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New GBC Chair: Inner Harbor Has "Lost Some Of Its Sparkle"

Tuesday, May 05, 2009
Robert Lang

The attorney who tonight becomes the new chairman of the Greater Baltimore Committee says Baltimore's Inner Harbor needs a "new vision."

"I think that the consensus among folks that...I've talked with about the harbor are starting to feel like it's lost some of its sparkle," Charles Monk II, told WBAL News.

Monk, who is the managing partner for the Baltimore offices of the law firm Saul Ewing, LLP, adds that the bankruptcy of General Growth Properties presents an opportunity for the city.

GGP owns Harborplace and The Gallery.

"It was more than 40 years ago that we developed the Inner Harbor," Monk said.

"It's time for us to look at what's going on the in the Inner Harbor and come up for a new vision for the Inner Harbor."

Monk says the "new vision" for the Inner Harbor should include developing Rash Field, and making changes to the Inner Harbor promenade.

He did say such a project would face challenges in getting financed because of the economy.

Monk will be formally elected to his post at the GBC's annual meeting which takes place tonight at the Hyatt Regency Baltimore.

Monk succeeds Atwood "Woody" Collins as chairman. The president and COO of M&T Bank's Mid-Atlantic Division had chaired the GBC since 2007. He will continue to serve as a GBC officer in the next two years.

NBC's David Gregory, moderator of the "Meet the Press," will be guest speaker at the dinner.

In the next two years Monk also expects the GBC to push for more cooperation between the state and various local governments, to work on a number of projects in the Baltimore area.

He says that includes paying for road, water and sewer improvements in Baltimore.

He says that last week's water main break on Lombard Street, which closed part of downtown to traffic, proves the need for more regional investment.

He also says the GBC is likely to continue its campaign to increase the state's gasoline tax, noting that many road projects are underfunded.

Charles Monk, incoming chairman of the Greater Baltimore Committee, talks about his goals for the next two years.

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