

**Oakland-Wide Community Meeting**  
**July 28, 2020, 6pm**  
**Hosted by OPDC via Zoom and Facebook Live**

**Presentations: Indovina Associates Architects – Pittsburgh Technology Center parking garage. University of Pittsburgh – Cathedral of Learning railings and reopening plan.**

**Presenters: Indovina: Martin Busser. University of Pittsburgh: Paul Supowitz, Vice Chancellor for Community and Governmental Relations; Mary Beth McGrew, Associate Vice Chancellor of Planning and Design; Dr. Christopher O'Donnell, Associate Vice Chancellor of Special Projects in Health Sciences; and Dr. Kenyon Bonner, Vice Provost and Dean of Students**

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## **I. Introduction/OPDC updates**

Wanda Wilson, OPDC Executive Director, announced OPDC updates: [food distribution](#) at Frazier Field House and Friendship Community Church continues throughout the week and [Home Repair Assistance programs](#), including the OPDC Façade Grant Program and CLT are available to residents.

The upcoming [An Evening of Oakland Storytelling](#) annual fundraiser takes place virtually on Thursday, August 13 at 7 PM. The next Oakwatch meeting is on Wednesday, September 16 at 6PM. OPDC encourages residents to join action teams for the Oakland Plan through the [Department of City Planning website](#).

## **II. Pittsburgh Technology Center Parking Garage on Second Avenue**

Martin Busser introduced the [designs](#) for a third and final [parking garage](#) at the Pittsburgh Technology Center on Second Avenue. Following the results of a demand analysis, inclusive of future development prospects in the area, the URA proposes a 600 car capacity parking garage with additional bike parking.

The zoning for the site allows for a building with a maximum height of 90 feet (seven stories) and minimum of 45 feet (three stories) in this area. However, special zoning laws related to parking structures in this area are limited to 60 feet (four stories) with an allowance of 30 feet (three stories) added to provide office space above the parking structure. Indovina modified the plans within these allowances to allow for a 7-story, 3200 square foot parking garage.

The [digital renderings](#) of the garage included multiple perspectives with details on entrances, building materials, and context for the design choices. Plans include a separate entrance to the ground floor dedicated to the Hitachi company. Other Technology Center users will use another entrance for all upper levels of the parking garage. Plans include a solar panel array installed on the roof, with the panels facing south towards the Monongahela River.

**Q:** Are any variances needed for garage? What are the measurements? Do they need permission to make that height change? Specifically, what does zoning require?

**A:** The garage fits all of the criteria within the City of Pittsburgh zoning; the zoning district is SP-1. This zoning district covers the Technology Center and has a governing document, the Land Development Plan, which restricts the parking garage to 60 feet with an additional 30 feet allowed for office space or different use. A revised Land Development Plan will be presented to zoning for a garage that exceeds 60 feet, but will still be within the guidelines of the SP-1 zoning district. This is the only item on the garage that does not meet the guidelines verbatim.

**Q:** What is the total amount of added parking with all three garages? What is the net increase in parking spaces? New spaces less current surface spaces?

**A:** This garage replaces an 88-car surface lot and adds 512 spaces, bringing the total to about 2,100 parking spaces.

**Q:** Can we be sure that the outside material will not glare? And can we assure that air conditioning units are not on top of the building adding more noise?

**A:** The garage will fit into all existing systems at the Technology Center with only two small condensing units on the top parking deck of the building to provide air conditioning to the hoist ways of the elevators. They would not emit any additional noise. The largest mechanical component is the solar array on the roof of the building. Looking down, you would see a roof of solar panels pointed away from that district, so there would be no glare created.

**Q:** What is small condensing unit size?

**A:** Units are one-foot wide, three-feet long, and two-feet high with one small fan in them.

**Q:** How does the traffic impact study fit within SPC's Second Avenue Corridor study that was completed late last year? What are the TDM measures to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips to the site?

**A:** A traffic study and demand analysis are complete. The traffic study is currently being reviewed by DOMI, but there does not seem to be a need for any major improvements to incorporate the parking garage at the Technology Center. The traffic study showed little indication that the addition of the garage would have an impact on traffic due to differing trip times. Busser shared that in relation to TDM measures that is something being worked out in development and they are applying for a Park Smart Silver Certification for the garage, an equivalent to LEED. The TDM measures are a part of achieving sustainability for parking garages and receiving this certification. The Pittsburgh Technology Center is planning programs to promote less single vehicle traffic. (It was acknowledged OPDC requested more information about the traffic prior to the presentation.)

**Q:** Will you be before ZBA or planning commission for asking the extra 30 feet be parking instead of allowed different use? Is solar above 90 feet?

**A:** The solar area would total 85 feet, without the array the garage would be around 74 feet.

**Q:** Can you talk about how the parking garage will contribute to quality pedestrian environment along Second Avenue? Are you designing the parking garage so that it can be converted to non-vehicular use in the future?

**A:** There is difficulty, due to the ramping in parking garages, to make it possible for different use of the space in the future. However, the foundation and structure of the garage could support a different structure in the future. There is work being done with a landscape architect to create greenspace between the parking garage and Second Avenue. There have not been many pedestrians observed walking along the Second Avenue side of the potential parking garage location. There will be the addition of a walkway from the garage to the bus stop in that area.

**Q:** Do you see people coming off the parkway, both directions, onto lower Bates Street to access the garage?

**A:** (Busser acknowledged he was not the best reference on the topic of the traffic study.) So far there has been nothing from what has been gathered that indicates any further impacts to what is already in place.

**Q:** Can you explain again what the argument is going from what's allowed at 60 feet and why 90 feet is requested/required?

**A:** In order to reach the car count there needs to be additional height added to the building due to the size of the space. If the height does not increase, there would need to be another parking garage built to meet the parking needs of the Technology Center. They do not want to use land for another parking garage that could be used for something more pertinent to the Technology Center. The design, plan and size of the garage is what is proposed for the purpose of this being the final parking garage built at the Technology Center.

**Q:** Would there be any additional architectural features on the building that are not shown here?

**A:** No, we're trying to keep it simple and clean to fit into the clean nature of the Technology Center's architecture.

**Q:** What is the overall plan for future additional build out of square footage of commercial space?

**A:** (Busser expressed he cannot speak to additional building plans at the Technology Center.) The 600 space garage proposed will accommodate future build out of the Technology Center.

**Q:** Are people today parking off-site because there is not enough parking capacity at the Technology Center today?

**A:** I do not know the answer to that question; our traffic engineer for this project would know more.

**Q:** Who is going to own and operate this?

**A:** The URA often owns garages and employ an operator to manage it has been done in the past with garages in the Technology Center. I don't believe they put out an RFP yet for someone to manage this.

**Q:** What is the timing for your approval process?

**A:** The plan is to go to bid to contractors in December, with plans to have approval in hand by February and construction starting in March.

The feedback form for this project is on the [OPDC website](#). Indovina will share the traffic study with OPDC, and this will be posted to opdc.org.

## **II. ADA Railings on the University of Pittsburgh Campus at the Cathedral of Learning**

Mary Beth McGrew, Associate Vice Chancellor of Planning, Design, and Real Estate at the University of Pittsburgh summarized the background and description of the Cathedral of Learning. The stairs surrounding the building have old railing or no railings, impacting mobility in the area. McGrew shared [renderings](#) depicting the areas around the Cathedral of Learning with dashed lines representing the proposed new ADA railings/replacements.

Wrought iron railings, keeping with the Gothic Revival design of the building, will be set in existing stone, replacing steel rails.

## **IV. ADA Railings Q&A**

**Q:** Do you worry about vandalism to the railings, like skateboarders on low walls?

**A:** This is not a huge concern, as the railings are thin and there is security on campus. This would be unfortunate and modifications could be made if this became an issue.

**Q:** What are the locations?

**A:** Fifth Avenue side of the walk, the stairs leading to the Stephen Foster Memorial Building on the southern side of the Cathedral, and around the steps at Heinz Chapel.

**Q:** What is the process – when are you scheduled for HRC?

**A:** I'm not sure of the date yet for HRC but can share that in the future.

The renderings and feedback form are on the [project page](#). OPDC will add the HRC date to the page once it's announced.

## **V. University of Pittsburgh Reopening Plan**

Supowitz introduced the resiliency framework being used by the University of Pittsburgh as students return to campus. The framework established three operation postures, “high,” “elevated,” and “guarded” to support health and safety. This plan’s flexible nature will allow the University of Pittsburgh to respond to the changing condition of the COVID-19 pandemic. Flex @ Pitt, a hybrid approach to teaching, will enable in-person and remote learning. Pitt has also established a health care advisory group with medical professionals and experts that will monitor the health and safety of the campus. They created a COVID-19 Medical Response office

to use testing, modeling, and current science to influence how the university will move forward. Weekly updates about active COVID-19 cases within the University of Pittsburgh community posted every Friday. Supowitz introduced Dr. Kenyon Bonner and Christopher O'Donnell.

Dr. O'Donnell addressed the recent surge of COVID-19 cases in Allegheny County, mostly among young people who have been traveling and visiting bars. He hopes this will serve as a wakeup call for younger people returning to campus. He noted that UPMC hospital system has a lot of potential occupancy and is in a good state to handle future COVID-19 patients.

Dr. O'Donnell outlined how the University of Pittsburgh has been planning for students' return to campus from a medical and scientific standpoint. Pitt formed an Advisory Committee of virologists, epidemiologists, physicians and other professionals to create documents with guidelines for controlling COVID-19 on campus concerning housing, travel, etc.

They created an Implementation and Oversight Committee, with some members of the Advisory Committee working as part of this team for five to six weeks. There are two subcommittees, the Medical Subcommittee and the Behavior Subcommittee. They created the COVID Medical Response Office two to three ago and tasked by the Chancellor with the goal of virus control on campus.

Dr. O'Donnell, in his role, has investigated the top 50 academic medical centers in the country to review their fall plans. There is no consistency with measures being taken across the board. However, Carnegie Mellon University and University of Pittsburgh are the only universities of the 50 reviewed that are implementing quarantining and sheltering in place as part of their return plans.

The plan for returning to campus will be continually modified and use mitigation and containment strategies. Promoted mitigation strategies include masks (Pitt is providing two cloth masks to each student, faculty, and staff), social distancing with dorm reconfiguration, and handwashing.

Dr. O'Donnell explained students can expect sheltering in place and Pod Week upon their return to campus. This is an approach that is more flexible and allows some socializing. Before traveling to campus, students will do a 7-day shelter in place at home, practice safe travel, and enter Pod Week upon arriving on campus. The Behavior Subcommittee concluded that doing a 14-day quarantine after getting to campus is not probable or likely and configured this plan in response.

A partnership with UPMC maintains the containment strategy. The University of Pittsburgh will administer random tests to students living on and off campus. Students will return to campus in phased stages that are four days apart. Through the UPMC partnership, there will be a rapid turnaround of 24 hours for tests, prevalence will direct results concerning the operational posture.

Pitt will repeat tests several times throughout the semester, test symptomatic students, immediately place positive students in isolation, and complete contact tracing.

Kenyon Bonner resumed the conversation. The University of Pittsburgh is mandating that all faculty, staff, and students participate in COVID-19 Training, which will reiterate the policies, guidelines, and standards concerning COVID-19. Over the summer Pitt student leaders have created a Community Compact of expected behaviors for mitigation, containment, and creating a culture of responsibility that community members should abide by during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Student Code of Conduct has been revised with new policy that requires students to comply with public health guidelines at the Pitt, county, and state levels. Pitt will refer students found not in compliance to the Office of Student Code of Conduct to address behavior and receive discipline accordingly. Consequences will be dependent on the non-compliant behavior. This Code of Conduct expands to on and off campus students. The University of Pittsburgh will not and does not suggest calling law enforcement in response to non-compliance with the COVID-19 safety measures or public health concerns.

The Environmental Health and Safety Office created a [form](#) where reports from community members can be made to the University of Pittsburgh about non-compliant behavior. Student compliance to the expectations are also a determining factor of the operation level. Pitt will share all of this information concerning reopening on July 29 to students as a part of this campaign, along with a video message from Bonner and student leaders addressing the Community Compact that has been created. Bonner then concluded his portion of the presentation.

## **VI. University of Pittsburgh Reopening Q&A**

**Q:** What are the hotel locations?

**A:** Residence Inn on Bigelow Boulevard, Residence Inn on Forbes Avenue, and the Wyndham on Lytton Avenue. The Quality Inn on the Boulevard of the Allies is not a location, the University of Pittsburgh does own the ground lease for the property. This will be something discussed with the community in the future.

**Q:** Where will they move students (specifically in dorms) who test positive or have been exposed? Will students who live off campus and test positive be part of the location?

**A:** Students living on and off campus who test positive for COVID-19 will have the option to go to a University of Pittsburgh isolation location or go home. there will be multiple isolation locations, including a group of apartments and floors in hotels, and University buildings around campus.

**Q:** Where can we find the reporting form to report parties, gatherings, etc?

**A:** [https://pitt.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_eXNBxN8D6wGdg8d?Q\\_JFE=qdg](https://pitt.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eXNBxN8D6wGdg8d?Q_JFE=qdg)

**Q:** Any further thoughts on skepticism about the returning plans, or Pitt News article referencing the University of Pittsburgh as “delusional”?

**A:** The students on campus are adults, the university will treat them as such. Pitt will educate students, who are held responsible to community standards. There are consequences for those who do not comply.

**Q:** Is it possible for residents to know the locations where Pitt students are living off campus – not addresses, but areas?

**A:** The only place the university can be 100% sure students are living is on campus. It is difficult to track where students live off campus, though there are general areas the university is aware that students congregate. For safety, security and privacy, the University of Pittsburgh would not share the address of students to the public. The university encourages residents to encourage compliance in the neighborhood and report concerns.

**Q:** In some other parts of the city, group are incentivizing people who wear masks. Would the university consider implementing anything to reward good behavior?

**A:** Absolutely, that is a possibility being seriously discussed and on the table. Again, please let us know about any non-compliant behavior.

**Q:** When is the release of the finalized new code of conduct? Will the testing results from the random COVID-19 testing be available to the public?

**A:** Pitt is [publicly posting](#) the number of students testing positive for the public, but Dr. O'Donnell is unsure whether or not the surveillance testing results will be made public; it is reasonable that they would be made so. Students who arrive in the five different phases to campus the students in each phase will receive testing within a 48-hour period, testing 250 students per day on 10 days over and 18 day period accounting for 10% of students arriving. This will not overburden the UPMC system and this plan will not compromise regular testing at UPMC.

University of Pittsburgh links:

[www.coronavirus.pitt.edu/return-campus/resilience-framework-operational-postures](http://www.coronavirus.pitt.edu/return-campus/resilience-framework-operational-postures)

[www.coronavirus.pitt.edu/covid-19-campus/campus-cases](http://www.coronavirus.pitt.edu/covid-19-campus/campus-cases)

[https://pitt.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_eXNBxN8D6wGdg8d?Q\\_JFE=qdg](https://pitt.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eXNBxN8D6wGdg8d?Q_JFE=qdg)

[www.ehs.pitt.edu](http://www.ehs.pitt.edu)