

Oakland-Wide Community Meeting
Minutes: January 26, 2021

Latin American Studies Association

Presenting: Milagros Pereyra-Rojas, Executive Director of LASA
Sandra Budd, Assistant Director and Curator, Latin American Cultural Center

The Latin American Studies Association (LASA) is an association of 14,000 students and scholars across the globe, and is housed in Pittsburgh since 1986. Membership has significantly grown over last 15 years, leading to need for new property. LASA plans to establish new international center for operations and create Latin American Cultural Center/Museum with temporary and permanent exhibits that share Latin American art, history, and culture. An auditorium is included in building plan for programming. This project will tentatively open Fall of 2021.

Q: How will this site accommodate parking?

A: We have an agreement with the garage under Soldiers and Sailors that allows us access to parking spaces for events. The parking outside the building is temporarily remaining, but the long-term plan is to have a valet parking option if needed. We plan to initially open the Cultural Center by appointment only, which should help with traffic control.

Q: Do you expect school visits?

A: Yes, when it is safe to do so. We expect one to two classes per day.

Q: Will galleries and exhibits be free to the public?

A: Because we are not opening until the fall, we have not determined admission costs. The pandemic has inhibited our fundraising abilities for this site. We would like to raise enough funding so there is no or a very small admission charge.

Several community members expressed comments in support of the new use for the building. Several community members also commenting in support of removing the small parking lot from front of building, which would increase pedestrian safety and enhance the appearance of the site.

Q: As a result of removing the front parking lot, will you have an ADA accessible drop off area?

A: There will be a drop off place for people with special needs. We have a ramp that goes into the lower floor of the building, and an elevator to the first floor. When we renovate the large gallery, we will modify the entrance so that it is accessible.

Q: Are you going to have any exterior signage?

A: Yes, we are looking at designs and imagine a straight-forward signage. Initially we will hang temporary signage where the parking lot is.

Comment: The Historic Review Commission will be involved in reviewing signage. Let us know when you have specific designs and we will share it out with the community.