

## Development Activities Meeting Report

*This report created by the Neighborhood Planner and included with staff reports to City Boards and/or Commissions.*

Logistics	Stakeholders
<b>Project Name/Address: Phipps Garden Center Renovations</b>	<b>Groups Represented (e.g., specific organizations, residents, employees, etc. where this is evident):</b> Point Breeze Organization, Friends of Mellon Park, Phipps Garden Center
<b>Parcel Number(s): 85-D-50</b>	
<b>ZDR Application Number: N/A</b>	
<b>Meeting Location: 1059 Shady Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15232</b>	
<b>Date: 10/19/2023</b>	
<b>Meeting Start Time: 6 pm</b>	
<b>Applicant: Rothschild Doyno Collaborative</b>	<b>Approx. Number of Attendees: 46</b>
<b>Boards and/or Commissions Request(s): Historic Review Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Arts Commission</b>	

### How did the meeting inform the community about the development project?

*Ex: Community engagement to-date, location and history of the site, demolition needs, building footprint and overall square footage, uses and activities (particularly on the ground floor), transportation needs and parking proposed, building materials, design, and other aesthetic elements of the project, community uses, amenities and programs.*

<p>Team is made up of various landscape architects including a biophilic expert.</p> <p>Design considered the Mellon Park master plan’s goals and future improvements. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accessibility all around (creating an all-around accessible path around the building and the create a more visible and open entrance to the garden center, sidewalk and ramp creation)</li> <li>- Making connections to other park activities</li> <li>- Entry improvements and accessibility</li> <li>- Support the arboretum, botanical gardens, and create more green space</li> <li>- Improved park conditions and connections between the building and the site</li> <li>- Honor history and support the community by rejuvenating the original Scaife Garage</li> <li>- Place the garden at the center with educational spaces surrounding it</li> <li>- Create patio space with shade and shelter overlooking the park</li> </ul> <p>Proposed entryway improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transform entry area, improve walkway to be an accessible pathway, and create an accessible walkway to the patio</li> <li>- Create a more accessible and visible entry along the Arts Campus Drive and garden pathways.</li> <li>- Renovate and repurpose the Scaife Garage</li> <li>- Restore the historic wall area at the Garden Center</li> <li>- Shift offices and loading areas to create a more open pedestrian friendly landscape area</li> <li>- Renovate landscaping to preserve the Oak tree</li> <li>- Restore historic wall area at the garden center</li> <li>- Remove a few parking spaces</li> <li>- Create an entry patio garden</li> <li>- Restoration of historical carriage house</li> </ul>
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- Using warmth canopy that captures rain water to water rain gardens

#### Proposed Scaife Garage Renovation:

- Want to replicate existing materials to create continuity and utilize historic details
- Create additional seating
- Will become the entrance to Garden Center

#### Interior

- Will move the garden to the center of the building for lighting and vegetation purposes
- Create interior courtyard garden
- Skylight overhead
- Create new interior space with visual connections to the park
- Improve the relationship to the park by relocating the Loading Dock and Building Services

#### Connection to Mellon Park

- Preserve ginkgo tree
- Site landscape improvements and patio
- Provide accessible route to the lawn

#### Will reinforce relationship between historic building elements and natural landscaping

- New buildings will reflect natural areas
- Will restore historic buildings to preserve those elements
- Will create new screen wall to provide contrast with historic building
- Solar panel area on roof will provide power for building
- Roof appearance will show solar panels in a subtle way
- Not adjusting grading and landscaping around ginkgo tree

#### Will incorporate historic details (terra cotta and metal) throughout building design

- Will combine nature and architecture
- Metal work columns
- Wood canopy
- Removing wooden steps to uncover original historic building of the carriage house
- Will remove wall additions to open up access to the carriage house (two story façade)
- When you're in the courtyard you'll be able to see the historical two-story façade
- Will showcase three distinct buildings (Scaife garage, Carriage house, Phipps Garden Center)

#### Existing green space

- Current green space is limited by existing pavement and vehicle access
- Will reduce hardscape to allow for more green space
- Will improve conditions for ginkgo and oak tree
- Will create a nice patio area
- Accessible pathway loop

#### Goal is to create a regenerative future

- Restore historic elements
- Improve classroom space
- Will be a sustainable, self-sufficient building
- Illustrate sustainability on a scale that could be replicated by residents
- International Living Future Institute
- LEED Building
- International Well Building Institute

## Input and Responses

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
<p>A. What is the square footage now and what will it be in the future?</p> <p>B. Will you be digging down?</p>	<p>A. 20,000 sq ft is the square footage now and it will remain that size after the project is completed.</p> <p>B. No. We will mainly be working on the main level.</p>
<p>A. Is the café idea that the community wanted not going to happen?</p> <p>B. Will the kitchen leave?</p> <p>C. What will happen to the library?</p>	<p>A. No, it is not.</p> <p>B. No.</p> <p>C. The books will be moved upstairs.</p>
<p>Will this be used for community events? Weddings?</p>	<p>We will be continuing to use it for our regular events. There will be no weddings.</p>
<p>Will there be public access even when you aren't taking classes. Access to the bathrooms?</p> <p>Why is that? Why can't it be accessible to the public?</p>	<p>This building is primarily for class/educational use. We are talking with the City about providing public restrooms in the park</p>
<p>Have you thought about staging areas?</p>	<p>We have the initial yard right now. The staging will occur at the public works yard. It has all of the necessary equipment.</p>
<p>A. How high are you going with the height of the building?</p> <p>B. Would you be able to see an aerial view of the park from the second floor?</p> <p>C. When will this start?</p> <p>D. How long will this take?</p>	<p>A. The height of the building will stay the same. We are working mainly with the main floor. Everything else will be lower than that.</p> <p>B. The second-floor area has a nice arch window and will continue to provide a nice view.</p> <p>C. When we get enough funding to begin the project.</p> <p>D. 14-16 months.</p>
<p>Who will maintain the plantings? Will maintenance be done by Phipps staff or volunteers?</p>	<p>All the plantings will be maintained by Phipps Garden. The maintenance will be done by a mix of volunteers and staff.</p>
<p>Why are you doing this if it's not getting any bigger?</p>	<p>The building is falling down. We also want to offer better educational spaces. We are also trying to create an improved interior.</p>
<p>This building isn't going to be accessible to the public? What about people that use the library?</p>	<p>It will be just like it is now. It is a building for educational purposes. We would let people come in to use the library</p>
<p>Thank you. This looks lovely. My concern is the walled garden. There is a current art installation that showcases little lights and that wall will be removed. Will this be considered?</p>	<p>We will make sure there is no light pollution. We are working with a light technician to figure out a way to prevent direct light bleed.</p>

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
Do you know what the maximum occupancy will be?	We are hoping that the occupancy will stay the same as the square footage will be the same. We will find that number for you.
What is the projected cost and where is the money coming from?	\$15 million. We will be fundraising for this amount.
Will you be able to get the City to redo the parking lot?	We are hoping these renovations will inspire other improvements. Hopefully we can leverage funding from the City when we get a new city council person come November. Friends of Mellon Park was able to fundraise to fix up the terrace garden. Hopefully, we can revitalize Mellon Park by continuing these renovations and this will draw more attention to the park. Things are looking up.
<p>A. Is there some way these restrooms can be made accessible to the public? At Frick, the bathrooms are open.</p> <p>B. Nothing has been done to fix the driveway. Do you know the story there?</p> <p>C. Are some of these buildings owned by someone else?</p>	<p>A. The building is open when we have classes but it won't be open outside of those hours. We think it's the City's responsibility to have restrooms at the public park.</p> <p>B. We don't know. This is a city park. Hopefully as we make these improvements it'll draw attention to the park and will inspire more improvements. You should call your local leaders and contact 311 to ask that funding be invested into Mellon Park. We need to put pressure on the city. This Park is used by many neighborhoods, not just Point Breeze.</p> <p>C. The garden center is owned by the city and leased to Phipps Conservatory.</p>
What will the screen wall look like and what is it?	These are not final designs; they are just showing what it could look like. We are thinking that the material is not brick so it isn't confused with the historic areas. It is up against a solid wall but there is no brick behind it. It's like the siding. We are in schematic designs right now. We want to make sure are going in the right direction.
A majority of the room raised their hands when the applicant asked if they were going in the right direction	
<p>A. Will the courtyard area be part of the classroom or where will that be moved?</p> <p>B. Will there be a large classroom with the same capacity as this?</p>	<p>A. There will be smaller classrooms surrounding the area (Two smaller)</p> <p>B. There will still be a space to gather in large groups.</p>
What is the plan for water catchment?	We are hoping to capture rain water in cisterns in our patio areas.

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
It is a lovely design.	
What are the next steps?	We have to go through zoning, the arts commission, and the historic review commission.
Will there be a covered pavilion?	There will be a covered walkway on both sides.

**Planner completing report:** Adriana Bowman, Neighborhood Planner