



A note from Dr. Susan Ehrlich, CEO

The Research Building is Becoming a Reality

Behind the fence encircling the space that once was the B/C parking lot, work has begun on the new UCSF Research and Academic Building at ZSFG.

This work has been a long time coming. Dr. Sue Carlisle, our Vice Dean for UCSF at ZSFG, one of the key leaders of the charge to get the building done since the very beginning, remembers the initial meetings to discuss a new research building happened 20 years ago. Between then and now, there were a lot of different ideas about where the building would be, including the A parking lot or within Buildings 100, 10, 20, 30 or 40. After fully investigating those places, the current site was selected, as well as the model for the partnership: UCSF would lease the property for 99 years, and build the research building there.

The original plan was to build the research building before Building 25 was built, but negotiations for the ground lease continued....and continued....and continued. The lease was finally approved by the Board of Supervisors on January 18, 2017 and signed by then-Mayor Ed Lee on February 13, 2017. In a final twist, the City and County of San Francisco did not have proper title to the site, adding more time to the process. Finally, escrow closed on August 5th, 2020.

And now the work has begun!

With the multiple twists and turns over the years, it was never actually certain the building would happen. But with the persistence and resilience of those working on the project, even a global pandemic could not get in the way of its completion.

In fact, the pandemic has illuminated why our partnership is so important. During this time, our talented UCSF faculty and staff, in partnership with the rest of our diverse DPH team, have been providing excellent and compassionate care that is informed by best international practices. In addition, our UCSF partner researchers have initiated and participated in key studies that not only improve care to individuals but illuminate how the pandemic impacts our community, especially our hard hit Latinx community. This has in turn allowed us, the DPH and the City to intervene from a wholistic public health perspective. It is truly an outstanding partnership in the service of all in our community, especially the most underserved.

What can we hope for the building and its soon-to-be occupants? Dr. Neil Powe, our Chief of Medicine at ZSFG sums it up: "I am hoping the new research building will allow us to better

define the determinants of diseases and their consequences in our patients and to develop new groundbreaking treatments and solutions to address them, thereby eliminating disparities in health and achieving health equity for all. “

Have a great week, everyone. Together, we will get through this as we always do, better than before –

Susan

