

LOUISVILLE BUSINESS FIRST

Jewish Community Center breaks ground on \$43 million facility

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The Jewish Community Center of Louisville on Thursday held a ceremonial groundbreaking for the long-anticipated makeover of the campus near Bowman Field.

The local nonprofit will spend \$42.5 million to build a 107,000-square-foot facility near the existing campus at 3600 Dutchmans Lane.

I wrote in August 2018 that the Jewish Community Center of Louisville would build a modern, but smaller community center and an indoor aquatic center. At that time, the center had an agreement to acquire the neighboring Anshei Sfard synagogue properties.

“The plan is to take Anshei Sfard down, however we don’t yet have a timeline projected for this removal yet,” a spokesperson for JCC said in an email.

Public records show that JCC acquired that property in May 2019 from Congregation Anshei Sfard Inc. for \$3.5 million.

“For over 130 years, the JCC has been a true community center, welcoming our entire community in and turning no one away,” Sara Klein Wagner, president and CEO of the JCC, said in a news release. “As we continue to serve children, families and seniors through our many community programs, our new campus will provide a modern, open and accessible facility to gather in ways that have never been previously possible.”

The project is expected to take about 18 months and will be funded with donor commitment that surpasses \$40 million raised during “the leadership phase” of the donor campaign, the release states.

The architect for the project is the Louisville office of Cincinnati-based GBBN Architects Inc.; the general contractor is Louisville-based Calhoun Construction; Louisville-based PLC Management LLC is the owner’s representative on the project.

The new structure will be set further south on the property, closer to Interstate 264, which makes up the property’s southern border.

The indoor family aquatic center includes a six-lane, 25-meter pool with a zero-depth entry recreation area, a splash pad, a water slide and a vortex pool. The existing outdoor pool will remain.

The floor-to-ceiling glass entrance opens to a large gathering area and connects to an internal thoroughfare that runs the length of the structure. It will be called “The Street” and connect all sections of the JCC. The facility will also feature a large and flexible auditorium.

The health and wellness area will feature a new gym with a full basketball court, two group exercise rooms, a functional training room, cycle studio and an elevated running track that will be larger than the one in the existing structure. The running track will be on the same floor as the workout rooms, equipment and free weights.

The facility will have a private entrance for the JCC’s Early Learning Center, which will be expanded to 12 classrooms.

The JCC has moved the fundraising campaign to a public phase to raise the remaining roughly \$2.5 million to reach the total cost of about \$42.5 million.

The existing JCC, which is branded as The J, was built in 1955. The existing structures will be demolished after the new facility is complete.

