

Stafford Courthouse

Educational Information

Board of Supervisors

July 6, 2016

History of Space Needs

- 2004 – Space needs planning
 - Then Current space 33,000 v. needs 74,000
- 2005 – Land purchased for J&DR Building
- 2006 – J&DR canceled – replaced with courthouse complex – projected opening 2010 with new Circuit/Gen District 2020
- 2009 Courts Complex Planning Committee
- 2016 – Today Current 45,676 v. needs 92,862

What is missing from the timeline?

- 2000- letter from Federal prosecutor “Stafford Courthouse is a zoo” with the number of people in the hallways & crowded clerks offices
- Letters from each presiding judge since 2000 requesting funding for capital improvements for space
- Planning for the future!

What happened?

- In 2007 – funding approved for the complex
- By 2009 – project was removed from CIP and basement renovations were made as a temporary measure per correspondence
- From 2009 to present – no action taken to prepare for today
- Stop gap and temporary Band-Aids have lead to this crisis point

What happened?

- Sheriff's Department initiated new programs, secured technology to fight crime and grew
- Commonwealth Attorney's Office outgrew its space due to hiring of more CAs.
- New CA's Building completed
- New Public Safety Building designed to meet future needs built
- Case loads increased for the courts and as the county grew so did the work of the Clerk's office
- Space previously freed up now insufficient for current and future needs

Courthouse Issues

In 2005

Need of additional Circuit Gen'l District and J&DR Court Rooms

Clerk's office space inadequate

No space for mediation

Inadequate space for jurors

Inadequate space for lock-up

Inadequate security for Clerks handling money

Inadequate space for victim/witness

No secure parking for litigants, witnesses, visitors, jurors, attorneys or county employees

No space for employees to eat

No vending

Lack of handicap accessibility

Security – Security - Security

Today

Need one Circuit Court today & second in 5 years with 2nd JD&R

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Courthouse Planning and Design

- Needs Assessment
 - Need a proper analysis of court house design **and** functionality to determine the next plan
- Renovation? Addition?
 - Planned additions generally require renovation to the existing facility in order to have the new and old work together
 - Essential is whether the court can meet guidelines and standards after the addition – or will only the addition meet the standards

Standards

- Courthouse Facility Guidelines
 - ADA Issues
- Controlled Circulation for all users
- Public and Private Circulation
- Secondary Circulation for security

What does go on at the courthouse?

- Trials – by judge and by jury which includes management of all dockets and juries
- Circuit Clerk's Office ALSO does:
 - Management of Funds
 - Fees, taxes (real estate, personal, death, local taxes, judgments, restitution payments)
 - Land Records
 - Recordings, payments, abstracts, liens, boundary lines, title records for county
 - Marriage – Adoption- Name Changes – CW Permits
 - Licenses – business related – entity filings
 - Fiduciaries - guardians, estates, conservators
 - Bonds – including oaths of office
 - Election issues

Size of Circuit Clerk's Office

- Requires spacing sufficient to permit public and non-public duties to be carried out separately
- Needs private office space for functions such as financial, probate, and civil and criminal clerks
- Requires ADA compliance for all public as well as staff

Size of Courtrooms - Circuit

- Circuit handles both jury and nonjury cases involving all types of matters: divorce, criminal and civil and appeals from General District and J&DR
- Seating for at a minimum 100
- Jury Deliberation Room attached to the courtroom with private bathroom and coffee/water station
- Holding Cells sufficient to hold 25-30
- Technology to enable proper presentation of evidence and video conferencing
- ADA accessible witness stand/jury box/counsel
- Jury Assembly Room

Size of Courtrooms - General District

- High Volume Case Loads
- Requires seating for 150+
- Needs holding cells with space for 10+
- Need technology to permit video conferencing and evidence review
- Requires ADA accessible witness stand, attorney tables and judicial bench

Size of Courtrooms – J&DR

- Due to nature of cases and lack of public viewing are generally smaller – capacity for 25-30 seating at most
- Requires designated and separated seating to permit separation of parties while waiting
- Holding Cells need to be designed to keep juveniles separated from adults and male/females separated

A Few Numbers to Ponder

| | | | 2016 |
|-----------------|--|--|---------------------------|
| | | | Circuit – 100 cases ahead |
| | | | 2015 |
| | | | Circuit – 8763 |
| | | | G Dist – 47,068 |
| | | | J&DR – 21,321 |
| | | | 2014 |
| | | | Circuit – 8150 |
| | | | G Dist – 46,980 |
| | | | J&DR – 21,788 |
| 2013 | | | |
| Circuit -9,424* | | | |
| G Dist – 47,033 | | | |
| J&DR – 19,715 | | | |

*Change made in gathering of case load statistics

A Few Pictures to Consider

Stafford



Hanover Opening 2017

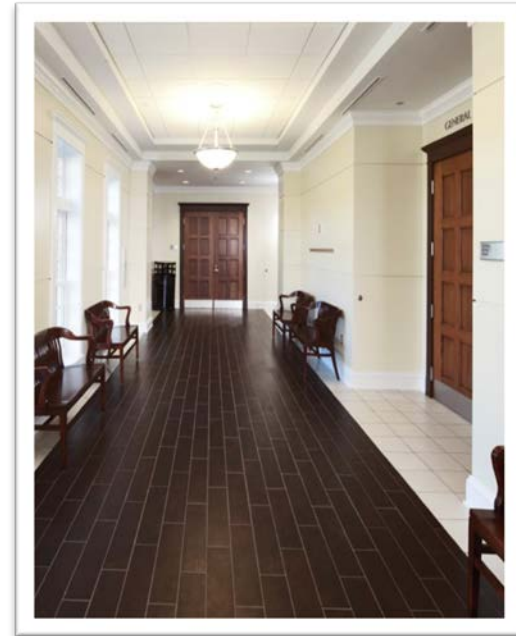


City of Fredericksburg



Spotsylvania Circuit Court

Stafford Hallways – Isle of Wright



**Thank you for your time and
consideration**

Circuit, General District and
Juvenile and Domestic Relations
Judges, Clerks and Staff
and

On behalf of the citizens of Stafford
County

Richmond Times Dispatch 2013

The Hanover County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday night unanimously approved \$44 million in funding for a new courthouse to replace two space-constricted buildings.

A 2006 study emphasized the limited space in the existing courts buildings. The county had planned to start construction in 2010, but the project was deferred due to financial constraints.

Construction is expected to be completed in 2017.

Supervisor Angela Kelly-Wiecek said public safety is a primary obligation of local government, adding that current court security is subpar.

Board of Supervisors Vice Chairman Sean M. Davis added: "There are concerns. Without going into details, I think there are substantial safety concerns."

County officials say favorable interest rates and construction costs are among the reasons to build a new courthouse now.

Space constraints have become worse in recent years as court caseloads have grown while energy costs and repairs have become more expensive.

County officials have said the building could be constructed without a tax increase.

The county could use money set aside for infrastructure projects and borrow, though officials maintain that the fiscal 2011 high of \$172.5 million of debt would not be exceeded. As of last fiscal year, the county had \$152.1 million in outstanding debt.

The county's General District Court and Circuit Court buildings were built in 1976 and are 37,000 square feet each, Budesky said.

A 108,400-square-foot building would replace both of the existing buildings, meaning an increase in space of about 34,000 square feet.