

Development Activities Meeting Report (Version: 06/24/2020)

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

Logistics	Stakeholders
Project Name/Address: 4337 Fifth Ave / University of Pittsburgh new residence hall	Groups Represented (e.g., specific organizations, residents, employees, etc. where this is evident): Oakland Planning & Development Corporation (OPDC) Oakland Business Improvement District (OBID) Bellefield Area Citizens Association (BACA) Area residents and stakeholders City Planning Staff
Parcel Number(s): 27-M-53	
Application Number: BDA-2026-03918	
Meeting Location: Zoom (Virtual)	
Date: May 11, 2026	
Meeting Start Time: 5:30 PM	
Applicant: University of Pittsburgh	Approx. Number of Attendees: 22
Boards and/or Commissions Request(s): Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA); Historic Review Commission (HRC); Planning Commission	

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.

The applicant team consisted of the University of Pittsburgh Office of Planning, Design, and Construction, and VMDO Architects. They began with an overview of the project: Construction of a new (9-story) residence hall for first-year students where there is currently a parking lot at Fifth & Ruskin Avenues. Publicly accessible retail dining with indoor & outdoor seating areas will front Fifth Avenue. The project is on site 2B of Pitt's Institutional Master Plan (IMP). - Over 400 student beds plus staff apartments, student gathering spaces on floors 2-9 - Ground floor retail dining fronting Fifth Avenue, 250+ interior seats + exterior seating when weather permits The applicant showcased the building design with a site plan, concept renderings from multiple perspectives, building elevations, etc. The building will have active frontages and public realm on Fifth Ave, Ruskin, and Bellefield. Its design wraps the existing Music Building, creating an alleyway for passage and seating. The front along Fifth and Ruskin will include an elevated terrace with outdoor seating for the first level dining space, with intentionally designed ramps for ADA compliance. Loading located in the rear next to Ruskin Hall with access from both Bellefield and Ruskin. The proposed location, uses, floor area, and height (105') all comply with the IMP. The project will require review from three review bodies: Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA); Historic Review Commission (HRC); Planning Commission. The ZBA review is required for the Dormitory use, permitted as a Special Exception in the EMI zoning district. The applicant provided an outline of their projected timeline: - Zoning approvals: End of July 2026 - Site preparation + commence construction: August 2026 - Construction Completion: July 2028 - Open to students: Move-in 2028

Input and Responses

Topic / Issue	Recap
Building performance & sustainability elements	<u>Comment/Concern Raised:</u> • Question regarding bird-safe glass • Inquiry about building certifications, i.e. LEED • Concerns about noise from HVAC systems • Question about how solar impacts; i.e. reflections, internal heating • Inquiry regarding stormwater elements & green roof • Inquiry regarding the number of ADA accessible rooms <u>Who raised it:</u> residents & neighbors, OBID, OPDC <u>Applicant Response:</u> Yes bird safe glazing patterns will be on windows; seeking LEED gold certification; There will be limited rooftop HVAC equipment, and we are mindful of the noise concerns, Regarding solar impacts, we are studying coating patterns on windows, internal shades and a canopy for the ground level; Regarding stormwater, there are plans for a rain garden and a green roof is being considered; For ADA accessible rooms, all rooms have accessible doorways widths and 20 percent of rooms are fully accessible
Site layout	<u>Comment/Concern Raised:</u> • Can you explain more about the space between buildings; how will this space be used and is it accessible to the public? • Will the existing parking spaces be replaced? <u>Who raised it:</u> OPDC, OBID <u>Applicant Response:</u> The space between buildings will be generally discrete from public view, but it will be accessible for building egress. We plan to remove existing elements to declutter the space and make it safe (i.e., generator, ramp, etc.) Near the terrace area, seating will be added to create a gathering space. There may be future opportunity for the Music building annex to be removed and replaced with a courtyard, with the facade facing Fifth maintained; No, the existing parking will not be replaced
Reviews & Construction	<u>Comment/Concern Raised:</u> • Questions about the construction impacts to the surrounding area • Discussion of the review process, including clarification on the ZBA review <u>Who raised it:</u> general audience <u>Applicant Response:</u> Yes, we are working out a construction plan now; full closure of Ruskin or Bellefield is unlikely; a single lane closure on Fifth Ave is likely

Recording: [Oakland DAM Video 5-11-26.mp4](#)

Planner completing report: Christian Umbach, Senior Planner