

Williamsburg Visual Arts Center

Executive Summary

Growth in the Williamsburg area over the past twenty years has resulted in increased numbers of children and adults who have an interest in the visual arts. Demand for classes and interest in shows of local and regional artists exceed the capacity of the local non-profit, This Century Art Gallery (TCAG) organization and facility. The plan is for TCAG, its board and 800 members to serve as the foundation for establishment of the Williamsburg Visual Arts Center (WVAC).

Williamsburg City Council has shown its support of This Century Art Gallery's proposal for the establishment of a new WVAC by unanimously approving the negotiation of a long term lease of land at Paper Mill Creek on South Henry Street where we will build a new facility. A feasibility study will be conducted in the fall (2007) to determine the community resources that are available to construct a new facility. The support and endorsement of City Council will allow the WVAC to establish itself as the primary resource for education, encouragement, development and promotion of the visual arts for the citizens of Williamsburg, James City and York Counties.

With appropriate staffing, the WVAC will focus on enhanced art education, expanded outreach programs, and promotion of local artists. The new Board of Directors of WVAC will focus on governance and planning, finance and budget, and development.

Why: The Mission

- 1. Provide Art Education for All in the Greater Williamsburg Area.** The new facility will provide space for year-round art education with classroom and workshop facilities, studio facilities, exhibition areas and group and personalized teaching that will encourage development of, and growth opportunities for new and emerging artists of all ages. Expanded collaboration in visual art activities will be possible with the Williamsburg area public and private schools, the College of William and Mary (W&M), the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA) and other arts-oriented entities. The very popular and often over subscribed Art Lecture Series in partnership with VMFA can be expanded. The new facility will have space for an art resource center and is projected to more than triple the number of art classes currently scheduled.
- 2. Promote Local Artists.** Opportunities are presently limited for artists to display their works. The WVAC will feature a large exhibition space that will not only provide a show and sales venue for local artists, but also attract outstanding artists from beyond the immediate area whose expertise and knowledge can enhance the educational value of a given exhibit.
- 3. Increase Community Outreach Activities to Encourage Art Appreciation.** The WVAC will expand the scope of its programs to include those in the community who may not have had opportunities to experience art and understand its importance in their lives. Focusing on identifying and serving individuals who might not otherwise be given a stimulating exposure to

the visual arts, these outreach programs will provide art instruction classes in area schools, for the general public, for seniors, for at-risk youth and for inmates at the regional jail.

4. Establish Williamsburg as an Arts Destination. The WVAC will be an important addition to other established museum, academic, historical, commercial and cultural art venues. As a new arts venue for the Williamsburg community, it will also be an attraction for tourists.

Where, How and Who: The Implementation

Where. Located on South Henry Street near Paper Mill Creek, the primary facility will be positioned away from the street on a flat area within the rolling terrain. The building site will allow a low impact and efficient building plan that will include classrooms, exhibition space, artists' studios, a gift shop and a multipurpose space/lecture area.

Constituting a relatively affluent population of approximately 125,000 in the immediate environs and hosting 4.5 million visitors annually, the Williamsburg area has the economic base to support a high-quality visual arts center. Local retail galleries, the Colonial Williamsburg museums and the Muscarelle Museum of Art fulfill specific roles, and will complement the WVAC and help promote art appreciation in the market area.

How. The WVAC will initially raise \$5.0 to 6.0 million from a capital campaign, and other fundraising activities, an amount that is expected to cover the planning and building costs as well as supplement the first twenty-four months of operation. Thereafter, WVAC operations will be funded with class tuition, gift shop sales, space rentals, corporate sponsorship of special exhibitions, membership dues and grants. Breakeven is targeted to occur in Year 3 after opening.

A comprehensive communications plan, including public relations, presentations to local community organizations, advertising in local newspapers and broadcast media and tourist brochures, has been designed and will be used on a continuing basis. This effort will ultimately include cooperative advertising with local retail galleries, other art centers and the City.

Who. The WVAC organization is building a dedicated management team that will be involved from early planning to opening and beyond as well as in effecting a smooth transition of operations from the existing entity (This Century Art Gallery) to the new center. Members of the team are supported by experienced advisors in key areas, such as finance, law, marketing and fundraising. The City of Williamsburg, owner of the property, will likely wish to have representation on the WVAC board; new governance documents will be drafted and approved to ensure that all operations are conducted in accordance with applicable local and state regulations.

An agreement has been made with the Greater Williamsburg Community Trust, which will assume contingent responsibility for distribution of funds donated for or allocated to the visual arts center.

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Project Forward

The Feasibility Study completed by Lisa Freeman, recommends that a Transition Team be created to lead the next eighteen months of preparation and transition from This Century Art Gallery (TCAG) to the new Williamsburg Visual Arts Center (WVAC). All Transition Team recommendations will go to the TCAG Board for review and action. Roles and responsibilities of the Transition Team include definition of a governance structure, nominations committee for the WVAC Board, selection of a Project Manager, recommendation of a business plan, oversight for a capacity building program, and oversight of the Project Forward Work Groups. The team members include Michael Kirby, Chair; Gil Bartlett, Kathy Hornsby, Sterling Nichols, Margaret Pritchard, Linda Caviness and Cindy May. Charlene Zolad will assist the team.

The Feasibility Study consultant, Lisa Freeman, recommended in her report to the TCAG Board that the Transition Team's work be carried out through a membership-wide effort of approximately one and one-half years and that this effort be called "Project Forward." Accordingly, Project Forward will consist of a varying number of Work Groups with some Work Groups to be on-going and some with a short life depending on their function and the tasks to be completed. Eight Work Groups will get started immediately and other Work Groups will be created as the need arises.

These Work Groups are listed below and members are asked to select areas in which they have interest and/or skills and to sign up accordingly. Members may wish to consider these volunteer opportunities before making a commitment, or may have questions that require further clarification. If so, please contact Michael Kirby at 258-5625 or e-mail him at kirbyscorpio@aol.com.

See the reverse side for Project Forward Work Groups.

2/25/08

Project Forward Work Groups

1. Marketing/Communications Work Group

- Develop a plan for promoting WVAC
- Implement the plan by developing press materials, speaker's bureau, website, etc.

2. Case Statement Work Group

- Develop a clear, concise vision for WVAC
- Develop a mission statement
- Use vision and mission statements to develop a 2-page case statement

3. By-Laws Work Group

- Review By-Laws of similar organizations
- Develop By-Laws for new organization

4. Business Plan Work Group

- Review draft Business Plan
- Complete Business Plan including 5-year budget projection

5. City and County(s) Work Group

- Develop strategy for collaboration with City and County officials
- Present appropriate documents to City and County officials

6. Area Art Organizations Work Group

- Develop plan to collaborate with all area art organizations
- Discuss vision and plans of WVAC with each area art organization

7. Capital Campaign Work Group

- Develop a capital campaign plan and timetable
- Lead the campaign plan implementation by developing major gift opportunities, naming opportunities, corporate and community strategies, membership opportunities, etc.

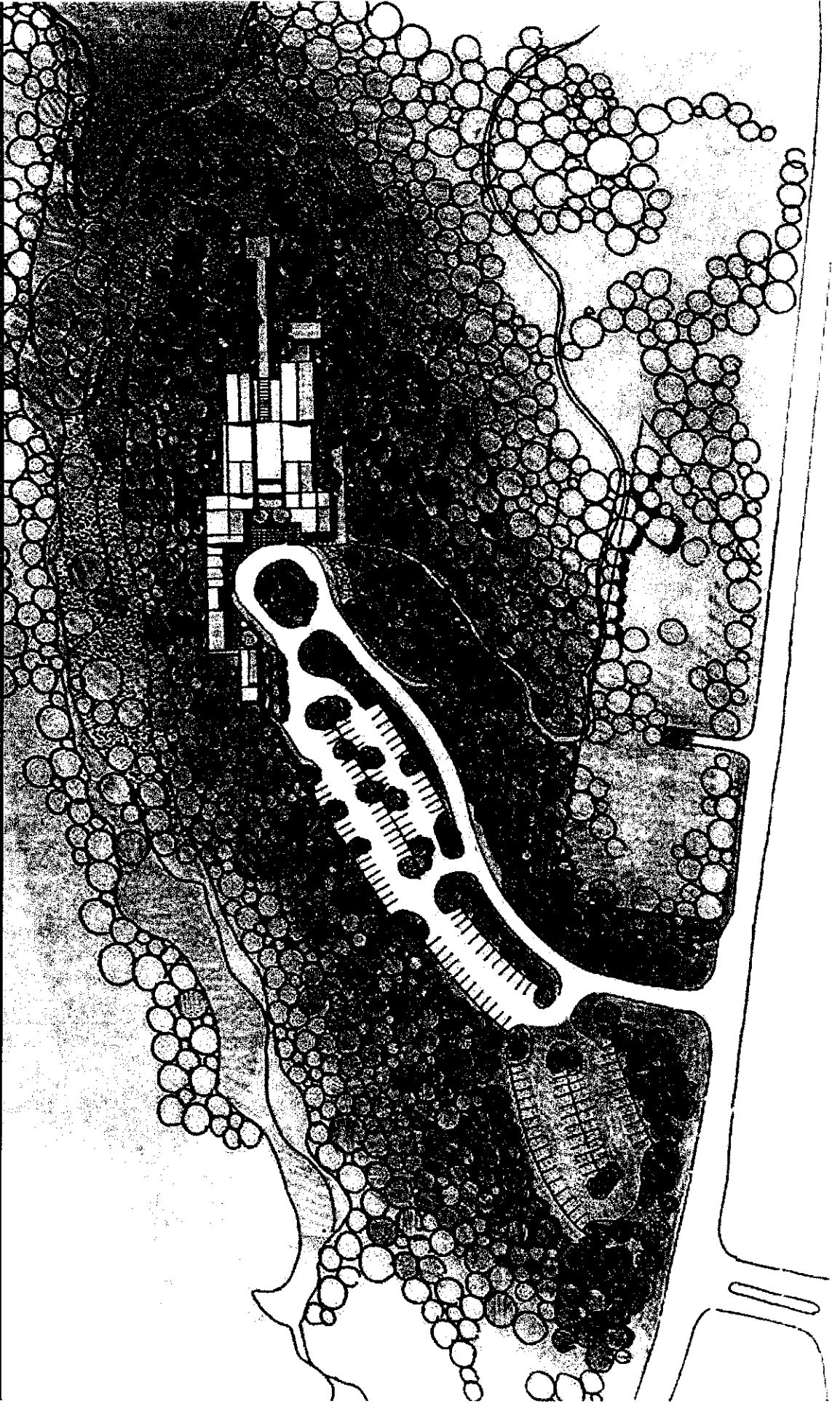
8. Facility Work Group

- Serve as liaison to the City of Williamsburg
- Serve as liaison to the architect
- Serve as Project Management for the building
- Serve as liaison to consultants and contractors



This Century Art Gallery

April 18, 2007





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