

Civic Groups Lay Out Visions For Old Cook County Hospital - Medical District - DNAinfo.com Chicago

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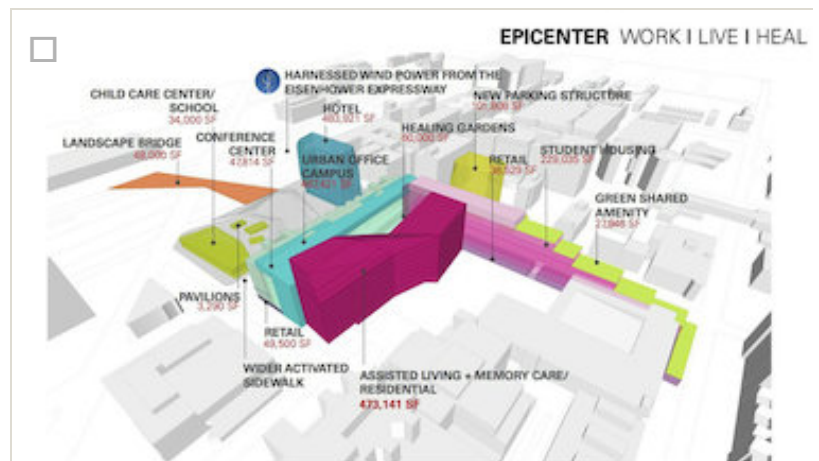
By **Stephanie Lulay** on October 8, 2014 9:25am

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MEDICAL DISTRICT — What's next for the old Cook County Hospital? Five civic organizations presented their visions for the site at the Chicago Architecture Foundation Tuesday night.

The development suggestions - which include residential lofts, a hotel and a business incubator - will now be used to inform potential developers about the opportunities that exist at the old hospital site.

While the presentations focused on redevelopment scenarios that would utilize the old hospital, it is not certain the historic building will be saved. The county will consider the most viable ideas from developers, and that could still mean demolition, said Tim Brangle, senior associate with Chicago Consultants Studio Inc., the group managing the



West Axon TOTAL SF = 2,042,043 SF

Groups Offer Ideas for Old Cook County Hospital Site

development.

The county is expected to seek developer proposals by early winter, Brangle said last month.

MULTI-PLATFORM COMPLEX

During Tuesday's meeting, which was strictly for floating ideas and not for formal proposals, the Metropolitan Planning Council team envisioned the old hospital as a retail, conference and office space. An addition and development of the larger site would create a multi-platform complex that includes a hotel, an assisted living/memory care facility, senior housing, student housing, a clinic and child care facility.

Amenities on site would include dining, boutique retail stores, a pharmacy and fitness center, according to the plan.

GLOBAL WELLNESS CENTER

The Chicago Central Area Committee wants the old Cook County Hospital to be part of a new global wellness center that would specialize in bioscience research, development and commercialization.

The historic hospital's north facade would be restored under the team's plan, serving as a gateway to an expanded building. The global wellness center would anchor a campus of new buildings, including a business incubator, in an effort to attract startups and established companies to the site.

The proposal also calls for a community health center, an underground parking garage and a digital museum to be added.

HOSPITAL TO LOFTS

Landmarks Illinois, a non-profit dedicated to historic preservation, highlighted two plans

Tuesday. The first proposal called for the entire old hospital building to be rehabbed into office and retail space; another plan would see residential and retail uses developed.

In the second scenario, the group proposed converting the building into one, two and three bedroom lofts with retail and leasing on ground floor.

Several new buildings and a parking garage extension would be developed on site under the plan, but the old Cook County Hospital building would remain unchanged.

HOTEL

Lambda Alpha International's Burnham team would aim to see a hotel and conference center developed at the old Cook County building.

In an effort to court a major corporation, the team called for a building with unique architecture elements — a "stand out" that people would notice. Under the plan, the group would want to get a big business to commit to moving their HQ to the site and "build [the property]-to-suit" the company's needs.

Retail, restaurant, athletic and entertainment uses would also be featured.

A second Lambda Alpha group, called Team Bennett, focused on strategies to land the best proposals from developers. All of the presentations are available [online](#).

To honor the hospital's rich legacy, some former hospital employees previously said they [want a Cook County Medical Museum](#) incorporated into future developments.

The former hospital, 1835 W. Harrison St., was replaced by [Stroger Hospital of Cook County](#). Completed in 1914, the remaining former hospital structure was previously used as the administrative wing and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Video of the proposal event can be [viewed online](#).