South Side Community Council’s Renovation of Esser’s Plaza
Art Commission Application Form

You must submit the following along with this form as a single PDF.

- Individual or organizational statement (250 word max)
- Letter of intent that includes history of project and its impact on the community (500 word max)
- Visual materials (See Art Commission Guidelines for requirement)
- Budget describing cost of materials, artist fees, maintenance, installation, etc.
- Two letters of support from project partners or neighborhood organizations
- One letter of support from the Department of Public Works or Department of Mobility & Infrastructure

Notes:

- You may be required to hold a Development Activities Meeting with the applicable Registered Community Organization prior to Hearing. For more information, visit pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/roc.
- After receiving Art Commission approval, any necessary permits, certificates of occupancy, legal agreements, or other city approvals are still required. These must be applied for separately at the appropriate City departments and are the responsibility of the applicant.
- Application format is a digital copy of full application form, required documents, and the presentation to be projected at the Hearing as one single PDF. Send all documents to pacd@pittsburghpa.gov.

Project Information

Type of Project: ☒ Conceptual Review
☐ Conceptual/Final Review
☐ Final Review
☐ Courtesy Review

Has this project been come before Art Commission before?
☒ No  ☐ Yes, when: __________________________

Duration of project: From 04/01/21 to 07/01/22

Permanent? ☐ No  ☒ Yes
Project Location

Address: 1200 East Carson Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203

Cross Streets or other relevant information: 12th Street
Rear line is on Roland Way, across from Armstrong Park

Neighborhood: South Side Flats

Applicant Information

Name: South Side Community Council

Mailing Address: 2005 Sarah Street

City: Pittsburgh State: PA Zip: 15203

Phone: (412) 447- 4735 Email: info@southsidecommunitycouncil.org

Relationship or Role in Project: Project Manager and applicant

Co-Applicant (optional)

Name: 

Mailing Address: 

City: State: Zip: 

Phone: Email: 

Relationship or Role in Project: 

Presenter at Hearing if different than applicant: 
August 2, 2021

Mr. Andrew Moss
Vice Chair and Secretary
City of Pittsburgh Art Commission
c/o Department of City Planning
200 Ross Street, 4th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mr. Moss:

South Side Community Council is the applicant for the renovation of 1200 East Carson Street, known as Esser’s Plaza. It is presently a tired, poorly lit, unattractive area between Armstrong Park and the South Side Market House in the heart of Pittsburgh’s historic South Side. The once handsome plaza, initially known as Birmingham Plaza, is in urgent need of renovation. Residents have started the process by removing dead and scrappy shrubbery, trimming unkempt trees, picking up persistent litter and trash and working with pro bono professionals – Engineers Without Borders (EWB) and the landscape architectural firm, LaQuatra Bonci - to create a new concept for the area.

South Side Community Council (SSCC), with the support of other neighborhood organizations, will renovate Esser’s Plaza. Planned improvements are:

1. Remove present pavers and work on subsurface drainage
2. Re-use 51 and relocate 8 – 10 canal stones to two other South Side sites
3. Remove decaying trees (approved by Lisa Ceoffe from City Forestry)
4. Install concrete sidewalks, pavers, 4" planter curb, handicap ramp (at Roland Way) (PennDOT will work on the East Carson ramp)
5. Install lighting
6. Install benches, trash cans, low planter rail
7. Install precast concrete lawn bench
8. Add a tree along South 12th Street, plant and mulch two garden areas and plant a lawn inside the precast concrete lawn bench.

The funds to cover the cost of these renovations have been raised. Just recently, a grant from Lowe’s 100 Hometowns has prompted a more immediate timeline than previously.

Thank you,

Barbara Rudiak, President
August 2, 2021

Mr. Andrew Moss
Vice Chair and Secretary
City of Pittsburgh Art Commission
c/o Department of City Planning
200 Ross Street, 4th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mr. Moss:

The City of Pittsburgh Department of Public Works is in full support of the South Side Community Council application for the renovation of 1200 East Carson Street, known as Eurer’s Plaza. We hope that you will agree that this is a remarkable project and worthy of your support.

Thank you,

[Signature]

Andrea Ketzel
Senior Project Landscape Architect
Department of Public Works
June 23, 2021

Mr. Andrew Moss
Vice-Chair/Secretary
City of Pittsburgh Art Commission
In care of Department of City Planning
200 Ross Street, 4th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

SUBJECT: Renovation of Esser’s Plaza
1200 East Carson Street
South Side

Dear Mr. Moss:

Greetings from Pittsburgh’s Historic South Side! The South Side Chamber of Commerce is pleased to have this opportunity to express our support of the renovation of Esser’s Plaza. The South Side Community Council’s group of resident stakeholders that led the renovation planning kept the Chamber informed and engaged throughout the planning process in 2019, at times meeting at the Chamber’s former Welcome Center.

We look forward to the rejuvenated Esser’s Plaza as we are confident that it will be a safer neighborhood public green space for many and complement the ongoing East Carson Street roadway and sidewalk improvements.

We respectfully request that the Art Commission approve the Esser’s Plaza renovation project that is so important to South Side businesses, residents, and visitors. You are welcome to contact us at info@southsidechamber.org or (412) 431-3360 for more information or questions in this regard.

Sincerely,

Candice A. Gonzalez
Executive Director
August 4, 2021

Mr. Andrew Moss
Vice Chair and Secretary
City of Pittsburgh Art Commission
Department of City Planning
200 Ross Street, 4th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mr. Moss:

The City of Pittsburgh’s Department of Mobility and Infrastructure has been in communication with the South Side Community Council and supports their application for the renovation of 1200 East Carson Street.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Karina Ricks
Director
7.6.2021

Mr. Andrew Moss
Vice Chair and Secretary
City of Pittsburgh Art Commission
c/o Department of City Planning
200 Ross Street, 4th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

The South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association is in full support of the South Side Community Council’s application for the renovation of 1200 East Carson Street, known as Esser’s Plaza. We hope that you will agree that this is a remarkable project and worthy of your support.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Blake M. McLaren
President
South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association
Bavarian paver from Unilock

Copthorne paver in three shades

Copthorne pavers in a Montreal park
Description of Design process – Renovation of Esser’s Plaza

South Side Community Council (SSCC) began the conversation around the renovation of Esser’s Plaza almost a decade ago. That is when the South Side Local Development Corporation turned over some funds earmarked for the plaza and another park to the SSCC. The SSCC worked on the other project first leaving the larger plaza for later attention.

The volunteers behind the project have been working for several years with multiple public events to gain community input. Comments were taken at an initial event at the local Carnegie Library in 2016. At that point, Engineers Without Borders was brought into the project. La Quatra Bonci Associates was added to the mix in 2018.

A group of 25 stakeholders were convened to further the development of a conceptual design. There were five events in 2019 to engage residents and businesses to explore the issues and weigh in on possible solutions. It was displayed at the candidate’s debate at City Theatre on March 25th, 140 persons saw it at the Spring Social on April 6th and it was presented to the Chamber of Commerce on May 16th. It was showcased at the September 14th Street Party with 300 residents and later seen at a September 20th Chamber of Commerce event. It was presented to the South Side Planning Forum on September 10th. The drawing has been continually on display at the flower shop across from the plaza. An online questionnaire seeking feedback on the design was sent to over 400 South Side residents and businesses with 125 responses.

Residents have pitched in by removing dead and scraggly shrubbery, trimming unkempt trees, picking up persistent litter and trash and working with pro bono professionals – Engineers Without Borders (EWB) and the landscape architectural firm, LaQuatra Bonci - to create a new concept for the area.

The project was submitted to a Development Activities Meeting held on March 25, 2021. The Local Review Board noted its approval at that time.

The Art Commission will note that there are two sketches of the Esser’s Plaza sign in the submission. We are interested in your input with regard to the nature of the sign and whether we should open this aspect of the design to further creative input from area artists.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Esser's Plaza Renovation</th>
<th>Estimated Construction Costs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demolition and drainage</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Furnishings:</strong> benches</td>
<td>$4,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>trash cans</td>
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<tr>
<td>low planter rail</td>
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<tr>
<td>lighting</td>
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<td>Professional services – pre-bid meeting and site progress reviews</td>
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<td><strong>Improvements:</strong> concrete sidewalk</td>
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<tr>
<td>unlock pavers</td>
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<tr>
<td>4&quot; planter curb</td>
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<tr>
<td>precast lawn bench</td>
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<td>Artwork sign</td>
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<td>Relocate canal stones</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planting: canopy tree, mulch, lawn, topsoil and plants</td>
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