



Artistic endeavors of integrity and risk

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August 9, 2024

Clear Space Theatre Company has been committed for 20 years to serving the community in coastal Delaware by creating access to the best of professional theater and arts education. As our region grows, it has become evident that Clear Space must grow with the region to meet our communities' needs.

To that end, Clear Space is currently envisioning a new performing arts / cultural arts center for coastal Delaware, the first of its kind in Sussex County. While Clear Space would operate this new facility, the facility would be an accessible home for a range of arts institutions in our region looking for improved performance space. We hope the new facility can become a source of civic pride for our region and a destination for year-round residents, seasonal residents, and cultural tourism.

In order to effectively assess market needs, both from our patrons and from prospective partners in utilizing the facility, Clear Space is beginning a market study in partnership with nationally recognized firm Theatre Projects. A short list of previous performing arts centers developed in partnership with Theatre Projects includes those at both the University of Maryland and the University of Delaware, anchor performing arts centers in major US cities (Kimmel Cultural Campus, Philadelphia; Aronoff Center for the Arts, Cincinnati; Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, Kansas City; Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, Orlando), and the National Theater in London, Bahrain, and Cyprus. Many of their previous projects have involved public/private partnerships, which is a model that Clear Space may consider depending on the nature of the property identified and the interest of municipal partners in such a partnership.

The market study will be conducted at Clear Space's expense. Its purpose is twofold: 1) to assess the scope of the new facility to ensure the building is adequately prepared to meet the needs of our community for decades to come, and 2) to aid in site selection, given a clear understanding of those needs. While audiences attended Clear Space productions last year from 36 states and 61 of 62 zip codes across the state of Delaware, the majority of Clear Space's local audiences reside in Rehoboth Beach and Lewes DE. As Clear Space is committed to those core audiences in our region, all sites being considered at this time are in either the 19971 or the 19958 zip codes. This includes parcels inside the municipal limits of the towns of Rehoboth Beach and Lewes, as well as parcels in unincorporated Sussex County.

Interested members of the community are welcome to participate in the market study, as Theatre Projects plans for in-depth interviews with dozens of community members as part of their research, as well as further online surveys. Those interested in participating in the market study are encouraged to email me at joe@clearspacetheatre.org for



inclusion. Members of the community with recommendations for parcels to consider are welcome to share that information as part of the market study.

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The market study should be completed in approximately 3 months. Based on results of that study, Clear Space's board and leadership intend to complete their site selection process by the end of this calendar year. Theatre Projects and/or Clear Space leadership may be in touch with commissioners in Rehoboth Beach, Lewes, and Sussex County during this process for informational purposes.

The results of the market study will be shared publicly at its conclusion.

Yours,

Joe Gfaller
Managing Director
Clear Space Theatre Company