

Events D.C. names architect, program manager for St. E's arena

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The District has hired a Detroit-based sports and entertainment architectural specialist to design the 5,000-seat arena planned for the St. Elizabeths East campus.

Events D.C., the quasi-public entity managing the \$55 million project, announced Tuesday that **Rossetti Associates Inc.** and D.C.-based Marshall Moya Design will partner to design the future home of the **Washington Mystics**, the training center of the **Washington**

Wizards, and an entertainment venue

managed by D.C. The key hire was revealed during a community meeting on the St. E's campus.

"What we do want is something unique and we heard from the community tonight that we're competing with others to be a destination, and we're working toward that," said Greg O'Dell, Events D.C.'s CEO.

The arena rendering the Washington Business Journal has been using since September will have "no bearing whatsoever on the design," O'Dell said. It was an early sketch "that had no specific ties to this site."



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This early rendering of the St. E's arena will be thrown out as the new architect gets to work.

Rosetti's many projects include Detroit's Ford Field, the Baku Olympic Stadium in Azerbaijan, and a proposed entertainment district (plus new home for the National Hockey League's Flames) in downtown Calgary. Rosetti also was retained to design the Los Angeles Lakers' corporate headquarters and training facility, scheduled to open in 2017.

Marshall Moya, a District-based certified business enterprise, has a long resume as well, from the **D.C. United** stadium (as associate architect) and The Howard Theatre to the Chuck Brown Memorial and the University of the District of Columbia's new student center.

Events D.C. also has named **Brailsford & Dunlavey** as the program manager for the construction project. It will be the "eyes and ears to oversee the project for us," O'Dell said.

Brailsford & Dunlavey is no stranger to major D.C. government projects. It was the program manager for the Nationals Park, performed a cost-benefit study for the proposed D.C. United stadium at Buzzard Point and is currently helping Events D.C. master plan the RFK Stadium site's future.

The arena's \$55 million price tag will largely be funded with taxpayer dollars. The District will cover \$23 million, Events D.C. — an entity partially funded with hotel tax revenue — \$27 million and Monumental Sports & Entertainment, owner of the Wizards and Mystics, \$5 million (through an upfront payment on its 19-year lease). Events D.C. will cover any cost overruns.

Scheduled to open by September 2018, the arena is expected to generate 300 permanent and 600 construction jobs, attract up to 350,000 visitors per year, and generate \$4.5 million in new tax revenue annually. In addition to the Wizards and Mystics, the facility may also serve as home to a Monumental-owned NBA D-League team. And Events D.C. expects to program numerous concerts and other events there.

"This deal is probably better structured than most," O'Dell said. "We are investing for our own operations. We are going to be doing our own programming."