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Metropolitan Downtown Columbia signs first wave of retail tenants

May 19, 2015, 11:02am EDT Updated May 19, 2015, 11:29am EDT

[Sara Salinas](#)

Baltimore Business Journal

The Metropolitan Downtown Columbia is seeing new tenants moving in, but they're not occupying apartments.

The Howard Hughes Corp., the Dallas-based developer of the Downtown Columbia revamp, announced leases at the Metropolitan with restaurants and retailers including Corner Bakery Café, MOD Pizza, Floyd's 99 Barbershop, European Wax Center and Village Nails Bar. The Metropolitan includes 380 luxury apartments and is one of two apartment complexes included in the massive Downtown Columbia rebuild.

"The Metropolitan is fast becoming a highly desirable, amenity-packed place to live," said Greg Fitchitt, vice president of development for the Howard Hughes Corp. "Adding this mix of restaurants and services along with an inspired neighborhood park, will make this an even more popular location for both residents and visitors."

The 13-million-square-foot Downtown Columbia project aims to re-imagine the mostly suburban hub of Howard County as a pseudo-city. The completed 30-year project will feature corporate space, public parks, retail and restaurant space, and luxury apartments like those at the Metropolitan.

Builders are hoping to surround the already successful Merriweather Post Pavilion, consistently ranked as one of the top outdoor music venues in the country, with more retail, residential and entertainment space to draw visitors to Columbia year round.

The project has already seen the completed renovation of the historic Rouse Building into a Whole Foods Market and a 27,000 square-foot luxury spa and wellness center. Upgrades to Merriweather Post Pavilion are also underway.

Article: http://www.bizjournals.com/baltimore/blog/real-estate/2015/05/metropolitan-signs-first-wave-of-retail-tenants.html?ana=e_bal_real&s=newsletter&ed=2015-05-19&u=DZyqzK1Vw8B3bBnMAsF7Mw07f7def-f&t=1432148970

Here's what's next for the East Baltimore Development Inc. project

May 19, 2015, 7:55am EDT

[Sarah Gantz](#)

Baltimore Business Journal

As construction begins on 1812 Ashland Ave., the newest addition to the East Baltimore Development Inc. renewal area, developers are already eyeing the next pieces of the project.

Forest City - New East Baltimore Development Partnership, the master developer for the 88-acre project in East Baltimore, plans for its development partners to break ground this year on five residential properties. All five projects are being developed by local minority- or women-owned companies.

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A 5.5-acre park and an extended-stay hotel are also expected to break ground this year.

The EBDI development area is intended to bring a mix of housing, retail and recreation to East Baltimore, while building out Johns Hopkins University's Science + Technology Park, which will serve as the university's hub for technology commercialization. The 165,00-square-foot 1812 Ashland Ave. building will house Hopkins' FastForward incubator, as well as other Hopkins biomedical researchers and tech transfer offices.

At the same time, Forest City and its Baltimore-area development partners are moving quickly to deliver on promises to create affordable housing for residents who have been displaced by the project.

The five residential properties in the works will bring a combination of rental and for-sale affordable housing units. Three of the five projects are already underway.

Article: http://www.bizjournals.com/baltimore/blog/real-estate/2015/05/heres-whats-next-for-the-east-baltimore.html?ana=e_bal_real&s=newsletter&ed=2015-05-19&u=DZyqzK1Vw8B3bBnMAsF7Mw07f7def-f&t=1432148975

1 E. Pratt St. continues to fill with engineering firm lease

May 18, 2015, 11:29am EDT Updated May 19, 2015, 8:59am EDT

[Ryan Sharrow](#)

Baltimore Business Journal

Parsons Brinckerhoff Inc. has signed a lease for 23,000 square feet at 1 E. Pratt St., bringing the Inner Harbor building closer to full occupancy after a series of upgrades.

The New York engineering firm will move its 115-person local office in the fall from neighboring 100 S. Charles St.

Jerry Jannetti, vice president and area manager for Parsons, said 35 percent of the office's workforce lives in the city and it was a priority to stay downtown.

The lease brings 1 E. Pratt St. to 79 percent occupied, said Tim Jackson, a senior director at Cushman & Wakefield of Maryland Inc., who represents the building along with Whitney Nye, also of Cushman.

"We've got a ways to go but we've come a long way," said Jackson of the building, which offers Inner Harbor views.

At the intersection of Pratt and Light streets, the 355,800-square-foot building became largely vacant in 2011 when Verizon Corp. moved nearly all of its downtown workers to space in Baltimore County.

A \$13 million makeover of the building over the last six years includes a new lobby and an outdoor lounge overlooking Pratt Street. The removal of berms and the addition of retail "pop out" space has drawn Kona Grill and Sullivan's Steakhouse to the ground-floor of the building.

PNC Financial Services Group Inc. now anchors the building with its regional headquarters. Other tenants include KPMG, Gensler and the Baltimore Business Journal.

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New York-based Emmes Asset Management Co. LLC purchased 1 E. Pratt in early 2014 for \$58.75 million.

Article: http://www.bizjournals.com/baltimore/blog/real-estate/2015/05/1-e-pratt-st-continues-to-fill-with-engineering.html?ana=e_bal_real&s=newsletter&ed=2015-05-18&u=DZyqzK1Vw8B3bBnMAsF7Mw07f7def-f&t=1432148984

Affordable housing's importance grows in light of unrest

May 15, 2015, 1:58pm EDT

[Sara Salinas](#)

Baltimore Business Journal

Even as millennials add to Baltimore's population and developers construct amenity-rich apartments to house them, the city must concern itself with affordable housing to ensure its future growth.

The need for affordable housing led the discussion about Baltimore's future at a panel that was part of the Grow Baltimore! Grow Maryland! conference Thursday. City leaders emphasized the importance of housing in advancing Baltimore after the recent unrest. Residents of the city's outer neighborhoods have been calling for affordable housing for decades, panelists said, and the violence of recent weeks is simply a testament to the level of need.

Affordable housing may have prevented the riots if made available earlier, said the Rev. Al Hathaway, senior pastor of Union Baptist Church and a member on the panel. He said Baltimore needs to explore other forms of homeownership like condominium and cooperative housing models to make housing available to all socioeconomic levels.

"We need to use all of our knowledge and tools to expand housing opportunities to every income level," Hathaway said. "Housing on mass scale allows for various skill levels to get employed and hired."

"Steven Gondol, executive director of Live Baltimore, said Baltimore leads many of its peer cities in population growth and stability. He added that most of the city's population gains come from millennials.

Article: http://www.bizjournals.com/baltimore/news/2015/05/15/affordable-housings-importance-grows-in-light-of.html?ana=e_bal_real&s=newsletter&ed=2015-05-18&u=DZyqzK1Vw8B3bBnMAsF7Mw07f7def-f&t=1432149018

Supreme Court: Maryland law that double-taxes income from other states is unconstitutional

May 18, 2015, 11:45am EDT

[Jeff Clabaugh](#)

Washington Business Journal

Maryland residents could be in for millions of dollars in tax refunds, and Maryland counties could see a cut in their revenue stream after a Supreme Court ruling Monday, the Washington Post reports.

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On a split vote, justices ruled the state's income tax law is unconstitutional because residents who earn money outside the state don't get a full tax credit, the Post reports.

Maryland's personal income tax is actually a "state" income tax and a "county" income tax, and under Maryland's current tax system, residents who pay income tax to another state for income earned outside of Maryland are allowed a credit against the "state" portion of the tax but not the "county" portion.

The Washington Post reports the ruling, which upholds a lower court ruling, means taxpayers in Maryland who tried to claim the credit on their county income taxes are eligible for refunds of as much as \$200 million, according to the state comptroller's office.

The Post says taxpayers claiming the full credit now will cost the state \$42 million a year in revenue.

Article: http://www.bizjournals.com/baltimore/news/2015/05/18/supreme-court-maryland-law-that-double-taxes.html?ana=e_bal_real&s=newsletter&ed=2015-05-18&u=DZyqzK1Vw8B3bBnMASF7Mw07f7def&t=1432149014

Miscellaneous

Marriott is looking for someone to operate a bar in a shipping container in Montgomery County

May 20, 2015, 11:44am EDT

[Rebecca Cooper](#)

Washington Business Journal

Calling all budding bar owners and mixologists: Marriott International Inc. wants to seed your dream watering hole. That is, as long as your dream watering hole is located in the venue of the moment, an uber-trendy shipping container.

The Bethesda-based hotel giant is asking for proposals from beverage industry entrepreneurs on potential concepts that could occupy a 160-square-foot bar inside a metal shipping container that will be installed lakeside at the Gaithersburg Marriott Washingtonian Center hotel.

The venue will be part of the Canvas restaurant incubator program Marriott (NASDAQ: MAR) rolled out earlier this year, in which the company aims to install unique, locally based food and beverage concepts in underutilized areas of existing hotel properties.

The winning concept will receive up to \$30,000 in seed money to customize the shipping container bar as its owner sees fit and the right to operate the concept for up to six months. The bar will be open daily to the public and be accessible from the hotel but also from the walking path around the lake in the Rio Washingtonian development.

The container's sides open to reveal the bar, and the chosen entrepreneur will be able to add seating on the surrounding patio area, according to Sara Moore, general manager of hotel. She's hoping the bar will come from a popular, local mixologist who already has a following.

Miscellaneous

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Article: http://www.bizjournals.com/baltimore/news/2015/05/20/marriott-is-looking-for-someone-to-operate-a-bar.html?ana=e_bal_real&s=newsletter&ed=2015-05-20&u=DZyqzK1Vw8B3bBnMAsF7Mw07f7def-f&t=1432148952

Pimlico's planned millions in renovations go undone as Preakness' future is debated

May 19, 2015, 2:49pm EDT Updated May 19, 2015, 3:26pm EDT

[Sarah Meehan](#)

Baltimore Business Journal

Relocating the Preakness Stakes away from its longtime home at Pimlico Race Course would deal a financial blow to Baltimore, but the move may be the most economically sound option for the track's owners, one horse industry leader says.

The Stronach Group, which owns both Pimlico and Laurel Park, must decide whether it makes sense to pump millions into Pimlico rather than investing in Laurel and consolidating racing there. The dilemma comes as the Stronach Group considers ways to grow the Preakness, including moving the event and holding the main race on a Sunday.

Talk of moving the second leg of the Triple Crown has surfaced before Maryland Jockey Club General Manager Sal Sinatra floated the idea during Saturday's race, and it's a complicated issue. But with track improvements at Pimlico stalled for years, Alan Foreman, chairman and CEO of the Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association, said it's a discussion that needs to happen now.

"Pimlico is going to be what it is, and if that's what people want, then that's what it will be," said Foreman, who is also an attorney in Baltimore. "As with all old race tracks, if you were to build a new facility, you wouldn't do it there."

Article: http://www.bizjournals.com/baltimore/news/2015/05/19/pimlicos-planned-millions-in-renovations-go-undone.html?ana=e_bal_real&s=newsletter&ed=2015-05-20&u=DZyqzK1Vw8B3bBnMAsF7Mw07f7deff&t=1432148950

OrderUp is on the Apple Watch

May. 20, 2015 9:44 am

[Stephen Babcock](#)

Technical.ly Baltimore

Want to be able to check your watch to see where your food is? With the release of the Apple Watch, OrderUp is making that happen. The Baltimore-based company that connects brick-and-mortar restaurants with people who don't want to leave their house to visit said establishments released the first version of its Apple Watch app when the new device was launched.

The app shows OrderUp's delivery tracker on the Apple Watch. OrderUp drivers check in during their deliveries, and the company's system uses GPS to show customers how close they are to noms.

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OrderUp Director of Product Flip Sasser said he and two other devs worked on nights and weekends over a month to develop the app. He said it was important for the company to be on the Apple Watch early to “put a flag up in front of competition.”

OrderUp and other companies who worked on an AppleWatch app before the device’s release faced a common problem: They didn’t have access to the hardware for which they were building.

With the thrill of seeing a presence on the Apple Watch, the first generation of apps offer a way to “delight users for any company,” Sasser said, but he added that they are “almost entirely about consumption,” referring to the app’s read-only functionality.

“Everyone who put out a first version ... suffered from same challenge which was not knowing how to get content back into the apps,” Sasser said.

Going forward, the OrderUp team will work to add features that allow users to input information. Right now, they’re working on a way to allow people to reorder items, and Sasser envisions more features in the future.

Article: <http://technical.ly/baltimore/2015/05/20/orderup-apple-watch/>