

Development Activities Meeting Report (Version: 01/24/2024)

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

Logistics	Stakeholders
Project Name/Address: Rangos School of Health and Sciences Building Southwest corner of Forbes Avenue and Magee Street in Pittsburgh, PA	Groups Represented (e.g., specific organizations, residents, employees, etc. where this is evident): Hill District Consensus Group-3 Hill District Collaborative-2 Hill Community Development Corp- 2 Schenley Heights Collaborative-1 Uptown Partners-3 Applicants: 5 DCP Staff: 5 Residents: 6
Parcel Number(s): 0002-L-00101-0000-00	
ZDR Application Number: BDA-2024-08149	
Meeting Location: Zoom	
Date: 10/20/2025	
Meeting Start Time: 6:00pm	
Applicant: Duquesne University	Approx. Number of Attendees: 27
Boards and/or Commissions Request(s): Zoning and the 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.

Registered Community Organizations Hill District Consensus Group: Have met with Duquesne University and expressed support for the project. Hill District Collaborative: Expressed support for the project Hill District CDC: Received an application from Duquesne University and have invited them to present the project on November 5 th . Uptown Partners: Received a presentation from Duquesne University and expressed support for the project. Applicant: Duquesne University has submitted a permit application for a new academic building at the corner of Forbes Avenue and Magee Street in the Bluff neighborhood. The building will be at the site of an existing campus parking lot. The building will be five-stories, or 82 feet above the grade along Forbes Avenue. There will be publicly accessible open plaza space at the front of the building with landscaping, areas for sitting and bicycle parking, 10-foot-wide sidewalks along Forbes Avenue and street trees along Forbes Avenue and Magee Street. There will be a clinic located on the ground floor, as well as various other new uses and existing programming space that is currently located elsewhere on campus throughout the building. The project will be reviewed by the Department of City Planning against the requirements of the Institutional Master Plan, which can be found on the City's Institutional Master Plan page .
--

Input and Responses

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
What are Duquesne University's efforts to recognize the cultural legacy of the Hill District? What is your participation in equitable contracting and how will you work with your contractor to ensure equitable outcomes?	We always have a good faith effort to meet Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) contractor goals. However, we hire union contractors, and so we the workers need to belong to a union to get the bid for the contract. So, it's very important that anyone that wants to be a trade worker to become a member of the union to work on these larger projects.
What is the highest percentage you've received to date?	On projects like this, we likely get 5-10% for MWBE and closer to 10% for WBE. While we strive for higher, it's difficult to get these percentages.
How have you worked to improve this process?	We work with the general contractor and try to find sub-contractors, when possible, to find vendors under them that can supply materials or work for the job.
If you can't get past 5-10% WMBE, how can we find creative approaches to improving this?	Having more MWBE contractors that are in the union to bid on the projects.
I believe you're talking more about workforce participation but I'm talking about business participation, not the employees.	I don't work in construction so I can't answer that, but we do our best to work with contractors and get subs.
Who would be the best point of contact who would be responsible for this at Duquesne and who is the general contractor?	The general contractor has not been selected at this time. One of the suppliers we often work with is minority-owned. We have a list of material suppliers and vendors that are MWBE, and we encourage that our contractors and subs used them if possible.
Is there specific funding or something that requires you to use union contractors?	Yeah, we always try to go after RCAP funding, etcetera, and that requires union contracts.
I would be happy to have a follow-up conversation about how we can help you guys increase those percentages, because the Greater Hill Master Plan calls for 30% Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and 15% Women Business Enterprise (WBE). Knowing that, we'd like to work collectively to come up with solutions to ensure that there is equal access to opportunity.	That is something that we would love to have. In this environment, we're also under the microscope with the Trump administration and have to be very careful about trying to meet certain race-based percentages. We've been challenged already with things like scholarships. So, we need to figure out what a balance would look like.
I'm thinking we could potentially do a Hill District-based focus. We can discuss that more offline when appropriate. I'd suggest within the Request for Funding Proposals (RFP) that we include preferences to Hill district residents or businesses to participate at a different level. I do want to be conscious of the current environment.	Yes, let's talk more. The Department of Justice (DOJ) did put something out recently that said we can't use "place-based" as a pretext for race. We'll have to discuss offline.

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
<p>This sounds like a great addition to the Duquesne campus. Will there be any programs, internships, or partnerships with the schools or community groups in the Hill District so that Hill youth can benefit from this?</p>	<p>Duquesne is one of the founders of, and still very involved with, the Citizen's Science Lab, and we'll make sure that kids that participate in that program have the opportunity to get involved with Duquesne's health sciences programs. The Science Lab is located within the Energy Innovation Center in the Hill District. We've found it's best to partner with Dr. Samuels, at the Science Lab, to get Hill students involved with Duquesne.</p> <p>There is also a health sciences camp that is open to high school students in the area. All components of this camp, which are currently spread throughout campus, will be consolidated into this building which will improve that camp opportunity. This new building will also allow for more students to be admitted into the health sciences programs.</p>
<p>Are there any federal funds associated with the building of this project where Davis Bacon Labor standards would apply?</p>	<p>We have state funds that we're looking for, but I don't believe we have any federal funds for this project.</p>

Planner(s) completing report: Benita Johnson, AJ Herzog