

Terri Leasure
Project Manager
Duquesne University
1204 5th Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15282
Via email: leasuret@duq.edu

May 22, 2025

Dear Terri:

On behalf of the Hill District's Development Review Panel (DRP) and the Hill CDC as a Registered Community Organization (RCO), we offer this letter of support to the Mendel Hall Conversion to Greenspace Project based on its January 2025 submission to the DRP. Details about this submission can be found at www.hilldistrict.org/drpproposals/mendel-hall-conversion-to-greenspace/

ABOUT THE DRP AND RCO

The DRP is the Hill District's unified and comprehensive community review process that gives every Hill District resident a voice in their neighborhood's redevelopment. It is a partnership with seven (7) Hill District Community-Based Organizations: Hill Community Development Corporation (Hill CDC), Hill District Ministers Alliance (HDMA), Uptown Partners, The Center that Cares, Neighborhood Resilience Project (NRP), Macedonia FACE, and the Center for Family Excellence. This partnership streamlines community-level review while ensuring transparency and sufficient community feedback.

The mission of the Hill CDC is to work in partnership with residents and stakeholders to create, promote, and implement strategies and programs that connect plans, policies, and people to drive compelling community development opportunities in the Greater Hill District. The Hill CDC is responsible for facilitating the implementation of the Greater Hill District Master Plan, specifically addressing any community concerns regarding redevelopment and economic opportunities in the area. As part of our role, we staff and facilitate the DRP process.

The Hill CDC is also a Registered Community Organization (RCO) for the Greater Hill District, whose boundaries are defined by the Greater Hill District Master Plan (GHDMF) and encompass this project.

Your front door to the Hill District. | hilldistrict.org

Hill Community Development Corporation 2015 – 2017 Centre Ave, 2nd Floor, Pittsburgh PA 15219 P 412.765.1820 F 412.765.1829

In agreement with our commitment to the Hill District's unified community review process, we do not issue independent letters on development proposals and have integrated the DRP with the RCO regulatory requirements. **As per the RCO Ordinance, the DRP serves as our community's "orderly and democratic means for forming representative public input" and is our "clear method for reporting to the City actions that accurately reflect the community's position."** This process ensures transparency and sufficient implementation of the community vision and goals.

Mendel Hall Conversion to Greenspace Project

The Mendel Hall Conversion to Greenspace development proposal scored a cumulative **81%-B** at the DRP committee and community review levels. **To receive a letter of support, a proposal must achieve a minimum cumulative score of 80%. Accordingly, your score indicates that the plan sufficiently aligns with the Greater Hill District Master Plan and has received community support.** As such, we wish you the best in your development endeavors and look forward to supporting this development project.

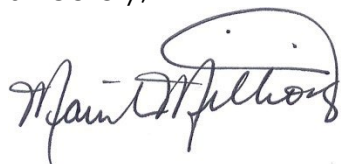
We strongly encourage the development team to consider the feedback made by the Development Review Panel and our Residents related to the project:

- Contract with Black-owned businesses for the building's demolition and the greenspace's landscaping
- Demonstrate an effective plan to hire Hill District residents, aiming to employ 1 in 3 persons from the Hill District for this project.
- Honor the historic and cultural legacy of African Americans in the Hill District.

Lastly, we request that you keep the DRP updated on the project's progress, including the start of construction, significant milestones, and any changes to the project. These updates should be emailed to Hill CDC, Policy and Planning Department at Policy@hilldistrict.org when available. If a change is significant, the DRP may request that you attend a DRP meeting to give an updated presentation.

Congratulations again!

Sincerely,



Marimba Milliones
President and CEO, Hill CDC

Cc:

City of Pittsburgh Mayor Ed Gainey and Staff

City Councilman Daniel Lavelle

State Representative Aerion Abney

Urban Redevelopment Authority, Susheela Nemani-Stanger

Department of City Planning, Dr. Jamil Bey

City of Pittsburgh Planning Commission, Staff

City of Pittsburgh Zoning Board of Adjustments, Staff

City of Pittsburgh Housing Authority, Caster D. Binion