

## Development Activities Meeting Report (Version: 12/20/2019)

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

Logistics	Stakeholders
<b>Project Name/Address:</b> 305 Wood St, YWCA Adaptive Reuse	<b>Groups Represented (e.g., specific organizations, residents, employees, etc. where this is evident):</b> Development teams, PDP staff, property owners, residents, etc.
<b>Parcel Number(s):</b> 1-H-139, 1-H-140	
<b>ZDR Application Number:</b> DCP-PRE-2021-00016	
<b>Meeting Location:</b> Virtual (Zoom)	
<b>Date:</b> 02/11/2021	
<b>Meeting Start Time:</b> 5:15 p.m.	
<b>Applicant:</b> City Club Apartments and Development Team	<b>Approx. Number of Attendees:</b> 55
<b>Boards and/or Commissions Request(s):</b> Zoning Board of Adjustments due to residential density limits, then Planning Commission for project development plan approval	

### 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.*

Presented the location, images of the existing YWCA, recent projects that have happened in the immediate vicinity. Presented their company, some of the projects they've done in Pittsburgh so far: South Side Works Apartments and Morrow Place in Bloomfield. Want to be part of a city, care about social responsibility, green buildings. Think about developments in terms of the neighborhood. Downtown is attracting new residents, young people who don't want to own cars, businesses who are not car dependent, vibrancy, and students who are in downtown for study. Also looking at trends for Baby Boomers who are moving downtown. Pandemic has impacted downtown's vibrancy, feel it's critical to support it coming back. Want to stop building parking garages, want to focus on building green, sharing the parking that's already available. The YWCA is leaving the building, don't want to see the building be torn down, but give it new life and keep Point Park University as a tenant with commercial uses and apartments above it. Want to have workout facilities in basement, swimming pool on top, indoor/outdoor theater, additional services for renters, rentals for months or long-term. Design intent is around people shopping, eating, and living in the same neighborhood, this is what the company is all about. Don't want to be thought of as a developer that just comes in and does what they want, but instead want to talk to everyone. Bill Sittig notes that this company has been focused on downtown, sees the existing building as an asset, when other developers have all proposed to demolish it. Arrangement with the Pittsburgh Parking Authority would allow them to build new without creating new parking. Shows renderings and says that this is the biggest impact possible from a massing standpoint, not going to get any bigger than this, but may be smaller. Want to pull massing away from Wood Street to reduce impacts on adjacent condo and hotel building. Everything about the building is permitted other than the residential density due to the Zoning Code's outdated 110 sf/unit lot area limit for residential which doesn't work for this kind of project nor does Transfer of Development Rights. The design of the building is by right, but the density limits are causing them to go to the Zoning Board of Adjustments. Showed the building's first design by Pietro Belluschi and SOM which included a larger podium and a tower on top of it. That original design wasn't realized, only a windowless version of the podium was created. Signage has been added over

time, bricks have decayed, roof garden has been allowed to decay and is dirty. Proposing adaptive reuse. Wanted to keep the health club, which means they have to keep the core. Then wanted to cut the building back on the corner of 3rd and Wood to open up for a restaurant with outdoor seating. Show footprints for basement levels that show basketball courts and pool. 30,000 sf health club facility. Additional open space on top of the podium on level 5. Very small footprint for the tower. Outdoor space on top of the tower. Pushing building back from Wood will create 84 ft between facades. High quality materials including stone, adding lighting to the façade, focus on green open spaces. Take ideas from Belluschi brise soleil on the design of the tower. Walk through multiple views of the tower from different sides of the building. Recognize there are challenges on construction management, PJ Dick and Trans have worked on other projects downtown, comfortable they can handle impacts. During operation, they have a drive behind the building that will be used for moving in and out.

**Input and Responses**

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
<p>You'll be asking the zoning board for a variance that is more than double the permitted units from 141 to over 300 given the footprint of the building. Why does this project need to be so aggressive in terms of height and units? This scale will bring significant density issues to the area for example: Density issues: congestion, parking, garbage, blocking out sunlight, blocking views, and it doesn't fit in the historic area. Please respond.</p>	<p>The density and the size of the building are distinct. If this was an office use, they wouldn't need to go to the ZBA at all, the height and massing are all allowed. The number of units is based on our research on demand and also a desire to bring more people downtown. Trash won't impact the neighborhood, the restaurant use is already there and not new. It's not an aggressive project in terms of massing and scale, the residential density limits are the issue and not realistic with what is needed in the City. All other past projects have gotten approvals for more density, but most have happened in existing office buildings. New buildings will all need relief from the density limits in the code, they are out of date. In terms of design, what makes America great is the contrast in terms of buildings from different eras, makes Pittsburgh's skyline great. Want new building to respect classical architectural form, but it's about the future. The exact architecture hasn't been decided, but we've taken some classical forms as a starting point to start narrowing in on some different decisions.</p>
<p>1. What will be done to minimize construction noise during nighttime hours? 2. What will be done to minimize traffic restrictions on Fourth and Wood? 3. During construction, will there be any restrictions on entrance and exit from the Third Ave parking garage? 4. I currently look out my window at The Carlyle and can enjoy the architectural uniqueness of the PPG buildings. The YWCA bldg will block that view. So, will I enjoy the architectural design of the YWCA bldg?</p>	<p>We will have to comply with City's limits on noise. If we were to tear down the building including the three stories underground and start with a new tower would have more impacts of construction than working with existing building. Construction workers can park in the garage next door, so this will reduce impacts to the neighborhood. Construction will take 17-22 months from start to finish, will have vibration monitoring, noise, hours of work, will be a union project, will comply with City requirements and sensitivity to the neighborhood. City also requires detailed construction management plan, and we'll communicate with neighbors about it and they'll have input. Garage will not be closed for anything we're doing, can't speak to what Parking Authority may need to do. Expect all streets to stay open, not all sidewalks. Hope to take the</p>

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
	experiences from recent downtown hotel project to build on and improve here.
1) After the apartments are completed in the building located at 316 Fourth Avenue, what kind of demand do you anticipate for this building?	If you look at the number of new apartments that have been created Downtown, it's been very small. Maybe 150 a year, with PMC doing most of the conversions of historic office buildings. Very few new builds. South Side and other parts of city are different and have seen more. If you look at what is needed in terms of population to maintain a vibrant neighborhood, grocery stores, etc. you need more people. If you look at young people moving into downtowns, they use mobility services, so parking isn't needed. Parking garages in downtown are empty at night and on weekends due to office uses, so it's perfect for sharing with residential. This concept has been around for 20 years but has increased with mobility service use and disinterest in owning cars. Looking at the demand for downtown rentals when they will be delivered in 3 years, not today, and am very optimistic. Don't know of any apartments that will be built new between now and then. Might be some small conversions.
What kind of materials are you planning to use for the exterior of this building? How will those materials mesh with the historic brick and stone buildings that surround it?	That goes to context. Historic buildings are built of different materials than the ones today. Use steel and glass now not terracotta. Might be stone and brick at the ground floor, but not above. Would not use EIFS, only quality materials. Design is responding to classical proportions but using new technology. Not replicating historic buildings, complementing them. Good paving will integrate with the neighborhood, tactile feel.
What are the benefits of building on top of a pre-existing 2-story building versus building from the ground up?	Tearing down the existing structure also include demolition of three levels below grade. Most sustainable path is to reuse what exists. When we looked at the existing building, it was designed to have a tower on it, which allows us to do that today. We want to bring Clean, Wellness, and Green rated systems to Pittsburgh. Energy, water, air will be to a higher level.
Will current garage renters lose spots?	No, it has capacity for this building without changing existing leases.
The PDP's recent state of downtown report said there are already vacancies downtown. What makes you believe this will not add to the high vacancy rate?	If you look historically at interest rates and the economy, we see that this period will come to an end. We have great companies, universities, tech, research, great city to live in, so think the demand three years from now will be there. Looking at what has been built, they were built in the 60s and 70s, and are outdated. Want to build for the future, kitchens, bathrooms, closets, quality of materials, square footages, all very different than what currently exists in downtown Pittsburgh. We think the people of the future want to live and work differently from how buildings were designed in the 60s, 70s, 80s, or 90s, or recent conversions.

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
Is there a representative from the YWCA here? If so, what will happen to the YWCA if this project does not occur?	Legal Council from YWCA: YWCA is looking to relocate to a smaller building, they're only using one floor currently. Want to sell to City Club and is currently under agreement. Want the project to go forward and that City Club receives the relief that it's seeking.
There are already at least four fitness centers within a few blocks of this building. What makes you think the neighborhood needs an additional fitness center?	We have 400 residents, and they will use all the facilities we are creating. Will benefit our residents. Looking at hotels downtown, if their customers want to swim or use a basketball court, that's not necessarily common, so they may want to use these facilities. We intend to be the high-end health club for the hotel guests, our residents, people who own condos in the neighborhood. Adds another element to downtown Pittsburgh.
What size are you planning the units to be?	Our strategy as a company would be for young people out of college or empty nester selling a home and renting a penthouse. Will have a range of units, but the mix is premature and are analyzing this now.
they look like micro units. if they're not micro then how do they know that a variance is necessary, especially with a "small" footprint	See above.
regarding any possible deal with the Parking Authority, the parking won't be bundled with the units, will it? preserving the natural affordability of such a project is incredibly important, as so much built downtown has unnecessarily built parking, shutting out the middle class.	I would agree with that comment. Cars are very expensive. First job out of college pays \$42,000/year, adding the cost of a parking space downtown affects their lifestyle and they've chosen not to own one. What you see in these kinds of buildings is that smaller units don't have cars or rent them, but as you move up in size and age of tenant, you get more cars. Might only have 50-100 cars for a 400-unit building. Knowing that the existing parking garage is empty at night and weekends, we think we can provide a revenue source and mutual benefit. This is a strategy (shared parking) that people are doing throughout the country. Also get to eliminate ugly parking decks and ramps on the first three floors of buildings. You won't see parking with this building, and we think that's a good thing. What we would do in terms of bundling is work with the Parking Authority to see if they want a master lease and then we lease to the tenants, or if they want to lease directly to tenants. Need to see what works for them.
Do you plan to incorporate any affordable housing (units affordable at 80% AMI or below) in the building? Are you planning to apply for the enhanced abatement program?	We would look at this like all of our developments and having a percentage of affordable units seems to be a clear mandate from most cities and would plan to incorporate that in collaboration with the City. In terms of tax credits, we would apply for what programs exist. We would engage the City about what programs are available and apply for those, but wouldn't apply for anything unique to this project.
what are they going to do to bring 400 new residents to the city	The larger trends before the virus were that cities and Central Business Districts specifically, were gaining

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
	<p>population, but you need to have developers and City governments collaborating to say this is a good thing. It's better for the City, it's what the young people want and what empty nesters want. Again, if you look at how many apartments are going to be built in next 3 years, it's not much and only conversion of existing buildings. Going to be 1- and 2-bed units not for people working from home. Apartments of the future will be designed for working from home, have dens and other rooms besides bedrooms. We think we're going to respond to what's going on currently and the future trends.</p>
<p>what is target market? timeline?</p>	<p>Plus or minus a year until we start construction then 17-22 months to complete. Could be 2.5-3 years before the development is 100% completed, close to 2.5 years from now until the first apartment is available. Current occupancy doesn't apply. There will be some trend back to normal, new normal.</p>
<p>The garage capacity is 575 spaces. Do you know the current occupancy level and what the expected occupancy level will be after both the building at 316 Fourth Avenue is occupied and the hotel is also occupied?</p>	<p>From Parking Authority, there are hundreds of spaces available post-hotel, so there's much more than we need. We're looking at shared parking, not full-time day-time leases.</p>
<p>Will there be any privacy taken into consideration from this tower into the Carlyle on Fourth Avenue? Especially the open terraces will face directly into the Carlyle units.</p>	<p>We will have a restaurant on the ground floor similar to what's there today, not a nightclub. The restaurant can use the upper terrace outdoor space in addition to their ground floor space, but don't see it as a noisy space. Have no interest in being a night club or bar. A great place for food, drink, spend time with co-workers. In terms of other outdoor space, it could be lots of things including balconies for residents. Design is trying to cut up the big box creating open spaces, but haven't figured out exactly what we'll do with those spaces. Could be outdoor conference room, tenant space. If I'm in the Carlyle, I'll be looking down at beautiful spaces. We have our projects on our websites. We take pride in exceeding trees and greenery expectations. Our intent is that Carlyle tenants are looking down on park-like spaces. Have reached out to hotel and condo association, early stages of collaborative process about privacy, noise concerns, design. Expect to receive input throughout the design process.</p>
<p>How will noise of restaurant be abated?</p>	<p>Hours, noise, light level are things that have to satisfy the neighborhood. Don't see this as nightclub or bar, place to have drink with family and friends, restaurant. There won't be a restaurant on the roof, that was an error in the presentation. That rooftop area is for the residents and their guests. The residents of the building will be the most impacted by any noise from the restaurant, so the building owner will have incentive to deal with that.</p>
<p>Just out of curiosity, in what city do you live, Mr. Holtzman?</p>	

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
<p>I don't understand how the 3rd venue garage will support the increase in traffic since there was no vacancy before COVID. Also, how will noise be abated for restaurant in evening one evening building is finished. Also, there were noise issues late into the evening when hotel across street was building built</p>	<p>We don't expect to have more traffic as this will be handled at the garage and the alley away from the Carlyle and Wood Street.</p>
<p>What's the proposed unit mix?</p>	<p>Has not been finalized. Size of units, and room types are to be studied. Look at what exists and the future. We don't do micro apartments; these are for professionals that need a certain amount of square footage. Would set limits on size of dogs in the building.</p>
<p>will there be any affordable units included?</p>	<p>See above answer.</p>
<p>Jonathon said that the goal is to take care of our neighbors. Your potential neighbors in the Carlyle purchased their properties. The majority of our homes have a view looking towards One PPG. Your tower will permanently block our views and diminish the values of our investments. And, we will have to live with your construction for at least two years when we most definitely won't be able to sell our properties if we want to. How does this help your neighbors?</p>	<p>We understand the expectation of light, air, and views. They will continue to work on the design. Something is going to be built on this site, but City Club thinks this is the best project they can contemplate for the Carlyle resident that will happen on the site. We hope that this won't diminish value of units, hope it will increase value. Hope fears will melt away as we continue to design the building.</p>
<p>Sorry if I missed this information, but are you using a Transfer of Development Rights from another property, if so which one? or is this a variance request without a TDR?</p>	<p>It's the latter variance, not TDR.</p>
<p>Please ask as anonymous - where are 400 new people going to park. The 3rd street lot is full during the day. It's only 5 floors. It makes it difficult for retired people to park. There is limited parking to begin with</p>	<p>That's not consistent with the information we are getting from the Parking Authority.</p>
<p>Within the past 2-3 years there have been multiple projects that added incremental residential units that have are coming onto the market - the Kaufman on Fifth, Commonwealth Building, and more. They have added significant residential units that are not being occupied. Given the shift to pandemic impact to work from home, all cities are seeing a shift to the suburbs not to the city. This project appears to be in direct contrast to the current and emerging patterns. Explain please.</p>	<p>Why currently live in the city? All the restaurants, museums, sports venues, etc. are closed so people moved away. Every analysis shows that people are moving to suburbs because things are open, but they will move back to the city when things reopen. This is very consistent across cities, developers, lenders, all know that we need to get back on track, open up. If you ask people when they're going to buy their first car, the difference now is dramatic compared to 1968. We're seeing shopping malls in suburbs failing because people are shopping online, people are working from home. Apartment buildings are a necessity – food, shelter and clothing. Food and shelter are growing. People not getting married means more housing units are needed. Cities like Pittsburgh that attract great companies and employees, medical services. Look at Downtown Minneapolis 20 years ago, we've been a developer there since early 2000s, the more that was developed the more residents followed. Pittsburgh needs downtown population, and I want to create something that benefits Pittsburgh and what is a very clear trend.</p>

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
Correct me if I'm wrong, but you're seeking a variance for square footage minimums. How can you say you don't know the size of the units? We know it's less than the current requirement of 110 square feet, no?	We're seeking up to 300 units and 240,000 sf. Might be less.
Pre pandemic the parking garage is full on weekends.	
You've said a cornerstone of the project is new modern construction. That appears to be in direct contrast to this specific historic district the heart of downtown. Clearly Marriott saw the need to refurbish rather than build new. Wouldn't a new building be more suited to a section of the city where it would blend in with the surrounding architecture?	A new exciting future doesn't have to blend in. We have an opportunity in this century to use glass in ways it couldn't have been before. Brick is a low-rise material. This isn't about replicating buildings that exist, this is about building something new that uses new technology. It's a historic district due to historic fabric, not the replication of historic districts. If you want to move into a technologically advanced building, or not have parking, the building should reflect that. The building that's there doesn't fit into historic buildings either. If we made a fake old historic masonry building no one would see through it.
Is the sale of the YWCA contingent on approvals for the project?	We've fully disclosed where we're at on this.
Will the YWCA have to be reinforced to allow the tower?	Comfortable that there will only need to be some interstitial work within the building to reinforce the steel that's there, not foundation work. Recognize that building one building next to another building will impact someone's views, but we have designed to have the least impact possible. The Y wants to resell the building to fund their mission. So how can we be a good neighbor for the Carlyle. Tonight's meeting is to say hello, answer some questions, but want to have more in depth conversation and dialogue to understand what we can and can't do.
If the building is 22 stories, that's 13 units per floor. How will that work at 243 square feet on each floor?	Mix and square footage have not been determined. Could be up to 300 units, could be less. The numbers do work, we are still just arriving at the final mix. There will not be one apartment that will be much less than 400 sf.
The bus stops on Fourth Ave and on Wood are a problem for current residents with noise and drugs. Do you think this project will help move these away from this area?	Coordinating with the Port Authority on service modifications. Part of the character of the bus stops will be due to the building and the activity there, which could change. This gets to the vibrancy of the area. As a developer, I have to attract residents and don't want them to feel uncomfortable. Our job is to make sidewalks, ground floor uses, lighting, and seating, better. Have 400 people coming and going, being positive, will make other people feel safe and comfortable. Then we can deal with some of the social issues. Just creating some vibrancy will work itself out, but having these dark abandoned buildings that are empty or will be empty we're inviting the social problems. Adding vibrancy, density, activity, will help solve some of these social issues.

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
Seems like your plans will accommodate more part-time residents. Could you classify it more as an extended stay hotel?	No, we wouldn't say this. Our building is not for students, it's for people who go to work, medical, tech, artists, actors, designers, lawyers, doctors. It's a diverse group of residents. We want to achieve the best apartment building built in downtown Pittsburgh, attract 60s-, 70s-, and 80-year-olds from Florida who want to be up here near family during part of the year, this is a huge trend right now. I will go to a building like this and go somewhere else for the nicer weather. This city is tremendously attractive due to medical and tech and other activities. These are people who want to move to downtown, but the building doesn't exist for them in downtown Pittsburgh today.
Really like this project. Like the reuse of existing structure and the density. Slab on a plinth.	
I don't understand how the area will support the additional parking needs. 3rd Avenue garage had no vacancy before COVID. also, how will noise issues be mitigated during construction and after building is finished. noise levels from restaurants in evenings.	See above.
Density is a good thing, not a bad thing. This is a CITY!	
The city needs more residents and a stronger critical mass to support the restaurants, retail stores and offices that create a vibrant and robust city experience.	
What are the anticipated rental rates?	We think we'll be very competitive. More work to be done on construction costs, unit types, etc.
Based upon the adjacent facades, I hope that you'll continue to refine your design for the rehabbed YW skin; I like the idea of blending new and old, but the current renderings impact both the materials and the scale in a significant way.	
a comment, not a question, if the configuration of units is not yet decided, please include enough 2- & 3-bedroom units, we need more, affordable, family housing downtown	
Wow. Bus riders are people, too. The prevalence of that absolutely disrespectful attitude towards us is, frankly, disgusting. We have a right to the city, just as anyone else does. Bus riders are not responsible any more or less than you are for any real, or perceived, American social problems.	

**Other Notes**

None

**Planner completing report:** Derek Dauphin and Phillip Wu