

Media Clips November 1- December 2, 2013

Topics include:

1. Master Plan approval by Board of Trustees
2. Master Plan total cost--\$624,500
3. Letters to the Editor from National Trust for Historic Preservation
4. Virginia STEAM Academy and FMA sign Letter of Intent
5. Editorial from Virginian Pilot: Protecting Wherry
6. NPS ownership still years away—Army still completing environmental work
7. New Exhibit at Casemate Museum—Fort Monroe: One Era Ends, Another Begins
8. Community Center opening December 5 at Fort Monroe

Media Sources:

Daily Press

Virginian Pilot

Suffolk News Herald

Inside Business Hampton Roads

Virginia Business Magazine

Association of Defense Communities Daily Newsletter

Associated Press

<http://hamptonroads.com/2013/10/fort-monroe-authority-oks-development-plan>

Fort Monroe Authority OKs development plan

By [Sarah Kleiner Varble](#)

The Virginian-Pilot

© October 25, 2013

HAMPTON

The Fort Monroe Authority adopted a master plan Thursday that calls for shops, restaurants, offices and housing around the historic landmark.

The plan includes residential development in the section known as Wherry Quarter.

For years, preservationists have urged the Fort Monroe board to keep development out of Wherry and designate it a park. They wanted it to connect the actual fort, surrounded by a moat on the south side of a peninsula, to land that President Barack Obama designated a national monument in 2011 on the north end.

State laws have required the authority to come up with a plan that preserved the area and that would make the state's part of the site economically self-sustaining. Consultants concluded that development - including in Wherry Quarter's core - was the only way the area around the fort would fund itself.

More than 15 residents spoke during the meeting Thursday. Many implored the board to postpone adoption of the plan or adjust it to turn Wherry into a park.

"This is ground zero for so-called American civilization," historian Bill Wiggins said. "We've spent too much time talking about what we want to do with this area without fully considering the significance."

The Army left the historic fort in 2011 after a round of Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission cuts in 2005.

In the early 1800s, the commonwealth turned over the land for the new fort to the Army. Decades later, the acreage grew as the Army filled in some areas that had been underwater.

At the meeting, several spoke on behalf of the nonprofit Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park. They questioned why the authority would be willing to allow development so close to the fort.

"Would the director of the National Park Service consider building housing developments in Yellowstone National Park beside its primary resource, Old Faithful?" Alec Gould said. "To me, it's just unthinkable that you would propose development right by the prime resource here at Fort Monroe."

National and state preservation groups spoke in favor of the plan because they want the existing buildings to be adapted for reuse as soon as possible.

The board reminded the dissenters in the audience that development in the quarter wasn't imminent because the plan could change.

It now goes to Gov. Bob McDonnell for his approval. If he signs off, the authority can begin selling some of the parcels around the fort, but state law prohibits the sale of land in Wherry Quarter.

Seven board members voted to adopt the plan. Del. Gordon Helsel and Sen. Mamie Locke voted against it.

"I owe the commonwealth my loyalty, but I also owe the 80,000 constituents I have my loyalty as well," Helsel said.

The plan calls for:

- Reuse of 400 existing residential units and about 720 units of new construction.
- One million square feet of mixed-use commercial development, most of which would come from existing structures.
- A 100-yard-wide strip of green space on the east side of Wherry Quarter so that the fort and monument can be connected.

Fred Merrill, the consultant who has been working with the authority, said it would take around 30 years for the plan to be fully implemented.

"I know it doesn't make anybody completely happy, but I think it makes most people really happy," he said.

Sarah Kleiner Varble, 757-446-2318, sarah.varble@pilotonline.com

<http://www.dailypress.com/news/hampton/dp-nws-fort-monroe-plan-approval-20131025,0,5752367.story>

**Fort Monroe plan approved, now goes to governor
Plan includes Wherry Quarter housing**

By Robert Brauchle, rbrauchle@dailypress.com | 757-247-2827 Daily Press

10:27 p.m. EDT, October 24, 2013

HAMPTON—

A master plan allowing the [Fort Monroe](#) Authority to sell homes and build on vacant land is heading to the governor's office.

The Fort Monroe Authority Board of Trustees approved the plan Thursday afternoon, despite objections that new construction just north and east of the stone fort could be ill-fitting for the historic property.

Del. Gordon Hesel and Sen. Mamie Locke, both of whom sit on the board, voted against the document. Gov. [Bob McDonnell](#) is expected to review the plan before his terms ends in January.

Trustees said they believe the plan created by Sasaki Associates, of Boston, lays out a firm path that protects the historic qualities of the property while finding a way to wean the authority's operations off taxpayers' dollars.

"This provides a flexible path that is sensitive to any changes that might come about," chairman John Lawson said.

Members of the Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park objected to the plan, saying homes in the Wherry Quarter area will devalue the nearby national monument.

"Americans will ultimately not permit this subdivision," said Mark Perreault, the group's president.

Virginia Department of Historic Resources Director Kathleen Kilpatrick backed the master plan in an Oct. 23 letter to the authority.

"The current plan is respectful of the character and quality that Fort Monroe already possesses," Kilpatrick wrote.

Just this month, Fort Monroe officials said the property can be financially self-sufficient, as long as the right strings are pulled.

To achieve that goal, existing homes must be sold, vacant land must be built on and financial arrangements with the city and National Park Service must be reworked.

The authority can sell property in the Historic Village and North Gate areas of Fort Monroe. The Inner Fort and Wherry Quarter areas are excluded from property sales.

Property owners must abide by strict guidelines detailing the size, height, architecture and materials that can be used during construction and renovations.

Fort Monroe Authority Executive Director [Glenn Oder](#) has said the General Assembly will likely not provide funding for the authority to renovate homes beyond what is needed to simply maintain those structures. Homeowners, though, can spend freely as long as improvements mesh with guidelines.

The master plan includes creating 1,120 new residential units using existing buildings and building anew. That would bring an additional 2,500 to 3,000 residents to Fort Monroe.

The master plan approved Thursday guides the authority to sell nearly all of the existing homes outside of the moat while continuing to lease commercial buildings in the Wherry Quarter.

"There are a lot of assumptions built into the plan that the board will need to implement in the future," said David Shiver, of Bay Area Economics.

The authority will also force property buyers to obtain mortgages through the authority, creating capital the authority can use to invest and on which it can earn interest.

The plan also leaves room for a science, technology, engineering and math school inside the inner moat. A trail follows the shoreline and McNair Drive is partially dedicated to pedestrians and cyclists.

"This plan provides the flexibility you need and the guidance to achieve your goals," Sasaki principal Fred Merrill said.

Fort Monroe master plan

What's next: The document will go to Gov. Bob McDonnell, who will review it and either suggest changes or sign the master plan.

<http://www.dailypress.com/news/hampton/dp-fort-monroe-authority-set-to-review-master-plan-20131021,0,2619986.story>

Fort Monroe Authority set to review master plan

8:32 p.m. EDT, October 23, 2013

HAMPTON—

Just shy of two years have passed since President **Barack Obama** created the **Fort Monroe** national monument.

The Virginia-based authority created to oversee the state's portion of the land is set to vote Thursday afternoon on a master plan for the decommissioned Army post.

The Fort Monroe Authority is expected to discuss the document, that spells out land uses and a path to economic sustainability for the property, during its 1 p.m. session.

Master planning consultant Sasaki Associates and its economist laid out a path earlier this month that leads the authority to an economically stable situation that does not rely on state taxpayer dollars to subsidize operations.

The plan does, however, place homes in the Wherry Quarter, a roughly 70-acre area of the property the Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park has targeted as being vital to keeping a park-like atmosphere at the property.

The authority's chairperson has said an authority-approved master plan needs to be reviewed and accepted by Gov. **Bob McDonnell** before he leaves office this winter.

An agenda for Thursday's meeting can be found at http://www.fmauthority.com/ai1ec_event/public-meeting-board-of-trustees-2/?instance_id=605.

<http://hamptonroads.com/2013/10/continuing-support-fort-monroe-plan>

Continuing support for Fort Monroe plan

The Virginian-Pilot

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A response to the Oct. 14 [editorial](#), “Fix the plan for Fort Monroe”

The editorial mischaracterized the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s position on the Fort Monroe Authority’s draft master plan. We, in fact, support the draft master plan and believe it achieves a reasonable balance of historic preservation and compatible growth.

The authority’s plan would preserve and put back in productive use 180 historic buildings at the fort that stand at risk. The recent theft of copper downspouts from 15 vacant buildings underscores the urgent need for a plan that protects the fort’s buildings by using them.

Additionally, the plan would promote compatible new construction that will generate revenue necessary for sustaining the historic site for future generations.

Right now, 25 existing structures stand in the contested Wherry Quarter. Two buildings are historic and the rest are of recent construction. We support the plan’s recommendation that these buildings be used.

We also believe that the majority of the 70-acre Wherry Quarter eventually should become parkland once the useful life of the newer structures has ended. However, further delay of the master plan, which strikes a reasonable balance for revitalizing and protecting this important site, would jeopardize the preservation and long-term sustainability of Fort Monroe.

Anyone interested in the fort’s future should view the draft plan at www.fmauthority.com.

Robert Nieweg

Field director and attorney

National Trust for Historic Preservation

Washington, D.C.

<http://www.dailypress.com/news/hampton/hampton-matters-blog/dp-ymca-considered-on-fort-monroe-20131021,0,3154396.post>

YMCA considered on Fort Monroe

3:00 p.m. EDT, October 21, 2013

Do you enjoy working out? How about in a renovated historic building overlooking a moat?

Officials at [Fort Monroe](#) believe they have the place for you then.

The Fort Monroe Authority was seeking some public input over the past few days to determine just how much interest there is opening a [YMCA](#) on Ruckman Road, just outside of the fort's west gate.

The authority was asking people to fill out a survey gauging the public's interest in such a facility.

From the authority's website:

"This large building was the first YMCA ever built on an Army Post and it is rich with history. The Fort Monroe Authority has been negotiating with the YMCA to re-open this facility for over two years. We presently have a Memorandum of Understanding with the "Y" that allows them to study the building and the unique opportunity the facility would offer to the YMCA portfolio."

From what I understand, the Army spend a considerable amount of money and time renovating the building just before the the post was decommissioned.

Here is more information about the YMCA: <http://www.fmauthority.com/ymca-your-feedback-needed/>

<http://www.virginiabusiness.com/news/article/fort-monroe-takes-a-step-toward-lease-agreement-with-school>

[Industries](#) > [Economic Development](#)

Fort Monroe takes a step toward lease agreement with school

November 1, 2013

The Fort Monroe Authority has taken a big step toward making the historic Hampton fortress the home for a statewide boarding school focused on math, technology and science.

Glenn Oder, the authority's executive director, has signed a letter of intent with the Virginia STEAM Academy, providing a framework for a lease agreement.

The authority is negotiating with the academy with the goal of signing a lease by Dec. 31

STEAM is an acronym for science, technology, engineering and applied mathematics. Founded in 2010, the school has four components: a public, statewide boarding school for high school students; a summer academy for middle school students; online, on-demand course offerings and professional development.

For more than a year, academy officials and Fort Monroe officials have been discussing placing the school on the fort property.

"Having the Academy located at Fort Monroe will help bring additional attention to this community as a place to live, work, play, and learn," Oder said in a statement. "We believe this will be a mutually beneficial partnership, one that could help shape the fort for years to come."

<http://www.dailypress.com/news/hampton/dp-nws-virginia-steam-fort-monroe-20131102,0,6622721.story>

**Virginia STEAM Academy plans 2015 opening at Fort Monroe
School could occupy 19 buildings on Fort Monroe**

By Robert Brauchle, rbrauchle@dailypress.com | 757-247-2827

November 2, 2013

HAMPTON — The Virginia STEAM Academy could occupy as many as 19 buildings on **Fort Monroe** in the coming years as new classes begin to enroll, according to an agreement between the school's founders and the Fort Monroe Authority.

The academy and fort officials have signed a letter of intent that could pave a path for the school to open in the summer of 2015.

The academy — a boarding school that will focus on teaching high school students science, technology, engineering and applied mathematics — will initially occupy three prominent buildings within the stone fort. The school's footprint would expand as more student classes enroll.

Once building renovations are complete and funding is in place, as many as 250 students new students could move onto the property each of the next four years until the 1,000-member student body lives and learns there. At least three buildings are needed to open for a fall 2015 class, Judy Stewart, Virginia STEAM Academy co-founder, said during an Oct. 29 interview.

"Fort Monroe is an ideal location," said Caroline Martin, also a co-founder. "The fort's history and proximity to STEAM companies and institutions will help us fulfill our mission to nurture future generations of creative, ethical, and imaginative STEAM leaders who understand and integrate the humanities."

The academy is the largest institution to commit to Fort Monroe. While tenants occupy close to 90 percent of the residential space, the authority has not had similar success finding users for commercial and office space. Fort Monroe officials are still estimating the economic effect of the academy as it occupies the three initial buildings and as its physical footprint grows.

The academy's three reserved buildings are all within the stone fort and include Building 5, which is the largest building inside the moat overlooking the parade grounds. It is book-ended by Buildings 10 and 139. The academy could eventually occupy 300,000 square feet of building space.

The academy will cover the cost of maintenance, repairs and utilities of the three buildings it initially occupies, according to a Fort Monroe news release. A lease could be signed by Jan. 1.

When it is fully operating, the academy will include a public boarding high school for interested Virginia students, a summer camp for middle school students, online classes and an educational professional development component.

The academy already offers a weeklong residential camp for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students that focuses on math reasoning, encryption and physics.

The school's inaugural class will include 9th and 10th grade students. Teachers will focus on applying lessons into laboratory and experiment-based scenarios. Such real-life learning is essential to showing students how the content of their lessons matters, Stewart said.

"They're going to learn the value of a living and learning environment," she said.

Once developed and running, the academy would hire about 75 faculty members and operate with a \$19 million annual budget.

The academy's co-founders have started building relationships with Hampton's federal institutions.

In June, the academy partnered with **NASA** Langley Research Center to have students and academy faculty mentored by 10 NASA mentors.

In November 2012, the academy's founders signed on with Jefferson Science Associates/Jefferson Lab to participate in lectures and discussions involving the school.

"Situating the STEAM Academy at the fort will give us routine access to some of the commonwealth's most significant STEAM assets," Stewart said.

The academy needs both public and private funding to operate; the founders are still acquiring those funds.

The academy is modeled after the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, founded in 1980.

Brauchle can be contacted at 757-247-2827.

Virginia STEAM Academy

For more information visit: <http://www.vasteam.org>

<http://insidebiz.com/news/fort-monroe-plan-ready-move-ahead-if-governor-approves>

Fort Monroe plan ready to move ahead if governor approves

Posted: October 31, 2013

By Lydia Wheeler

lydia.wheeler@insidebiz.com

Fort Monroe officials are waiting on the governor now.

The board of trustees for the former Army post approved a master plan last month that will map future development on the 565-acre Hampton property, but the plan has to be approved by the governor before any projects proposed within it can move forward.

The looming question is whether Gov. Bob McDonnell will sign off before he leaves office. His term ends Jan. 11.

“I think it would be advantageous for this administration to approve the plan because they have been so involved in the plan,” said Glenn Oder, executive director of the Fort Monroe Authority.

The plan, which passed by a 7-to-2 vote on Oct. 24, calls for residential and retail development, better public access to the waterfront, and connected green space throughout the historic property. In August 2011, the authority sent out a request for proposals, formed a selection committee and by December 2011 had hired a consulting firm – Sasaki Associates Inc. The authority paid the Watertown, Mass.-based firm \$500,000 to develop the four-phased plan that spans a 20-year timeline.

“The master plan really lifts the fog of uncertainty about the future of Fort Monroe,” Oder said. “At the end of the day, this master plan provides a baseline against which all future opportunities will be measured.”

The FMA Board of Trustees’ approval makes three public votes in favor of the plan. The planning advisory committee, a citizen panel, voted 7 to 1 to recommend the board adopt the plan, and the Fort Monroe Finance Committee held a public vote on the economics of the plan and voted unanimously in favor of its adoption by the board.

“This is actually the third or fourth master plan done for Fort Monroe,” Oder said. “In 2005, when the BRAC – Defense Base Closure and Realignment – process started, the city of Hampton thought they could be the local redevelopment authority.”

Hampton’s draft, which called for significant development, created public controversy and ultimately failed, as did other attempts. The plan before the governor, however, has been a public process from the start, Oder said.

“We went out of our way to make appointments with various stakeholders and bring them in,” he said.

On 390 acres of open space, the plan allows for 720 newly constructed mixed-use residential units and 160,000 square feet of commercial mixed-use space, a 7-mile waterfront trail and future development of a hotel at the north end of Wherry Quarter, one of the most controversial aspects of the plan. Board Chair John Lawson, owner of W.M. Jordan Co., said preservationists don’t want to see construction in that area of Fort Monroe.

“Frankly that’s one of the best areas for new construction,” he said. “Anything that will be done will be first-class and very respectful of the historic buildings nearby. We will also preserve the view from the fort to the bay.”

State Sen. Mamie Locke, D-Hampton, and Del. Gordon Helsel, R-Poquoson, were the two lone votes against the adoption of the plan. Though she admits it is not a bad plan overall, Locke said Wherry Quarter could have been kept green.

“There needs to be some connection between parcels owned by the National Park Service and the parcels owned by the state,” she said. “There has been quite a bit of discussion about allowing Wherry Quarter to make the connection and leave much of that an open and a green space. I think that could have been a reasonable compromise.”

If adopted by the governor, the master plan would set design standards for any new construction on the property. Building heights would be limited to 2½ stories on a raised base and fences would be discouraged with only picket fencing allowed.

McDonnell spokeswoman Taylor Keeney said the governor is currently reviewing and receiving input on the plan. She said he will consult with the appropriate staff prior to making a decision in the weeks ahead.

In the first five years, the plan would focus on leasing the current houses on the inner fort, encouraging adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of vacant casemates and securing a long-term lease with the Virginia Science Technology Engineering Applied Mathematics Academy.

Oder said the statewide public boarding school has a memorandum of understanding with the authority and is looking into leasing 300,000 square feet and bringing 500 to 1,000 students to Fort Monroe.

Phase two of the plan, expected to take place over 10 years, calls for the creation of a zoning plan, a redesign of McNair Drive to include on-street parking, work with the legislature to possibly establish a high-speed ferry destination point at Point Comfort and taking ownership of the marina and adjoining property from the Army.

Fort Monroe’s operating budget is now close to \$11 million a year. Leases generate \$3.5 million and the rest of the funding comes primarily from state government. There is now 135,000 square feet of existing vacant office space on the property. Residential housing, however, is 92 percent occupied.

The third and fourth phases of the master plan include seeking new development in North Gate; improving access to Mill Creek for boating, fishing and swimming; creating a living shoreline along Mill Creek; establishing a strong green connection from the Chesapeake Bay to Mill Creek; and utilizing green areas in the Wherry Quarter for recreation.

“As discussed in the public meeting, master plans such as these are visionary and future circumstances and opportunities will most certainly cause the plan to be revisited time and again,” Oder said.

<http://www.dailypress.com/features/history/our-story/dp-historic-fort-monroe-became-much-more-than-a-national-military-landmark-20131101,0,6691884.post>

Completed on Nov. 1, 1834, historic Fort Monroe became much more than a national military landmark

By [Mark St. John Erickson](#), merickson@dailypress.com | 757-247-4783

November 1, 2013

HAMPTON—

Robert E. Lee was many years removed from fame when -- as a young officer in [the Army](#) Corps of Engineers --he packed up and left his quarters at [Fort Monroe](#) in late October 1834.

But the report he gave when he reported for his new job at the office of the Army's chief engineer in [Washington, D.C.](#) a few days later left no doubt that one of the nation's largest building projects to that date had resulted in a nationally important military landmark.

Spawned by the embarrassing destruction wrought by the British during the [War of 1812](#), the "Gibraltar of the Chesapeake" was pronounced complete on Nov. 1, 1834 after 15 years of construction.

But as impressive as the great stone bastion might have been with its formidable batteries and 1.2-mile-long moat, no one then could have guessed just how large and continuous a role it would play as the history of [Hampton Roads](#) and America unfolded.

On that same day 177 years later, President [Barack Obama](#) would recognize the significance of the fort and Old Point Comfort by designating 570 acres as the Fort Monroe National Monument.

Here are some of the historic events that Hampton History Museum curator J. Michael Cobb and historian John V. Quarstein cite as the reasons behind his 2011 proclamation and the fort's importance:

COLONIAL PERIOD

As early as 1608, [Capt. John Smith](#) describes the strategic Chesapeake Bay gateway at Old Point Comfort as "an isle fit for a castle."

Old Point Comfort is fortified by [Jamestown](#) colonists in 1609 as a watch station.

A Dutch ship bearing the first documented Africans in English North America stops here in 1619.

First masonry fortification built here following Dutch raids on tobacco fleets in late 1600s.

EARLY NATIONAL PERIOD

Old Point Comfort lighthouse is constructed in 1802 as part of the first federal building program.

Spurred by British raids on the Chesapeake during the War of 1812, work on Fort Monroe begins in 1819, ultimately encompassing 63 acres in America's largest stone fort.

First Hygeia Hotel opens in 1822, becoming a nationally known resort.

The Army Artillery School of Practice is founded here in 1824.

Troops depart from Fort Monroe for Seminole, Blackhawk and Mexican wars as well as the suppression of Nat Turner's rebellion.

CIVIL WAR PERIOD

Held by the Union in April 1861, Fort Monroe gives the North command of Hampton Roads and the Chesapeake Bay as well as a vital land corridor to Richmond.

The North Atlantic Blockading Squadron is based here in May 1861, providing a springboard for crucial Union amphibious expeditions to the Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

Fort Monroe commander Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Butler gives asylum to runaway slaves as contraband of war in May 1861, paving the way for emancipation and the fort's new nickname as "Freedom's Fortress."

First land battle of the war is fought by troops commanded from Fort Monroe in June 1861.

Largest army in North America assembles here in spring 1862 for Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan's Peninsular Campaign aimed at taking Richmond.

[USS Monitor](#) departs from Fort Monroe on March 8, 1862 for historic first battle of ironclad warships in Hampton Roads.

Confederate President Jefferson Davis imprisoned here in May 1865.

LATE 1800s

Artillery School of Practice is re-established as Artillery School of the U.S. Army in 1867.

Second Hygeia Hotel opens in 1868, generating such success as a nationally known resort that the first Chamberlin Hotel opens in 1896.

1900s

Fort Monroe becomes home of the Army Coast Artillery School in 1907.

Fort Monroe becomes headquarters of Army Ground Forces in 1946, the Continental Army Command in 1955 and the Army Training and Doctrine Command in 1973.

-- Mark St. John Erickson

<http://hamptonroads.com/2013/10/governor-should-protect-wherry>

Governor should protect Wherry

The Virginian-Pilot
© October 31, 2013

Amid the speculation about what deeds and misdeeds will shape Gov. Bob McDonnell's legacy, one item draws little attention but likely will be associated with his name for generations - Fort Monroe.

Two years ago, when President Barack Obama declared a large portion of the historic fort a national monument, the governor was among the celebrants. He and others had lobbied the president for the designation a few weeks earlier when they met in Hampton.

"This was a grassroots campaign that started with the great citizens of Hampton Roads, whose passion and determination never wavered," McDonnell said after the president announced the designation. "They sought to see Fort Monroe, with its critical role in the history of America, take its rightful place for all time as a monument to our nation's history."

He was right. When the Army installation was targeted for closure in 2005, many in our region and around the nation rallied for preservation of the 565-acre fort on the Chesapeake Bay.

This grassroots movement recognized Fort Monroe's immense potential as a tourist attraction, education center and recreation area. They recognized what would be lost if its rich history - particularly the powerful story of three slaves whose flight to freedom helped set the stage for the Emancipation Proclamation - were converted to waterfront condos.

McDonnell now has an opportunity to advance the plans envisioned by those citizens - or to cement, quite literally, Fort Monroe's future in the wrong way.

A state panel, the Fort Monroe Authority, adopted a master plan for the state's roughly 240-acre share of the property last week. The plan is now headed to the governor for final approval - or revision.

A major part of the plan, calling for renovation and reuse of historic buildings at the fort, draws no objection. Nor is there much concern about new residential development compatible with those buildings.

But there is substantial opposition to plans for 250 residences and a 160,000-square-foot "hospitality" development in an area known as the Wherry Quarter.

Citizens, here and around the nation, have repeatedly spoken up for leaving Wherry - which lies between two sections of the national monument - as open space until the federal government is ready to secure the land. The hope is that Wherry will be incorporated into the national monument and, eventually, a national park.

Proponents of the master plan believe it's the best option for accelerating the preservation of the historic buildings and generating revenue for the state to maintain its share of the land.

But the plan, as presented, is a have-your-cake-and-eat-it-too model.

You can't preserve the Wherry Quarter if you clear the way for construction of high-density development on it. You can't fulfill the vision set out by "the great citizens of Hampton Roads" if you're relying on - as this plan does - a mere 100-yard strip of green space to serve as the link between the two portions of the national monument.

Gov. McDonnell now has a chance to reset expectations, to return the planning process to its original goal. He should express support for portions of the plan that facilitate renovation - and flatly reject massive new construction on the Wherry Quarter.

Fort Monroe - like Jamestown, Colonial Williamsburg and Yorktown before it - is a national treasure in the making.

This plan will unmake it. The governor has an opportunity, right now, to prevent that from happening.

<http://www.dailypress.com/news/hampton/dp-tsq-hpt-notebook-1031-20131031,0,5873979.story>

On Fort Monroe: Sasaki vs. Dover, Kohl

1:15 p.m. EDT, October 31, 2013

It was still five years before the military brass would need to ship out of [Fort Monroe](#) when Dover, Kohl and Partners was hired to map out a future for the historic Army post.

Those 2006 discussions lead to some early conclusions: historic buildings will be reused and the northern portion of the property can become prime park land. What should happen between that commercial and residential area and the park has been debated ever since.

In 2006, Dover, Kohl was paid more than \$700,000 to create a reuse plan for Fort Monroe. After holding a weeklong series of meetings, the firm created three concepts that focused new construction to the north and east of the stone fort.

The future of the so-called Wherry Quarter has been debated since then. And a plan now awaiting Gov. [Bob McDonnell](#)'s review doesn't do much to quell that discussion.

The Fort Monroe Authority board of trustees agreed on Oct. 24 to accept a master plan created by Sasaki Associates that also leaves the option open for new construction in the Wherry Quarter. But are the Sasaki and Dover, Kohl plans essentially the same?

Not according to Kathleen Kilpatrick, director of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

"It has troubled me greatly to hear or read the current plan termed by some as essentially a 'Dover Kohl, Part 2,'" she wrote in a letter to Fort Monroe Authority Executive Director [Glenn Oder](#). "This agency is on record as strongly criticizing that earlier effort as an inappropriate overlay of 'new urbanism.'"

She continued that that Dover, Kohl's plan cut into the existing historic character on the property.

The Sasaki plan instructs the Fort Monroe Authority to continue reusing the existing buildings in the Wherry Quarter until the structures can no longer generate revenue. It might be 15 to 20 years before those buildings become old enough that it no longer makes sense to keep them standing.

Once those buildings are leveled, then the authority should decide if new construction is appropriate.

King Street work

In a couple weeks, a contractor will begin installing a center lane along North King Street, near [Langley Air Force Base](#), and begin making underground sewer improvements. Motorists should expect some delays. The sewer work is expected to take about four months to complete.

Participate online

The city of Hampton is hosting an online forum for residents to provide input on potential projects. For more information and to participate, visit cityofhamptonva.mindmixer.com.

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<http://www.dailypress.com/news/hampton/hampton-matters-blog/dp-french-design-influences-on-fort-monroe-20131030,0,7652922.post>

French design influences on Fort Monroe

9:47 a.m. EDT, October 30, 2013

Col. Paul Olsen, of the **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** will host a discussion on Nov. 4 about the French influences of coastal fortifications in the 1800s.

Fort Monroe was a key union stronghold and played a vital part in the campaigns against the Confederates during the Civil War. The stone fort was built after the **War of 1812** to defend the entrance to the **Hampton Roads** harbor. It was the master work of Simon Bernard, the renowned French engineer who had served with Napoleon Bonaparte.

The discussion will be held at 7 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 4 at the Hampton History Museum. It is a part of the Port Hampton Lecture Series.

The Hampton History Museum is located at 120 Old Hampton Lane. There is free parking in the garage across from the museum. For more information, call 757/727-1610, visit www.hamptonhistorymuseum.org, or like the Hampton History Museum on Facebook.

<http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/fort-monroe-plan-could-add-thousands-of-new-residents-to-post/#>

Fort Monroe Plan Could Add Thousands of New Residents to Post

October 27, 2013

The LRA responsible for revamping the former Fort Monroe on Thursday approved a new redevelopment plan for the historic post located on the Virginia shore of the Chesapeake Bay, sending it to Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell (R) for final approval. The board of the Fort Monroe Authority expressed confidence that the plan will protect the historic qualities of the property while weaning the reuse effort off of taxpayer dollars, reported the Daily Press. LRA officials anticipate the sale of existing homes, vacant land and the reworking of agreements with the National Park Service and city will allow the authority to become financially self-sufficient. The authority approved the plan despite complaints from members of Citizens for Fort Monroe National Park who worried that construction of new homes near the stone fort might devalue the national monument. Under the plan, 1,120 residential units will be built or sold, bringing an additional 2,500 to 3,000 residents to Fort Monroe. The blueprint also calls for a new science, technology, engineering and math school on the post, according to the story.

<http://www.dailypress.com/news/hampton/dp-tsq-hpt-notebook-1107-20131107,0,626506.story>

Fort Monroe audit is clean

1:30 p.m. EST, November 7, 2013

With nearly a \$7.9 million budget in its 2013 fiscal year, the **Fort Monroe** Authority has developed into a significant operation.

The way the authority tracks its revenues and expenses is up to snuff, according to an audit performed in October by Cherry Bekaert LLP.

Here are some of the budget highlights, according to the audit:

- The authority received \$8.4 million in revenue from leases, state and federal sources during the 2013 fiscal year.
- Expenses topped out at \$7.8 million with a bulk of that money being spent for "governmental activities" and planning.
- The authority does not have any long-term debt. It owns the buildings and their contents free and clear. It may need to invest in its infrastructure in the near future. But for now, the authority is not paying off any long-term bonds.

Expect the authority's sources of revenue to change in the upcoming years as the General Assembly cuts back its funding, and the authority seeks other ways to gain revenue, such as land sales, homeowner association fees and potentially parking fees.

<http://insidebiz.com/news/steam-academy-signs-letter-intent-fort-monroe>

STEAM Academy signs letter of intent at Fort Monroe

Posted: November 4, 2013

By Lydia Wheeler

lydia.wheeler@insidebiz.com

The Virginia Science Technology Engineering Applied Mathematics Academy has signed a letter of intent to lease as much as 300,000 square feet at Fort Monroe.

The former Army post's board of trustees unanimously approved a motion at its meeting on Oct. 24 allowing the authority's executive director Glenn Oder to sign off on the agreement, according to an authority issued news release sent Friday afternoon.

A letter of intent provides a basis for the lease agreement, mapping out a framework and statement of material terms, the release said. The authority hopes to sign the lease by the end of the year.

The statewide boarding school for high school students, which was founded in 2010, could bring 500 to 1,000 students to Fort Monroe, Oder said. The school, expected to open in summer 2015, will occupy at least 19 buildings in the inner fortress area of the Fort Monroe campus.

<http://www.suffolknewsherald.com/2013/11/05/academys-fort-monroe-plans-progress/>

Academy's Fort Monroe plans progress

Published 11:49pm Tuesday, November 5, 2013

The executive director of the Fort Monroe Authority has signed a letter of intent with the Virginia STEAM Academy, laying the groundwork for locating the state's first science and technology-related public boarding school at the historic former military site in Hampton.

Glenn Oder signed the agreement after it received unanimous support from the authority's Board of Trustees on Oct. 24, a news release says.

The letter of intent "provides a framework and statement of material terms" that would be used as a basis of the lease agreement.

Negotiations between the academy and the authority will continue, with the goal to sign a lease by the end of the year, the release states.

Two Suffolk women, M. Caroline Martin, Suffolk's 2012 First Citizen, and Judy Stewart, an education consultant, are spearheading the academy project, which they founded in 2010.

Their goal is to establish an institution specializing in science, technology, engineering and applied mathematics.

The academy concept includes a public boarding school for high school students from across the commonwealth, a summer academy for middle school students, online courses and professional development.

"It is expected to attract some of the most able and motivated students from across the commonwealth regardless of ZIP code," the release states.

"Fort Monroe is an ideal location," Martin stated in the release. "The fort's history and proximity to STEAM companies and institutions will help us fulfill our mission to nurture future generations of creative, ethical, and imaginative STEAM leaders who understand and integrate the humanities."

Stewart added, "Situating the STEAM Academy at the fort will give us routine access to some of the commonwealth's most significant STEAM assets. We will impact the commonwealth's STEAM teaching and learning and economic future. We are excited to be moving forward with our discussions."

The STEAM acronym stands for science, technology, engineering and applied mathematics.

The academy expects to open by the summer of 2015 in the "inner fortress" area of the historic fort initially, in buildings 5, 10 and 139, the release says. It will pay for maintenance, repairs and utilities in the buildings it occupies.

Eventually, the academy would occupy at least 19 buildings, the release says, "meaning it would have a prominent presence in the community."

"We look forward to our continued discussions with officials from the STEAM Academy, with the intent of reaching a deal soon," Oder stated in the release.

"Having the Academy located at Fort Monroe will help bring additional attention to this community as a place to live, work, play, and learn. We believe this will be a mutually beneficial partnership, one that could help shape the fort for years to come."

<http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/transfer-of-ft-monroe-land-to-park-service-not-expected-for-several-years/#>

Transfer of Ft. Monroe Land to Park Service Not Expected for Several Years
November 14, 2013

The commonwealth of Virginia does not plan to transfer any property at Fort Monroe until the Army completes the required cleanup and, as a result, the National Park Service won't gain ownership of the 325 acres designated a national monument until 2016 at the earliest. The Army transferred 313 acres to the state in June, but it still is removing contaminated sediment from the moat surrounding the historic stone fort. The state is holding onto the fort until the Army finishes that effort, reported the Daily Press. The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality is overseeing the cleanup. "Looking from the outside in, it could be a frustrating process," the department's Eric Salopek told the paper. "But we have to cover each of these bases to make sure it's done correctly." The Army will transfer a separate tract, the North Beach area, directly to the Park Service. The Fort Monroe Authority and the Park Service are working closely to manage the site, located on the Virginia shore of the Chesapeake Bay, and plan to present it to the public as a seamless entity. "We believe that the Fort Monroe experience begins when you cross the bridge and enter the property," said the authority's executive director, Glenn Oder. "We want people to believe the entire property is part of the monument." -

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/body-found-in-water-near-fort-monroe/2013/11/14/05c9698e-4d39-11e3-bf60-c1ca136ae14a_story.html

Body found in water near Fort Monroe

By Associated Press, Published: November 14

HAMPTON, Va. — Hampton police say a body has been found in water near Fort Monroe.

Police tell media outlets that a citizen reported the body on Thursday morning near a bridge.

Authorities are in the process of recovering the body.

No other details were immediately available.

<http://www.dailypress.com/news/hampton/dp-nws-fort-monroe-nps-transfer-20131113,0,7349379.story>

<http://www.onenewspage.us/n/Front+Page/74w4f30vk/Park-Service-ownership-on-Fort-Monroe-still-years.htm>

Park Service ownership on Fort Monroe still years away Army continuing to clear property of contamination

By Robert Brauchle, rbrauchle@dailypress.com

November 13, 2013

HAMPTON — The National Park Service will likely not own a single square foot of land on Fort Monroe until 2016 at the earliest — four years after President Barack Obama declared 325 acres of the former Army base a national monument.

The state does not intend to transfer any land to the Park Service until the Army addresses each contaminated site on the property, according to a letter from Gov. Bob McDonnell to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. Those issues might not be fully resolved until 2016 or after, said Robert Reali, the Fort Monroe Base Realignment and Closure environmental coordinator.

"All of these sites have a certain degree of urgency to them," said Reali, during a Nov. 7 Fort Monroe Restoration Advisory Board meeting. "We've been working quite hard in the past six months to a year helping get that land transferred to the Fort Monroe Authority so they can get up and operating."

The Army transferred 313 acres to the state in June. That transfer leaves out specific areas where the Army is still addressing contamination, the largest of which is the moat encircling the stone fort.

Contractors hired by the Army to address the cleanup have found contaminants within sediment at the bottom of the moat. When the Army transferred the land in June, it "carved out" the moat, leaving it in military hands until those contaminants are addressed. The moat will eventually be transferred to the state, which in turn will hand it over to the Park Service.

Visitors can still view the moat, although it is technically off limits for swimming or kayaking.

Despite the lengthy cleanup, Fort Monroe Authority officials believe the state and Park Service can work together, even as the cleanup process crawls forward.

The Park Service and state still need to reach agreements determining which entity pays for utilities and property maintenance, said John Hutcheson, Fort Monroe Authority deputy executive director.

"That cooperative management agreement will dictate basically how to live together," he said.

The national monument is 325 acres and includes the historic fortifications and the North Beach area. An area of state-owned land known as Wherry Quarter separates those two monument areas. While the North Beach area will transfer directly from the Army to the Park Service, the state is overseeing the fortification and moat until the contamination in the moat sediment is removed.

"Looking for the outside in, it could be a frustrating process," said Eric Salopek, of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. "But we have to cover each of these bases to make sure it's done correctly."

The DEQ must sign off on any actions the Army plans to take to address contamination.

"We're not dealing with conventional contaminants," said Salopek, of the DEQ, of the entire property. "There's the potential for ordnance and it's just another level of contamination that we're not normally confronting."

As the Army continues addressing contamination, the state and Park Service are planning how the property will evolve as a civilian community.

NPS

So far, visitor services are not hampered by the ongoing cleanup, said Eola L. Dance, National Park Service chief of visitor services and resources management.

The Park Service has spent the past two years creating documents to guide how the monument will be operated and the themes presented to visitors about the property's past. Those "foundational documents" could be complete by the end of 2013, Dance told the advisory board.

It was unclear Tuesday, how long its lack of land ownership could impede progress developing the monument. Park Superintendent Kirsten Talken-Spaulling was unavailable for comment.

Since the monument's creation, the Park Service staff at Fort Monroe has worked with the Fort Monroe Authority to create programs, and funnel grant dollars to the property. The Park Service, though, has not yet put up any prominent signs announcing its presence on the property. Talken-Spaulling has said the Park Service and Virginia Department of Transportation are talking about installing signs along Interstate 64 directing motorists to Fort Monroe.

A visitors survey was scheduled to be performed in October but the federal government shutdown forced the Park Service to reschedule the survey to December, Dance said. The survey will ask visitors what they would like to see incorporated into the national monument.

Employees from the Park Service and Fort Monroe Authority have said the property should be developed as a "seamless" community, despite the complex ownership issues.

Partnership park

Hutcheson and Fort Monroe Authority Executive Director Glenn Oder said cooperating between the state and Park Service is paramount for success on the property. Oder points to the Park Service pamphlets at the state-run Casemate Museum and the tenants occupying buildings that will eventually be on Park Service land.

"We believe that the Fort Monroe experience begins when you cross the bridge and enter the property," Oder said. "We want people to believe the entire property is a part of the monument. It's a partnership park and that's how we've seen it since day one, and it's how we'll continue to see it."

The authority and Park Service will likely design and install interpretive signs that — no matter which entity's land they're on — will be look similar throughout the property.

"We want it to feel like there are no borders here," Hutcheson said. "There will always be at least two land owners out here, but we need to look at it like one big park."

Army cleanup continues

As the park service and state continue planning how the civilian community will take shape, an Army contractor continues to scrub contaminants from the property.

The Army acknowledges the need to clean contaminants at sites throughout the property, including:

- Area 200: An 8.5-acre area between the moat and New Garden Street where construction and landfill debris, hydrocarbons and heavy metals have been found.
- Moat: The Army is still working with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality to determine the extent and character of contamination in the moat sediment.
- Buildings 204 and 205: Hydrocarbons have been found in the groundwater.
- Building 82: Underground soil around a drainage pipe is contaminated with mercury.
- Dog Beach: Pesticides and construction debris are on the site. The Army is performing a dune assessment.

"You don't want to rush these types of investigations," Reali said. "This isn't an issue of contractors slowing the process to make more money."

Reali said the various reports, studies and comment periods between the Army and DEQ can eat up time, causing cleanup projects to take longer than initially expected. The cleanup of each of those sites runs along differing timelines.

"The Army's obligation is to transfer that land to the commonwealth," Reali said. "That is our focus right now."

Brauchle can be reached by phone at 757-247-2827.

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<http://www.dailypress.com/news/hampton/dp-nws-casemate-fort-monroe-reyes-20131111,0,3954141.story>

Uniform worn during decommissioning ceremony on display at Fort Monroe Casemate Museum

Col. Reyes uniform on display

By Robert Brauchle, rbrauchle@dailypress.com | 757-247-2827

November 11, 2013

HAMPTON — The uniform worn by Col. Anthony "Tony" Reyes during [Fort Monroe's](#) decommissioning ceremony will be displayed in the Casemate Museum beginning [Veterans Day](#).

The digital camouflage uniform is part of the first exhibit completely owned and built by the Fort Monroe Authority, the state entity overseeing the transition of the property from an Army post to a civilian community.

The Army decommissioned Fort Monroe on Sept. 15, 2011, ending the property's 188-year military mission. Since then, the state has begun operating and maintaining portions of the property. The military turned the museum over to the authority in mid-September. Many of the exhibits are owned by the Army but maintained by the authority and the state-hired museum staff.

"This is the first exhibit we've put in place since the Army turned over the Casemate to civilian control," museum director Robin Reed said. "It's fitting that the first exhibit under the authority's control is one that honors the Army and the work it did here."

Reyes' uniform, the Fort Monroe garrison flag and the American flag flown on the day of the decommissioning ceremony are all a part of the exhibit, which is located in the far east portion of the museum.

Reyes was garrison commander at Fort Monroe when the base was decommissioned. He is now the Hampton Public Works director. He moved to Fort Monroe in 2008 to oversee the base's closure and transition to the state.

"He's a strong spirit within the community," Reed said. "He's a force of power wherever he goes."

Museum staff will also create educational programs that give visitors a hands-on learning experience, said Veronica Gallardo, the museum's operations and cultural resources manager.

The authority owns the Casemate building, and the Fort Monroe Foundation provided the funds to pay for the exhibit, Fort Monroe Authority Executive Director [Glenn Oder](#) said.

"These are the types of partnerships between the foundation and the authority that we will see more and more of here at Fort Monroe," Oder said.

The foundation is the fundraising arm of Fort Monroe that also collects donations for American flags and organizes the summer concert series.

Museum staff will also upgrade the historic Casemate and the exhibits within it.

"We'll be tweaking some of the existing exhibits and retrofitting the museum in the future to bring it more up to date and to modernize it," Reed said.

Reed said attendance has been very good throughout 2013. In October, the number of people passing through the museum increased 19 percent from the previous October.

The authority and foundation will hold an invitation-only unveiling with Reyes on Sunday. The exhibit will open to the public at 10:30 a.m. Monday.

Museum staff members are working with the National Park Service to create a historic structures report that evaluates the physical state of the Casemate and researches its origin.

"The building is also considered an artifact," Reed said. "It's just as important as any hat or sword on display here."

Col. Anthony Reyes exhibit

Where: Casemate Museum, 20 Bernard Road, Fort Monroe

When: Beginning Veterans Day and regular museum hours 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday

Cost: Free

<http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/transfer-of-ft-monroe-land-to-park-service-not-expected-for-several-years/#>

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<http://www.dailypress.com/news/hampton/dp-nws-evg-fort-monroe-community-center-20131130,0,3904601.story>

**Fort Monroe community center opens Dec. 5
Hampton-run facility includes swimming pool, basketball courts**

By Robert Brauchle, rbrauchle@dailypress.com | 757-247-2827

9:54 p.m. EST, November 29, 2013

HAMPTON — A swimming pool with handicap access, indoor basketball courts and a large recreation room will be available to the community beginning Dec. 5 when the city opens the city's sixth community center at Fort Monroe.

The city is leasing the nearly 27,000-square-foot building at 100 Stilwell Road from the Fort Monroe Authority.

The city has used the building for limited community activities and a police training center for more than a year now. The community center will provide more opportunities for residents to swim, use the gym and access computers.

The zero-entry pool — a sloped floor allows swimmers to wade into the pool — is also unique in the city; the feature isn't provided at any of the city's other centers.

The city's other centers include:

- West Hampton Community Center: 1638 Briarfield Road
- Northampton Community Center: 1435-A Todds Lane
- Old Hampton Community Center: 201 Lincoln St.
- North Phoebus Community Center: 249 W. Chamberlin Ave.
- Hampton Senior Center: 3501 Kecoughtan Road

The Fort Monroe Community Center opens as city employees decide how to restructure the placement of similar recreation facilities.

In April, the City Council had considered closing the Old Hampton Community Center because of the extensive repairs needed to its pool and the building. Hampton Parks and Recreation Director Jim Wilson estimated necessary maintenance to the Old Hampton facility would cost just shy of \$3 million.

The City Council approved a budget in May that includes funding to keep the center open for another fiscal year and to open the center on Fort Monroe.

City Manager Mary Bunting had said the city would not open the Fort Monroe center until the money was available and demand for such a facility was apparent.

Even before the center opens full time, the city has provided classes that include karate, Zumba, ceramics and cake decoration.

Brauchle can be contacted by phone at 757-247-2827.

Fort Monroe Community Center

What: A facility that includes a pool, basketball courts, gaming room, computer room and full-service ceramic studio.

Where: 100 Stilwell Road

How much: Membership costs \$15 a year for children and teens and \$20 a year for adults and seniors. Day passes are also available.

Hours open: 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Friday and 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday. It will be closed on Sundays. Pool hours are 8 a.m.-1 p.m. and 5 p.m.-7:45 p.m. Monday-Friday and 12 p.m.-4 p.m. on Saturdays.

How to sign up: Call 722-6831 or 727-6833.

Source: City of Hampton

<http://hamptonroads.com/2013/11/fort-monroe-front-and-center>

Letters to Editor - bLetters
29 NOVEMBER 2013 | 5:00 AM

Fort Monroe, front and center

RE 'PROPERTY RIGHTS and climate change' (Anthony Flint Sunday Forum column, Nov. 24): I'd like to thank Flint for sharing his thoughts on the potential costs of climate change.

In Virginia, we have an issue with a stark storm-surge, sea-rise dimension: the post-Army fate of the low-lying 570-acre sand spit called Fort Monroe. It's on the Chesapeake Bay, with a 400-year history highlighted by Civil War events.

The controversy centers on whether to unify the Fort Monroe National Monument or to build condos on the space between the two parts of the monument. A quick glance at an aerial view of the fort shows both the historic landscape and the geography. Like most stakeholders, including The Pilot and the National Parks Conservation Association, I believe Fort Monroe's sense of place is in great peril.

The planned, threatening overdevelopment is plainly a textbook case of coastal overdevelopment folly. Wetlands Watch charges that, despite 'significant new residential development investments' planned for this 'increasingly fragile and potentially dangerous landscape,' the plan 'does not consider the long-term costs/benefits.'

Steven T. Corneliussen
Poquoson