

Development Activities Meeting

August 9th, 2021

107 - 111 Halket Street Townhomes Proposed Demolition

Innovation Tower Proposed Special Exception for Educational Use

Presenting:

Georgia Petropoulos, Oakland Business Improvement District

Todd Reidbord of Walnut Capital met with the OBID Executive Director and Board of Directors to present project information and corresponding renderings to use for outreach on the site demolition. OBID and Reidbord met with Oriente Sciulli, a property and business owner of the adjacent property located at 3404 Fifth Avenue to address concerns regarding the Halket Street barricades, along with the Halket street property demolition. The Board of Directors support the efforts of Pitt and Walnut Capital.

Wanda Wilson, Oakland Planning and Development Corporation

OPDC undertook a community engagement process with Walnut Capital regarding the Innovation Research Tower site, and there was subsequently a community benefits agreement made between OPDC and Walnut Capital. Testimony was given to the Zoning Board at a March 2019 hearing. There was no testimony made from OPDC for the demolition proposal.

Jonathan Kamin, Walnut Capital

Walnut Capital is proposing to demolish a row of three townhouses on Halket Street. There are currently no plans to redevelop the site. The site will be left as green space in the interim. The properties were purchased by Walnut Capital several years ago.

Walnut Capital is also asking for a special exception for their 3342 Fifth Avenue site. The site was originally approved in May 2019. The building permit was issued and construction has started. There are no physical changes to the plan. The request is a special exception for educational classroom use. There are no design changes from the previous approval. The exception will allow for academic classrooms in part of the building. The project site will still be mixed use.

Q: What is the timeframe for how long to leave Halket vacant?

A: There is no concrete timeframe.

Q: What are the ceiling heights for proposed classrooms?

A: It would be the same as previously approved.

Q: Will class cycles at the site impact traffic?

A: No. It may even lessen the impact.

Q: Will the building look like other Walnut Capital buildings and will evening classes impact congestion on the street?

A: The design is the same as originally approved. There should not be any impact regarding street congestion.

Q: What study has been done to show that no commuting students will attend classes here?

A: There were no studies and none are required for this site. They are currently unaware how much programming has been done for the site.

Q: Is there an agreement for the demolished townhouse site to be sold to Pitt?

A: No.

Q: Has there been any look into the proportion of potential classes being done in the evening?

A: Programming for the classroom spaces have not been done.

Comment: Regarding the proposed demolition, the loss of single family homes is harmful to the neighborhood.

Q: How has potential traffic issues not required further analysis?

A: With no physical changes being made to the site, no additional requirements are needed.

Q: Have there been discussions to sell the houses on Halket Street.?

A: No comment. That is outside the purview of the meeting.

Q: Dates for ZB and other appropriate bodies? What are the dates of the Zoning Board and other hearings for the proposed demolition and special exception?

A: There are no exact dates confirmed. Once they are received, they will be relayed to the RCO's.