

**REPORT TO THE ARLINGTON COUNTY BOARD
ON THE PROPOSED CULTURAL CENTER
FROM THE
ARLINGTON COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS
March 2009**

Introduction

The Arlington County Board approved the use of the former Newseum building space as a community benefit for a museum or other cultural use in December 2007. Eleven months later the Board approved a lease between the County and Monday Properties, owner of the building.

In February 2008, the Arlington Commission for the Arts unanimously approved a resolution (Attachment A) outlining seven criteria for reviewing proposed uses of the space as a community cultural benefit. On June 25, 2008, the Commission endorsed the proposal to create a County cultural center using the adopted criteria (Attachment B). Additionally, several local arts organizations endorsed the concept in letters to the County Board.

The County Cultural Affairs Division was tasked with developing a Business Plan for the proposed cultural center and the County Board asked that the Arts Commission review the plan. The Commission's five-member Executive Committee reviewed the Business Plan and reported back to the full Commission. Commission members have arts management, marketing, legal, economics and finance backgrounds and expertise.

This report does not repeat the calls over the last few decades for a County cultural center, nor does it detail the serious facility needs of Arlington's arts groups, as those topics have been highlighted to the County Board in the past. Suffice it to say that finding good performance/exhibition venues for local arts and culture groups remains the #1 priority for a large majority of them. We know that the Board is fully aware of the social, educational and community development advantages that the arts bring to a community.

Given that the County contracted with an independent arts management firm (Webb Management Services Inc.) to review the plan in full, we chose to bring new information to the Board on the Business Plan by comparing information the Commission has received as part of the County's arts grants program with the assumptions in the Business Plan. We also reassessed the most recent studies on the economic impact of the arts and have summarized those findings for the County Board's consideration.

By following this methodology, we did not second-guess or duplicate Webb Management's work, but relied upon information available to the Commission that Webb did not use, and hopefully have contributed useful information for the County Board's consideration.

Vetting the Cultural Center's Business Plan

Testing of Partner Organizations' Assumptions

The Commission chose to vet select assumptions used in the Plan by first comparing that data with information the Commission received from local arts organizations as part of their application process for 2009 grants from the County. Organizations included in the Plan and which also submitted 2009 grant applications are:

- Synetic/Classika Theater
- Washington Shakespeare Company
- Bowen McCauley Dance
- Jane Franklin Dance
- National Chamber Ensemble

We were also able to compare the attendance and revenue projections for the Planet Arlington concerts included in the Business Plan with information available from the Rosslyn Business Improvement Corporation. Finally, we reviewed the Artisans Center of Virginia's website to review their attendance and economic data.

Synetic/Classika Theater – Synetic has become a highly-respected regional theater company over the last few years, winning more Helen Hayes Awards last year than any other company. The company has a budget of more than \$1 million and last year had a small surplus. Synetic received the highest rating from the Commission for its grant applications over the past two years. It performs primarily at the Spectrum Theater as well as the Kennedy Center. Its children's theater, Classika, performs in space at Shirlington that is rented on a month-to-month basis. In FY 2008, attendance for Synetic productions was estimated about 12,000 for 4 shows. Classika had 6,000 attendees for its shows.

Because the Spectrum Theater is heavily rented by other organizations, Synetic has not been able to have longer runs of shows or additional productions. The Business Plan assumes that some of the Spectrum's rental activity will be moved to the former Newseum space, freeing up the Spectrum's theater space. Synetic's usage of the Spectrum would then grow from 21 weeks to 32 weeks, a 52 percent increase, and become a resident theater. It is also anticipated that with this shift the current stage area in the Spectrum and the Spectrum's signage promoting Synetic will be enhanced, addressing two major concerns Synetic has had with the facility. Classika would be able to use the dome theater in the cultural center, allowing for larger audiences in a unique setting that has appeal to children.

The Business Plan assumes Synetic/Classika will be able to grow its total audience with the planned improvements to a total of 30,000. This projected attendance appears attainable, given the theater improvements, additional performance runs and Synetic's growing reputation.

Synetic's ticket prices range from \$40 for regular seating to \$20 for students. For its revenue projections, the Business Plan assumes a \$30 ticket price average, which is conservative.

Washington Shakespeare Company (WSC) – Washington Shakespeare performs at the Clark Street Playhouse, located in the North Tract area, which is expected to be demolished in the near future. The theater space is difficult to find, lacks metro accessibility or a safe-appearing parking area, and is in poor physical condition. WSC has about a \$300,000 budget and had 6,100 attendees for its performances. Like Synetic, WSC has received the Commission's highest rating in the grants application process for the past two years. The company was expecting to move to the former Signature Theater area at Four Mile Run and the County had committed to assisting WSC in making that move. With the cultural center proposal, the move instead would be made to the center's proposed black box theater space as a resident theater.

The Business Plan assumes 10,000 attendees for WSC's productions and the revenue projections are based on \$30 average ticket prices. The projected attendance appears optimistic but also attainable, given the improved location for its performances and the synergy of having multiple arts activities to attract additional patrons. Current WSC ticket prices are in the \$30 to \$35 range, so the revenue projections also appear reasonable.

Bowen-McCauley Dance (BMD) and Jane Franklin Dance – While neither of these well-respected dance companies would be resident at the cultural center, both organizations have expressed interest in performing at the center and the Business Plan assumes that there would be innovative, contemporary dance programs performed in the ballroom area on occasion. Both BMD and Jane Franklin perform frequently around the local region. Audience attendance figures for BMD in its grant application shows averages of 300 to 800 people for performances at Kenmore; Jane Franklin's audiences in larger venues ranged from 150 to 350. Ticket prices for the two organizations were generally in the \$30 to \$45 range.

The Business Plan assumes 1,200 projected attendance for these new dance programs, which certainly appears realistic. *We note, however, that the added income from ticket surcharges is not included in the Business Plan's budget, since the surcharge revenue is based on current performance schedules. Therefore, the surcharge revenue figures used in the Business Plan appear to be conservative.*

National Chamber Ensemble – This classical music group is relatively new and received its first arts grant from the County last year. The Ensemble performs at the Spectrum Theater and is expected to remain a resident company there under the Business Plan. The performances have been highly rated by Arts Commissioners and over this past year the number of attendees has grown to more than 100 patrons per concert. Ticket prices are generally \$25. Cultural center revenue from their performances is included in the ticket surcharge section of the Business Plan's budget.

Planet Arlington Concerts – This concert series is jointly sponsored by the Cultural Affairs Division and the Rosslyn Business Improvement Corporation. The series currently consists of 3 to 4 concerts during the winter months with artists from around the world performing at the Spectrum Theater. Attendance has generally averaged about 200 to 300 per performance and ticket prices have been \$25.

The Business Plan assumes total attendance of 1,800 for an expanded series of six concerts, which is a reasonable assumption. Because the Business Plan’s revenue assumptions are also based on \$30 ticket prices, we conclude that the income projection for the expanded series is possible, although optimistic.

Artisans Center of Virginia (ACV) – The Artisans Center, located in southwestern Virginia and recognized by the Virginia General Assembly as the official state center for fine craft in 1999, had more than 20,000 visitors in FY 2008. It specializes in high-quality, handmade fine crafts. Of sales made to Virginia residents, 36 percent were from outside a 50-mile radius of the Center. Forty percent of total sales were made to out-of-state visitors. The Center generated \$34,000 in local and \$41,000 in state taxes and fees.

“The Waynesboro community is privileged to enjoy the presence of ACV. Our local economy and community rely heavily upon a thriving arts and culture environment to sustain [this community’s] long-term viability. The ACV is an economic engine that must not be underestimated.”

Lorie Smith, Waynesboro City Council

Other Business Plan Observations

The Commission noted four other areas of the Business Plan for comments:

Governance – The Business Plan proposes a reasonable and well-thought out approach for the cultural center to attain self-governance as a 501(c)(3) within three years. The Commission believes this goal should be a priority and hopefully will be reached in less time.

Fundraising – Multiple theatre, gallery and lounge spaces in the former Newseum space lend themselves to gift-naming opportunities. Once the center is able to demonstrate success with attracting audiences and establishing financial stability, it should be possible to solicit such larger gifts and establish an endowment fund.

Marketing – The proposed budgets in the Business Plan have modest, but reasonable, funds allocated for marketing – especially if some marketing assistance is donated or obtained through advertising trades in the cultural center’s first years. Development of a professional marketing plan will be crucial. We expect that a key component of that plan will be for the center to have a vibrant and interactive website to attract its targeted audiences. In addition, the Arts Commission hopes to be able to provide valuable

marketing information for the cultural center's use from the Commission's 2009 marketing research project with area newspapers and web advertising.

Volunteers – The Business Plan references use of numerous local volunteers, and we expect that the cultural center will become a significant source for volunteerism in the County. But we also note that there will be multiple groups of volunteers: those that volunteer in general for the cultural center and those that come specifically with a performing or exhibiting group. Just the five partner arts groups discussed above (Synetic, Washington Shakespeare, Bowen-McCauley, Jane Franklin and the National Chamber Ensemble) reported in their most recent grant applications that they had about 100 volunteers working for them. *The Business Plan does not address how the cultural center will coordinate and manage these volunteers coming with different interests and backgrounds. A volunteer coordinator, whether filling a paid or unpaid position, appears to be needed.*

The Arts Are An Economic Engine

Recent Independent Studies on the Impact of the Arts

Two recent independent survey studies are of the most relevance to the cultural center proposal. The first is the 2008 Community Interest and Opinion Survey of 1,000 Arlington households on parks, recreation and cultural facilities, programs and services. The second is the 2006 Arts & Economic Prosperity III national study in which 29 nonprofit arts and culture organizations and 765 patrons in Arlington participated.

Community Interest and Opinion Survey – This periodic survey was contracted by the County's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department with Leisure Vision/ETC Institute. The survey showed high participation by Arlington households with the County's parks, recreation and cultural facilities. While the survey questions were more oriented to citizen interests in parks and recreational activities than the arts, the results were supportive of increased cultural activities.

Half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the County's sponsored activities enhanced their understanding of different cultures, while 65% agreed that they brought about cultural enrichment to the community and 62% agreed that they helped to attract new residents and businesses. Almost half of the respondents indicated they have a need for County performance spaces/theaters and over 40% identified art galleries and public art as interests.

“Arts & Economic Prosperity III” Report – This national study by the Americans for the Arts of 156 participating communities and regions, including Arlington, represented all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Detailed expenditure and attendance data was collected nationally from more than 6,000 nonprofit arts and culture organizations and almost 95,000 attendees of their programs. The report used input/output modeling (a

highly regarded type of economic analysis that has been the basis for two Nobel Prizes in economics) to measure the impact of expenditures by nonprofit arts and culture organizations and their audiences. It showed an impressive 24 percent growth of national economic activity as a result of the arts over the previous five years.

The report concluded that the arts industry generated nearly \$30 billion in revenue to local, state and federal governments every year. In comparison, the three levels of government collectively spent less than \$4 billion annually to support arts and culture – resulting in more than a 7 to 1 return on government dollars spent. The typical attendee across the country spent \$28 per person, per event, in addition to the cost of admission, for secondary expenditures such as meals, drinks, transportation, parking, etc. Non-local audiences spent twice as much as their local counterparts (\$40 vs. \$20).

Using the national results and each community's local data, project economists customized input/output analysis models to calculate findings for each study region, including Arlington's. For Arlington County, the study estimated that:

- The arts and culture organizations represent an \$85 million industry, when secondary expenditures are factored in, employing 2,000 full-time equivalent jobs.
- The industry generates more than \$6 million in local and state government revenue (including more than \$3 million for the County).
- Non-residents spend an average of \$39 per person, per event, in addition to admission costs, while residents spend an average of \$18.

In comparing our data with other surrounding jurisdictions, we compare very well in terms of expenditures and government revenues. However, there was an interesting outlier in terms of Arlington's data. ***What we found was that despite average spending levels per person being relatively consistent with the U.S. average, our total audience expenditures in Arlington – for secondary expenditures other than admission costs – are significantly lower than what was reported for surrounding jurisdictions.***

We realized – with the notable exception of Signature Theatre and Arena Stage – Arlington arts groups must typically perform in schools or other performance facilities (e.g., Clark Street Playhouse, the black box theater at 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive, etc.) that do not offer surrounding amenities for dinner or shopping. Therefore, audiences do not tend to spend money on restaurant dinners or at other retail stores before or after going to many Arlington performances.

The proposed Arlington cultural center is located in an area of the County already has these amenities for secondary expenditures and holds the promise for increased restaurant and shopping choices over the life of the center's building lease.

The Arts Commission's Local Economic Impact Study

In late 2008, the Arts Commission Chair asked the Commission's Strategic Outreach and Advocacy Committee to conduct a study of arts groups that perform in Arlington. Partnering with the Crystal City Business Improvement Corporation, the study collected economic impact information for two theatres: Signature, located in Shirlington, and Arena in Crystal City.

The study's work in collecting information from theater patrons and analysis of select restaurant sales and seating was recently completed and is currently under review by the Commission. It will be released to the County Board and the public in the next few weeks. The study finds that there is substantial economic impact fostered by the theaters for local restaurants.

We also know regionally that recognized arts groups in attractive facilities can draw patrons from outside their venue's immediate local jurisdiction, helping that jurisdiction's economy. For example, Signature's 5,000 person subscription base last year, per their website, showed that 30 percent of the patrons were from Arlington, another 30 percent from other parts of Northern Virginia and 40 percent from Maryland and Washington, DC.

“The draw of Signature Theatre was the deciding factor in our opening a Busboys and Poets [restaurant] in Shirlington. And there is a pronounced increase in our business on the nights of their shows...”

Pamela Pinnock, Events and Marketing Manager, Busboys and Poets.

A Personal Economic Impact Example

The Arts Commission Chair recently conducted his own “economic impact” analysis to validate the idea of secondary expenditures. After he and six other patrons went to Synthetic Theater last fall, it occurred to him to analyze what the group had spent for their “theater night.” Before attending the theater, they had drinks and dinner, spending an average of \$60 each at Domaso Restaurant at the Hotel Palomar. Four people drove from DC, Montgomery County and Arlington; two paid parking garage fees and two parked free on the street. Two took the Metro and one walked to the restaurant. Two people also purchased drinks and snacks at the theater.

The total costs, including seven \$40 theater tickets, were approximately \$740 spent in Arlington County. Of further note, for the food and drink costs, the group paid about \$35 in meals and sales taxes to the County and the Commonwealth. Bottom line: the group spent \$280 for theater tickets and an additional \$460 in secondary costs - all within Arlington County.

Economic Impact of the Cultural Center

Using the methodology for the “Arts & Economic Prosperity III” Report, the Business Plan indicates that *the cultural center, assuming half of its patrons are from within Arlington, will create more than \$8.6 million in direct event-related expenditures annually in addition to ticket sales.*

“One small theater with 300 seats can generate almost \$10,000 to its neighborhood in a single night”

Linda Levy Grossman, Executive Director of the Helen Hayes Awards

We note that the five partner arts organizations identified earlier employ about 20 staff and contract with almost an additional 400 individuals for their performances. They represent only a fraction of the total paid employment and contractual services that would be involved with the cultural center.

Additionally, the fact that there are multiple types of arts organizations that will be housed in the center indicates that the organizations will strengthen one another in terms of audience and financial growth.

“Nationwide, the economic effect of theaters tends to be stronger when more than one theater is in the mix....Once you get a sort of critical mass, a cluster of theaters, restaurants and other attractions and amenities, then the impact can be dramatic.”

Jason Bram, Federal Reserve Bank of New York economist.

Conclusion

Our review of the cultural center’s Business Plan and independent studies on the appeal and economic impact of the arts lead us to conclude that the proposed cultural center is a viable and much-needed asset for Arlington.

The cultural center proposal will:

- provide an important economic stimulus for the County, generating a projected \$8.6 million in secondary expenditures annually, as well as new jobs;
- lessen a long-standing, critical performance and exhibition venue shortage in the County;
- give the opportunity for County residents, including children and the elderly, to appreciate and learn from the arts in a multi-disciplinary and multi-programming center;
- allow County residents to experience a wide variety of the arts at a low cost;

- take advantage of what may well be a “once in a lifetime” opportunity to establish a County cultural center for far less money than building a new structure; and
- forward Arlington’s reputation as an innovative center for the arts in the region and the nation.

The Commission again urges the County to expedite its approval of the proposal and support the creation of the cultural center as an integral part of Arlington’s social, educational and economic fabric.



ARLINGTON COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 414, Arlington, Virginia 22201

July 17, 2008

The Honorable Walter Tejada
Chairman, Arlington County Board
1 Courthouse Plaza, Suite 300
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Walter:

The Arlington County Commission for the Arts heard and reviewed on June 25, 2008 the Cultural Affairs Division's proposal for a County-wide cultural facility at the former Newseum space and current Spectrum theater. The proposal consists of an arts center open 7 days a week, 12 hours a day and will offer over two dozen cultural activities on a weekly basis. In what it believes is a conservative estimate, the Cultural Affairs Division (CAD) predicts over 300,000 attendees annually once the center is fully operational in approximately a year.

In its review, the Arts Commission agreed that the \$15,000 of market research funding approved earlier by the County Board for this fiscal year would be wisely spent to gain further information on the cultural activity preferences of the primary target group identified by CAD for the center: 20 to 35 year olds. The County already has a large percentage of this age group as residents and Rosslyn just experienced an influx of over 1,500 employees from the Corporate Executive Board whose average age falls within this cohort. Therefore, the Commission believes that targeting our marketing research on this age range for Arlington and the region will not only help in the marketing of the proposed arts center but would also benefit other cultural programming within the County.

Anticipating a review of options for the former Newseum space, the Arts Commission agreed at its February 7, 2008 meeting to a set of criteria for evaluating proposals. The criteria, which were forwarded to the County Board earlier this year, are enclosed. Also enclosed are the same criteria with elements of the CAD's proposal which we believe address each criterion.

After our review of CAD's proposal, the Arts Commission voted unanimously to approve the following resolution:

"Whereas the Commission finds that the Cultural Affairs proposal meets the seven criteria passed by the Commission on February 7, 2008 (attached hereto), the Commission enthusiastically supports that proposal and recommends that the County Board adopt the Cultural Affairs proposal for the use of the former Newseum space and urges the County Board to take all steps necessary to implement that proposal."

We look forward to the County Board's approval of the proposal and the Commission pledges its assistance in helping the County staff make it a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Seal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and the last name "Seal" clearly distinguishable.

John Seal
Chair
Commission for the Arts

cc: Ron Carlee

Enclosures (2)



MULTICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMISSION

3700 South Four Mile Drive Arlington, VA 22206
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Mr. J Walter Tejada
Chair, Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22201

17 July 2008

Dear Mr. Tejada

The Multicultural Advisory Commission enthusiastically endorses the basic thrust of the County staff proposal for "An Arts Space for Everyone". We agree that there is a need for a welcoming and inclusive cultural facility to serve the Arlington community. We agree that supporting arts organizations in the County is an important and worthy goal. We are impressed by the well-thought out and imaginative plan for using the old Newseum space. Not only is the proposal consistent with a "smart growth" policy, but its planned mix of uses will be a significant, worthwhile amenity and attraction for all of those who live and work in Arlington County and the surrounding region. .

We do have a few suggestions that we hope will be worked into the final plan that is approved and implemented.

1. We agree with the approach of having a number of organizations being official partners in the project. This type of collaboration will surely help to bring recognition to the facility and strengthen its financial foundation. We do have a concern that all of the partners identified so far are fairly upscale. We have no objection to any of them, but do feel that more effort needs to be made to recruit additional partners from a broader cross-section of Arlington's cultural communities. This will be important to attracting a wider audience and helping to make sure that the facility truly becomes a space for everyone.
2. We believe there needs to be more effort to reach out to various cultural communities to get input on what would attract them to come to the facility. We know that some of this has been done. But if the facility is to realize its aspirations of serving everyone in the County, there must be a much more robust effort to get perspectives and preferences from across the entire Arlington population.
3. We suggest that the facility in some way visually recognize and celebrate the diversity of Arlington. The terrace area connected to the Newseum may be a good place to do this. We could ask various cultural communities to create murals, sculptures or other types of permanent or rotating displays, to be placed in this space. This would get these communities involved in this effort and help to create a connection that will help to make it a successful facility.



MULTICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMISSION

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We appreciate the good work that the Cultural Affairs Division of the PRCR and the Arts Commission have done to develop this proposal. We hope that the County Board will give its approval.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wuiping Yap".

Wuiping Yap
Vice Chair, Multicultural Advisory Commission

cc: Arlington County Board
Mr. Ron Carlee, County Manager
Mr. John Seal, Chair, Arlington Commission for the Arts

ARLINGTON COUNTY FISCAL AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMISSION REPORT TO THE COUNTY BOARD

PROPOSED CULTURAL ARTS CENTER JUNE 19, 2009

FAAC is enthused and encouraged by the County Board's willingness to look into opening a world-class Cultural Arts Center in Rosslyn- a dream which many Arlingtonians have sought to attain for over 30 years.

FAAC recommends that the County Board direct staff to:

1. Develop a plan to make up for any possible revenue shortfalls

a. Economic Impact of Theaters in Arlington

- i. Arlington's theaters are a significant part of the county's social fabric. A recent study by the Crystal City Business Improvement District, in conjunction with Arlington Commission for the Arts, provides strong and credible data demonstrating the economic benefits of theater facilities to a neighborhood. Arena Stage (Crystal City) and Signature Theatre (Shirlington), were evaluated for their impact on the local economy.
- ii. Examining audience expenditures at surrounding restaurant establishments prior to and after events, the major findings were as follows:
 1. More than 50% of theater patrons visit a restaurant prior to attending a show
 2. On performance nights, area restaurants experience increased sales over non-performance nights of between 7% and 20%
 3. Each performance generates an average of \$8K in restaurant sales
 4. Approximately \$4M annually is generated in Arlington restaurant and retail sales, showing that support for the arts is an investment in the area's economic well-being

- b. Though the revenue outlook is positive, revenue streams projected for the Cultural Arts Center are speculative in nature mainly because a minority of the projected revenue comes from identified County cultural organizations that are expected to

move to the Cultural Arts Center. Additionally, there is no comparable facility in the US in which to compare it.

- c. Much of the estimated revenue is reliant upon the Rosslyn Business Improvement District marketing and attracting restaurants, etc to open venues in Rosslyn.
- d. The Center is expected to have an estimated \$10 million in annual economic impact, enhance street life in Rosslyn and attract an estimated 250,000 visitors annually.
- e. A course of action is needed if construction does not begin and end on time and anticipated revenues do not materialize.

2. Estimate maintenance capital costs for life of the lease

- a. Throughout the term of the lease, Arlington County is responsible for operating costs associated with the space (heat, AC, electric, common space, etc)
- b. The County shall pay the periodic costs of utilities separately metered to the old Newseum facility and shall pay the maintenance and repair costs for the dedicated HVAC system and the escalator located within, and solely serving, the facility.

3. Review the impact on currently functioning arts venues in Arlington County and their surrounding communities

- a. Several of the community centers host cultural events that may lose patronage, due to the creation of a Cultural Arts Center in Rosslyn, for example:
 - i. Thomas Jefferson Community Theater
 - ii. Lubber Run Amphitheater
 - iii. Lee Arts Center
 - iv. Gunston Arts Center
- b. In addition, several arts venues already exist in Arlington County. For example:
 - i. Signature Theater
 - ii. The Ellipse Arts Center
 - iii. Clark Street Playhouse
 - iv. Columbia Pike Arts Studio

4. Examine the potential revenue if the old Newseum facility were converted to office space

- a. If Arlington County were to terminate the lease, it would forfeit the right to use the Newseum space and accept a cash payment of approximately \$7M, in lieu of “free” rent.
- b. The Newseum owners also retain the option of converting the facility to unrestricted use for an additional payment to the County of the difference in the fair market value: estimated at \$3M.
- c. An impact study is needed to determine the effect to the county budget and execution dollars for FY 20010 to FY 2015, if the County Board were to terminate the lease.

FAAC Recommendation – FAAC recommends that the County Board approves the county manager’s plan to develop a Cultural Arts Center in the old Newseum building in Rosslyn.

Yes: 8; No: 1; Abstain: 1