

THE FILSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S EXPANSION

ENHANCING THE NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENTS OF OLD LOUISVILLE

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This article is the fifth in a series
on The Filson Historical Society's
Old Louisville Campus Expansion.

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Expansion Architects*

In the mid-1980s The Filson purchased and renovated, and in 1986 occupied, its present home, Old Louisville's historic Ferguson Mansion and Carriage House. Due to our continuing evolution and dynamic growth since that move, The Filson has embarked on its bold Campus Expansion Project that will modernize and substantially enlarge its facilities, enabling us to continue to accomplish our mission and meet the needs of the communities we serve. In prior articles we have described the overall Project and certain of its important design features , from its careful integration into the Old Louisville neighborhood to its innovative, state-of-the art new interior spaces, including its modern, multi-use programmable lecture and event facilities. The Project also features dramatic changes to the natural environment surrounding the Filson's facilities, another manifestation of the Project's purposeful integration with the Old Louisville community.

The Campus master plan includes a new European-style public mall—a physical green space—that provides a virtually porous urban boundary for the site, while grounding the Campus buildings at the same time. The mall will be an open public space and amenity at all hours. Centered on axial alignments with neighboring properties and buildings, this civic-scaled outdoor courtyard allows for the re-integration of the neighborhood's historic fabric from the original circa 1890 Southern Expansion development era—a unique feature of that movement—eroded by urban renewal efforts of the late 1960s. The mall greenspace will be supported and enhanced by extensive landscape features and plantings about the Campus site, including grass lawns as well as clusters of native Kentucky trees along the plan's Tree Aleé and in other parts of the campus. The north side yard is proportionately equal to the side yards of the original neighborhood fabric and the grass lawn along Ormsby Street carries the lawn set-backs of West Ormsby across the site.

The masterplan's emphasis on the natural environment is an extension of our community's historic fascination with and affection for the natural landscape of our region, as witnessed by the multitude of parks and the naming of, and plantings along, our streets—Walnut, Chestnut, Oak, and Magnolia. Preserving, incorporating, and ultimately saving significant portions of the natural world within the urban landscape has long been important to us as a community. In that tradition the Filson's Campus expansion will make a significant contribution to the natural, "park-centric" environment of Old Louisville and the Metro at large.

We ask your support for this visionary Campus Expansion plan, which will enhance not only The Filson's man-made facilities but the natural environment of the Campus and the surrounding neighborhood as well. The expanded new Campus will serve as an anchor development and important symbol and catalyst for continued growth in Old Louisville. Please watch for future articles on the Campus Expansion project in upcoming editions of The Filson. For full information on the Campus Expansion, visit our website www.Filsonhistorical.org.



FOURTH AND ORMSBY: EXPANDED CAMPUS'S NEW LANDSCAPE FEATURES



TYPICAL NEIGHBORHOOD LANDSCAPE BUFFER AND SETBACK



EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD FABRIC



AERIAL VIEW OF EXPANDED CAMPUS AND NEW LANDSCAPING



NORTH FACE OF NEW BUILDING AND LANDSCAPING