

## Development Activities Meeting – Form to Use During DAM

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> 1163 Murray Hill Ave Change of Use	<b>Groups Represented (e.g., specific organizations, residents, employees, etc. where this is evident):</b> Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition (SHUC)
<b>Parcel Number(s):</b> 85-K-225	
<b>ZDR Application Number:</b> DCP-ZDR-2021-13047	
<b>Meeting Location:</b> Zoom (DCP hosted)	
<b>Date:</b> December 7, 2021	
<b>Meeting Start Time:</b> 6:30 PM	
<b>Applicant:</b> Walter Fowler – Chatham University Jennifer Hoerster – Chatham University Ken Doyno – Rothschild Doyno Collaborative (architect)	<b>Approx. Number of Attendees:</b> 14
<b>Boards and/or Commissions Request(s):</b> Planning Commission – change of use in EMI district	

### 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.*

- Walter Fowler, Finance Director of Chatham University, introduced the project, explaining that 1163 Murray Hill Avenue will become Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh's offices. He noted that a 1,700-square-foot exhibition space for the center's archival material has been created at the Chatham library, with both permanent and traveling exhibits, that some courses and programming are upcoming, and that the university believes that that this new office + the library + additional programming will enrich Chatham and the Jewish community around Squirrel Hill.
- W. Fowler introduced Jennifer Hoerster, Assistant Finance Director and explained that facilities and capital projects staff report to him.
- Ken Doyno with Rothschild Doyno Collaborative, the architectural firm that completed Chatham's Institutional Master Plan (IMP), which was just approved by the City Council in September, introduced himself, noting that his firm had also done numerous projects on campus, including reuse of other older structures.
- K. Doyno noted that 1163 Murray Hill Avenue was adjacent to the library's parking lot and was one of three houses that Chatham has site control of. The university also has ownership or agreements on the adjacent houses, but this building alone was designated as being different from residential use. Improvements recently made to the site include a retaining wall and a new railing.
- K. Doyno went over Chatham University's strategic plan and mission as well as a slide entitled "Build Upon Existing Campus Assets," which showed an overview of campus in a district-by-district map. He mentioned that the university wanted to create a "residential gateway" from Fifth Avenue in the future.
- One of the goals of the master plan, K. Doyno explained, was to build upon existing assets and be good stewards to the historic structures and to lay out plans for the university for the next 10 years.
- K. Doyno explained that the master plan changed the zone classifications in and around the university from R1D-L and RM-M to EMI; the EMI required the university to establish an IMP. He further explained that under the EMI district, there are provisions around change of use.

- K. Doyno showed an aerial view of campus with points of interest, including 1163 Murray Hill Avenue.
- K. Doyno explained that the change of use was discussed in the master plan and anticipated there but that the process in the City Code is to still go through separate process to change from a residential structure to office. K. Doyno added that even though the Code calls this an administrator exception, it also requires a Project Development Plan that is approved by the Planning Commission due to the EMI zoning.
- K. Doyno noted that the two houses next to 1163 Murray Avenue will be maintained as single-family residential uses in the future.
- K. Doyno explained that the Holocaust Center approached Chatham to have a connected office and exhibit space on campus. The exhibit space was moved to the J.K. Mellon Library (that project has been completed). 1163 Murray Hill Avenue does have steps from Murray Hill Avenue, but the project team wanted to create an accessible path to campus and the library from the rear of 1163 Murray Hill Avenue to ease access from library/campus to the office space. K. Doyno showed a photographic view of 1163 Murray Hill Avenue from the campus quad to highlight this connection. He also showed a photo of the pathway up to back door from the quad, noting that it would be possible to get a path at 5% grade for accessibility. He said that his team would work with a surveyor for more detail on the grading.
- K. Doyno showed plans for the ground floor, second floor, and third floor. He pointed out that there would be a lounge, reception, and kitchenette on the ground floor. Offices will be located in converted bedrooms on the second floor, and two additional offices are to be located on the top floor.
- K. Doyno mentioned that the project team received approval of the IMP in February or March of 2021 from the Planning Commission. He noted that there was extensive dialogue with Murray Hill neighbors during the IMP process, from which the project team agreed to a series of improvements along the campus edge, prior to City Council approval.
- K. Doyno noted that future improvements discussed were to further improve screening of the library from Murray Hill Avenue. The project team will identify valuable tree species and then create an appropriate planting plan. Additionally, the project team will look at providing cobblestone paving at the current entry drive on Murray Hill Avenue and to improve the driveway and add lighting.
- K. Doyno discussed the parking required for the office use: He mentioned that 1 parking space is required, which already exists on site. All additional parking, he noted, would be accommodated in the library parking lot (which has 128 spaces in its self-park state and 180 spaces in its valet state).

### Input and Responses

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
Have the neighbors on Murray Hill objected at all?	We had extensive discussion during the IMP process. There came to be a consensus through the text of the master plan itself, which includes a timeframe for making improvements on this side of campus.
What is the timeframe for renovations and the conversion?	We would like to start doing some of these renovations next summer. We want to use this winter to put a point on what we want to do. The two key priorities will be to clean up the transition between Murray Hill and our parking lot, and the second thing is to create the buffering, so it grows and provides the screening. We want to proceed on this with the neighbors who are proximate to the entrance.

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
<p>What aspect are you going to discuss with neighbors?</p>	<p>Screening and transition. Chatham could have done a better job over the years communicating with those neighbors, but we've built trust with those neighbors and it's now a working group.</p> <p>The buffering is thick in summertime and you can't even see the library. We would like to thin the deciduous tree composition and increase evergreens to provide better buffering during the winter. Also, the lights in the parking lot are pretty dated. We want to do this hand-in-hand with the neighbors.</p> <p>We'll also extend the survey down there as well. We want to get started on that in spring and next fall.</p>
<p>What other approvals do you foresee your team needing in the future for the Chatham campus?</p>	<p>The change of use does require a Project Development Plan, as established in the master plan. When we go down to Fifth Avenue, some of the apartments will change to having a conversion to dormitory uses and will change the number of rooms. So, we will likely have to come back for change of uses there; same with the residence that will become an alumni house. For the rest of the modifications, I don't know whether or not they will need Planning Commission approval. Maybe some additions to Dilworth and Buell will take place as well; probably any of the additions I guess may require Planning Commission approval.</p>

**Other Notes**

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**Planner completing report:** Phillip Wu