

Oakland –Wide Community Meeting
Minutes: April 27, 2021

Carnegie Mellon University Health, Wellness, and Athletics Center

Presenting: Bob Reppe, Ralph Horgan, Utkarsh Ghildyal, Joe Yimin, Greg LaForest

Carnegie Mellon shared plans for a 160,000 sq. ft. integrated health, wellness, and athletics center, which they plan to occupy by August 2024. The site location is in the southeast corner of campus, bordering Schenley Park. The project will renovate parts of the existing gym and build a new home for the health and wellness center and the athletics department. The building will have both private and public entrances to accommodate different student needs. Carnegie Mellon will replace all trees that they must remove for the project and plans to integrate the building's connection to Schenley Park. The project does not anticipate needing variances, as it is consistent with the current institutional master plan. They will retain and renovate the main gym and demolish Thistle Hall and the smaller gym to the north. Carnegie Mellon is targeting LEED Gold certification for this building.

Q: How are you replacing lost greenspace on campus?

A: We are looking to create interior greenspaces (e.g., wellness gardens) and make existing greenspaces around campus more usable (e.g., around Skibo gym). We are working with the Parks Conservancy to reclaim original landscape design at the end of Frew St. to blend the park and campus landscapes into each other.

Q: Is this going to Planning Commission as a Final Land Development Plan (FLDP)? What is the project's completion dates?

A: We plan a May 2021 review by the Contextual Design Advisory Panel (CDAP) and a June 2021 review by Planning Commission. The approval is not an FLDP, but a Project Development Plan (PDP), which is specific to institutional master plans. Our goal is to have this building open by January 2024.

Q: How does this relate to Morewood Towers and Cohon University Center?

A: This project is the third phase of our athletics and recreation master plan for the campus. The first phase was turfing the existing intermural field at Forbes and Margaret Morrison in 2011. The second phase was developing the Cohon University center for general fitness. This building will focus on intercollegiate athletics. We plan to repurpose the existing health services center in 2024 as the third of our new student commons. The counseling and psychological services program will remain in Morewood Towers; the health and wellness center expands these services.

Q: Did you consider traditional materials such as stone panels that could be high-tech-looking? Can you include brightly colored foliage and plantings on Tech to offset the beige?

A: We are looking to design a building that is respectful of Margret Morrison. We want this building to have a soothing presence, and the color pallet reflects this. We are focusing on whites, grays, and green spaces. The building materials will mostly not be metal but textured terracotta panels (a newer version of the campus's traditional materials).

Q: How much was the gift from Highmark?

A: The total project budget is \$105 million, and the Highmark gift was \$35 million.