

826 Hazelwood Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15217
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holocaustcenterpgh.org



The Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

For the first time in its 34 year history, the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh will inhabit an independent and dedicated space all its own. Located at Squirrel Hill Plaza, 826 Hazelwood Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15217 in the East End of Pittsburgh, this new location offers more access and engagement opportunities than ever before. The relocation began mid-2015, focusing first on establishing the office and administrative space in the lower level of the building. A grand opening to the public is planned for October 18, 2015.

A MUCH NEEDED HOME

Since its inception in 1981, the Holocaust Center's capacity to fulfill its mission has been limited by its dependence upon other organizations to provide administrative, exhibit and program space. In 2012, the Holocaust Center moved to Oakland to temporary office space belonging to the Jewish Federation; this space, a former house adjacent to the Jewish Federation office on McKee Place, did not allow for exhibitions or group visits, so all programs were conducted at alternate locations. Following months of space-planning studies that included community input, the Center leadership has selected a space which will increase the center's capacity for educational and community programs and resource sharing. As noted by Lori Guttman, co-chair of the Holocaust Center advisory board, "the new location will allow the Center to get back to hosting school and community groups for tours and to display its collection of artwork and artifacts, all of which have been in storage for the past 3 years while we looked for a suitable home."

ACCESS AND ENGAGEMENT

The Holocaust Center offers 2,300 square feet on one level for easy access for visitors. The current plans include an exhibition space for both permanent and temporary elements; a classroom space that can accommodate up to 45 people; a memory room that can be used for quiet contemplation and for capturing stories from survivors, their children or others with links to the Holocaust; and a research area with computers to help visitors explore records, testimonies and other materials. The lower level of the building will provide 3,000 square feet of office, administrative and storage space. The design will accommodate the Holocaust Center's own staff and will also provide space for a library and archive.

Holocaust Center plans for visitors to experience hands-on engagement with the actual artifacts of the Holocaust, not facsimiles or replicas. It purposefully avoids calling itself a museum and instead, aspires to be a community center for education, experience and understanding. Such direct, interactive experiences are designed to transform attitudes and behaviors and to foster tolerance by teaching individuals to recognize, understand and remember the atrocities of the Holocaust.

The new location is situated near the junction of major roadways including the Parkway East and other major travel routes for regional visitors, and includes a large parking lot. Multiple public bus lines serve

the area. The Port Authority routes 61C, 61D, and 64 stop right in front of the building, and the 52L, 53L, 58, 93 stop a few hundred feet away.

A RETURN TO THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

Pittsburgh is home to a significant number of Holocaust survivors, liberators and others whose lives were affected by the events of the Holocaust. Many of these live in or near Squirrel Hill, a neighborhood at the heart of this vibrant community. Advisory board co-chair Barbara Shapira says, “Restoring the connection to Squirrel Hill has been one of the primary requirements of the community. This new center can be a warm and inviting home for survivors — not only a place for people to support our mission but also a place for people to feel the support of the community.”

NEW DESIGN

Architect Paul Rosenblatt and his team from Springboard Design began working with the Holocaust Center in September of 2013, using a process that included benchmarking against other such centers and engaging the stakeholders and community to help guide the site selection and design process. The Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh partnered with the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh’s Storefront Renovation Program to improve the façade of its new location and center at 826 Hazelwood Ave in Greenfield.”

To complement the new space and a mark a new era for the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh, the graphic identity for the Center has also been redesigned, via the creative design team from Pittsburgh-based Landesberg Design. The new logo visually reflects a new strong presence for the organization as the region’s educator, facilitator, curator, historian and voice for survivors, liberators and protectors.

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