

PHIPPS CONSERVATORY AND BOTANICAL GARDENS

Phipps Conservatory Garden Center

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



Top and above: Mellon Park

Built in 1893, Pittsburgh's Phipps Conservatory is one of the oldest, largest, and greenest public gardens in the nation. Originally established to provide a verdant respite from the steel mills and factories that once dominated the region, the Conservatory is now a leading force in Pittsburgh's transformation from a city of industry to a city of regeneration.

Phipps Garden Center is located in the former carriage house of the estate of banker/industrialist Richard B. Mellon. It sits at the intersection of some of the city's most affluent and economically depressed neighborhoods, in what is now known as Mellon Park. To transform the Garden Center into a community asset that transparently engages

A regenerative design process transforms a world-renowned conservancy's garden center into a Living Building that connects America's "Iron City" to its natural legacy.

stakeholders and inspires visitors, Phipps is renovating the historic carriage house and expanding it using deep green and high-performance construction strategies. The new facility will host educational programming and events, a retail shop, and a café.

As a member of a design team headed by Rosthschild Doyno Collaborative, Biohabitats is leading the water infrastructure visioning and detailed engineering for onsite water treatment and rainwater harvesting to ensure that the project meets the rigorous standards of the Living Building Challenge's Net Positive Water Imperative. The goal is to harvest, treat, and reuse all of the water that falls on, flows into, or is used by the facility on site.

The project is unique not only for its ambitious sustainability goals, but for the regenerative

and biophilic process being employed to design it. Facilitated by the 7Group, a collaborative of leading visionaries in regenerative design, that process begins by examining the patterns of life in the site's landscape and immersing each member of the design team in that landscape. The Garden Center project is transforming a building long associated with the industry that degraded the environment into a state-of-the-art facility that celebrates, regenerates, and connects people to it.

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