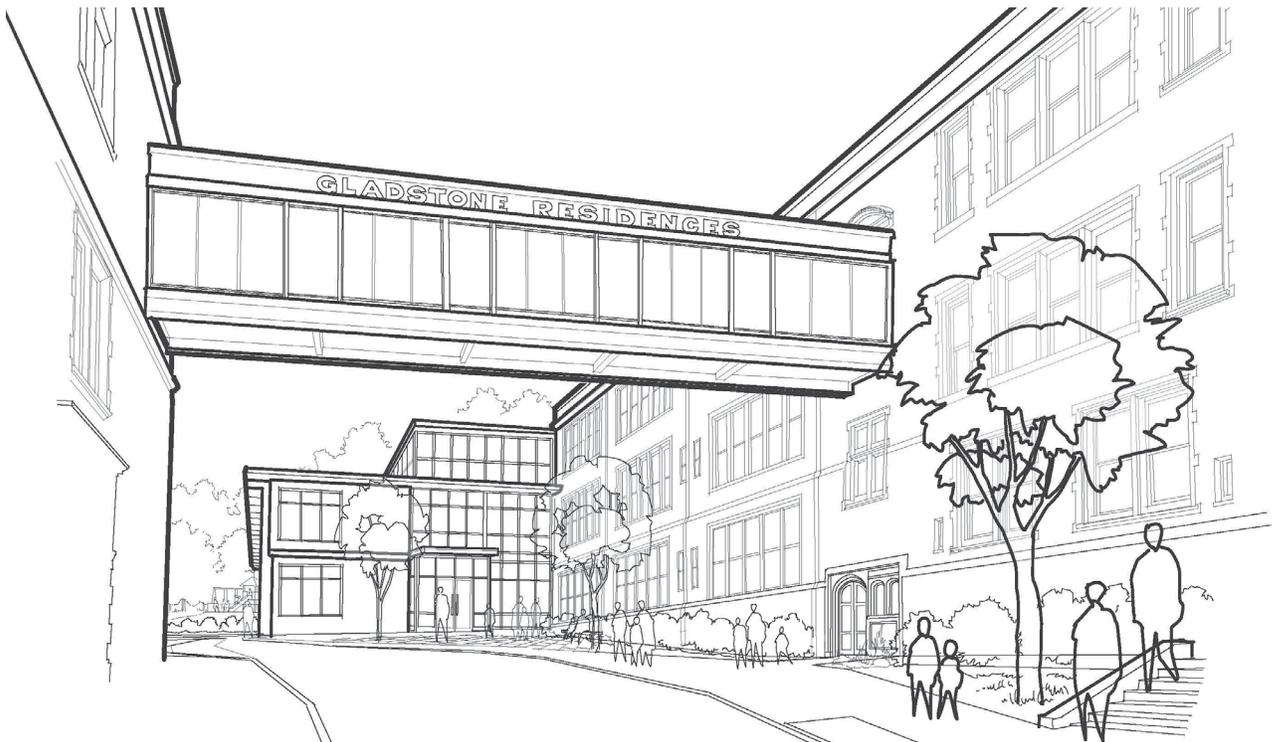




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Gladstone School in Hazelwood to house 42 affordably priced apartments

By Michael Machosky



Rendering of the walkway between Gladstone Middle School and the Annex

Gladstone Middle School, an iconic part of Hazelwood's past, is becoming a critical part of its future.

For a long time after the closure of the LTV Steel mill in 1998, finding affordable places to live wasn't a problem in Hazelwood. Thousands fled the neighborhood, leaving many of its modest hillside homes empty. In 2001, the population decline led to the closure of Gladstone, which was built in 1915.

The rise of the Hazelwood Green mega-development has played a big part in changing the neighborhood's fortunes. Major institutions have pledged hundreds of millions of dollars in investment for the vast, vacant land along the Monongahela River where the LTV mill once stood. The potential of the Second Avenue commercial corridor and strong neighborhood institutions have also made Hazelwood more attractive.

A big part of that is centered around Gladstone Middle School, built into a steep Hazelwood hillside. The building is owned by the Gladstone Community Partnership LLC, a limited liability corporation created by the Hazelwood Initiative. The school's main building is slated to become 51 apartments, 42 of them falling into various categories of affordability.

"It's been vacant for almost 20 years, and the Hazelwood Initiative saw an opportunity to



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do two things: one, to preserve a historic building, and two, to start addressing the community's pervasive affordable housing needs," says Diamonte Walker, deputy executive director of the Urban Redevelopment Authority.

The school, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, will have the masonry of its deteriorated facades

restored and the auditorium will be transformed into a community meeting space.

Restoring a historic building isn't cheap; the project will cost nearly \$24 million. To assemble the funding required finding a creative array of sources, such as the 9% Low-Income Housing Tax Credit and money from the American Rescue Plan Act.

Rothschild Doyno Collaborative will be the architect for the project, which is expected to break ground in the spring or early summer. Walker says that construction is tentatively slated to be completed by the third quarter of 2023.

The site's Annex property, which is connected to the main school building by an elevated walkway, will not be redeveloped at this time.