



WOODY MARSHALL, NEWS & RECORD

Lisa Hazlett with the Nussbaum Center talks April 6 about plans for the 220,000-square-foot building in Greensboro.

# Steelhouse renovations promise opportunities

‘They want this place to be a showplace’

**KENWYN CARANNA**  
Staff Reporter

GREENSBORO — From the street it looks a bit rusty and broken down, but the bones of the Carolina Steel plant remain in good shape.

Good enough for officials at the Nussbaum Center for Entrepreneurship to plan its rebirth into a manufacturing hub for Greensboro.

“We want to preserve, but obviously we want to modernize,” Nussbaum President Lisa Hazlett said.

During a recent tour of the 220,000-square-foot build-

ing, Hazlett explained that the revived plant will offer much more than the steel products it churned out for 85 years. Along with manufacturing and offices, plans include areas for commercial food preparation, community gatherings, artist studios, retail space and a farmers market.

There are even plans to include medical offices.

“You’re standing in a food desert and you’re standing in a medical desert,” said Hazlett during the plant tour.

Nussbaum CEO Sam Funchess “always had a vision for either medical or dental being in the building,” she said. “And when the Evans-Blount clinic over on MLK shut down, we were offi-

cially declared a medical desert.”

People from the nearby public housing communities could walk to the clinics and the plant, whose address is 1451 S. Elm-Eugene St. and is also on the city’s bus line.

About 20,000 square feet of the building will be “chopped off” to make space for additional parking and docks to accommodate food trucks.

“We’re in the design phase right now, so my architect and my engineers are working on a plan to update the infrastructure,” Hazlett said.

She envisions the \$36 million project to be similar to Mill 19 project of the Regional Industrial

## Nussbaum Center

A three-phase renovation plan includes space for commercial food preparation, manufacturing, offices, retail and artist studios.



©Mapcreator.io | OSM.org, Lee Enterprises graphic

Please see **STEELHOUSE**, Page A3

# Steelhouse

From A1

Development Corp. in Pittsburgh and Blue Ridge Food Ventures in Candler.

The building already has three tenants – USA Insulation of The Triad, Noah’s Arc Welding and The Honest Carpenter.

David McAlister, owner of USA Insulation of the Triad, said he likes the building’s location near Interstate 40, its affordability and the business assistance he’s received from the Nussbaum Center.

“The people that work here at the Nussbaum Center have been tremendous in helping us,” he said, adding that he looks forward to the renovations.

“It will be an upgraded area for us. It offers a little more security, upgraded facilities and restrooms and offices ... it will be nice when it gets through,” McAlister said.

The Honest Carpenter, aka Ethan James, records YouTube videos at the Steelhouse for his business.

“I’m curious to see what they manage to do,” said James, who plans to start recording online courses in August.

Hazlett said all three of the project phases are designed to be self-supporting through renting the spaces.

The first phase is an 85,000-square-foot manufacturing center. The estimated cost is \$12 million and will have bays “designed to serve entrepreneurs,” Hazlett said.

The bay sizes range from 1,700 to 15,000 square feet and will have water, electric, gas and internet access, she said. Each space will have a rollup door and a regular door.

The bays will have removeable walls to allow for businesses to expand as needed.

“We want you to start with the smallest space you need,” she said.

The second phase, which also will cost about \$12 million, is the community space. With 40-foot

high ceilings, plans call for building two additional floors in this area.

The third phase, which is estimated to be three or four years away, is a food production facility that will cost about \$12 million to build. It will have kitchens ranging from 200 to 1,000 square feet.

“And then you have specialty rooms, so you have a chocolate room, you have canning, packaging, contract services,” Hazlett explained. “And some of the kitchens will be private, so it’s yours 24/7, and some of the kitchens will be shared kitchens.”

The kitchens will be state certified and allow for meat processing, which requires a U.S. Department of Agriculture inspector on site. There also will be cold and dry storage.

Food truck parking will be available – health code restrictions require trucks to be parked at their kitchen when not in use.

Thus far the center has raised about \$6.5 million for the Steelhouse project. That includes \$4 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds from the city of Greensboro and Guilford County. Another \$2 million came from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The center is also applying for grants and seeking private funding to pay for the renovations.

“What COVID did is it highlighted the plight of small business,” Hazlett said. “It highlighted the importance of small business and so it made this project relevant.”

“And the jobs that we create inside the incubator are paying higher than both the city and the county average and we know that the Steelhouse is going to do the same thing.”

As for the structure’s outside appearance, Hazlett said that also will improve. Both board members and business owners want the space to be attractive.

“They want this to be a showplace,” she said.

kenwyn.caranna@greensboro.com  
336-373-7082



WOODY MARSHALL PHOTOS, NEWS & RECORD

Thomas Hudson welds at Noah’s Arc inside the Steelhouse at the Nausbaum Center for Entrepreneurship in Greensboro, N.C., on Tuesday, June 13, 2023.



Inside the Steelhouse at Nausbaum Center for Entrepreneurship in Greensboro, N.C., on Tuesday, June 13, 2023.