

## Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens Society

### Proposed Expansion Project

#### Summary of Public Comments Received Following the October 23, 2024 Public Information Session with Responses

In connection with the proposed renovation and expansion (“Expansion” or “Project”) of the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens located at 2655 South Park Avenue (the “Gardens” or “Site”), the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens Society (“Society”), together with Erie County (“County”), and representatives from Wendel Companies as Project Architect and Engineer of Record (“Wendel”), hosted a public information session at the Gardens on October 23, 2024 to provide the public with an update on the latest status of Project and the environmental review process conducted by the County as lead agency in a coordinated review pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”). During the information session the Society and Wendel presented on design and programming details and Project elevations and renderings were available for public review. At the information session the public was invited to leave written comments regarding the Project, and the County also made a website link available to provide access to project information and provide an electronic method for the public to submit further written comments through October 30, 2024.

In total, 67 comments were submitted during the comment period. The attached **Exhibit A** is a chart to index each of the public comments received, with annotations to group the comments by general category, as follows: (1) Comments in General Support; (2) Comments on Design and Modern Appearance; (3) Comments on Programming; (4) Comments on Project Need; and (5) Comments on Project Process. Please see below for a summary of the comments in each category, followed by the Society’s and/or County’s response to each comment category.

#### Comment Category 1: Comments in General Support

- *Summary of Comments in General Support:* Many comments offered general support for the Expansion, with the public expressing excitement about the enhanced capacity for education and event programming and opportunities to engage with the plants and displays. Commenters appreciated the design of the proposed building addition in the context of the overall Site, for example:
  - “With the existing magnificent architecture remaining front and center, this is a very exciting plan. I fully support it.”
  - “I think the expansion is very exciting for the next generation of our community and visitors. The new building brings a sense of contemporary design with respecting the beautiful historical nature of the existing building.”
  - “I feel it will be a worthwhile addition to the existing buildings. A reasonable induction of new while respecting the old to bring excitement to current members and visitors as well as welcoming new interest.”
  - “I love how the plans honor and compliment the amazing architecture that already exists while also providing the means for the Botanical Gardens to grow and serve our community for the future. I am all for the expansion and can't wait to visit when it is complete!”

- “This new expansion is beautiful and fits perfectly with the current unique design.”
- *Response to Comments in General Support:* We appreciate the comments in support and attribute positive public reception to the Society’s long planning process and outreach efforts that have resulted in an Expansion proposal that achieves the Society’s mission to deepen the connection between people and plants, and which also meets the community’s demand for accessible amenities and plant-centric programming and event spaces that will help broaden access to the Gardens and ensure its long term financial viability.

**Comment Category 2: Comments on Design and Modern Appearance**

- *Summary of Comments on Design and Modern Appearance:* Commenters emphasized the importance of the Frederick Law Olmstead designed South Park and the landmark nature of the site, particularly the Lord & Burnham glass conservatory, and expressed concerns about the modern appearance of the building addition in relation to the overall historic site. Commenters questioned the design and orientation of the new entrance/drop off area and expressed concern for how the new construction might impact the view of the conservatory, with some suggestions for the use of different and/or more transparent materials in the design of the new construction. The following comments are representative:
  - “Feeling pretty underwhelmed with this expansion and its ambition to create a modern face for the facility. . . . Where is the transparency?!”
  - “I would prefer the new construction to be less modern in appearance, and more traditional and faithful to the time the original building was constructed, if possible. Otherwise, I favor the expansion plan.”
  - “Need better materials and a more cohesive design.”
  - “I am very concerned about the renderings shown--the new buildings, as shown, are not appropriate/do not complement the Lord & Burnham building.”
  - “I’m very pleased the botanical garden is in a position to expand. I am sure the proposed expansion will help serve the gardens mission in a very functional way. With that being said, the proposed renderings look boring. Aesthetically underwhelming.”
  - “Very institutional. More effort should have been made to incorporate the original structure into the new design.”
- *Response to Comments on Design and Modern Appearance:* We appreciate the concerns expressed in these comments and the commenters’ emphasis on the care that must be accorded to the Expansion’s design in view of the historic Site in Olmstead’s South Park and the prominent aesthetic of the Lord & Burnham conservatory. These factors were key considerations that shaped the final design as proposed. In light of the conservancy’s historic status and the Gardens location in South Park, the Society has engaged in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (“SHPO”) throughout the design of the Expansion, and the Society remains committed to further consultation with SHPO to ensure

that the Expansion will not cause an adverse impact to those important historic resources. The Expansion's new construction is located behind the primary frontage of the conservatory structure, and also lower than it to avoid interfering with the design vista of the historic structure. It is constructed on previously disturbed ground, between an existing administrative building and an existing grow range building to ensure no meaningful change to the view of, or from, the Site. The new construction is sited and sized so that it will not impact the iconic, historic, and beloved front view of the conservatory structure. The new construction is effectively screened from view of South Park and Park Drive by careful orientation on Site and heavily planted borders. The Society also worked closely with the Buffalo Olmstead Parks Conservancy ("BOPC") to ensure the expansion will enhance the historic site and South Park, and BOPC has offered its full support for the expansion as proposed because it provides much needed additional square footage for meaningful programming to align with the community's needs and is complementary to the historic conservancy and surrounding historic landscapes.

Materials and design for the addition were chosen based upon project needs, and also to differentiate from the iconic structure in accordance with the United States Secretary of Interior Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties. This approach preserves an ability to appreciate the original architecture without the addition creating a false view of what was historic in the early 1900s.

Inspired by the iconic glass conservatory structure, glass paneling is currently proposed for the new construction up to the maximum amount feasible for the Project to meet energy efficiency standards (LEED silver certification as a result of the County's ownership of the buildings) and building code requirements. Glass paneling is proposed throughout the new construction in strategic locations to ensure that visitors (both interior and exterior) are afforded the best possible views of and from the expansion, including in key transitional spaces between the existing structure and the new construction. For example, large portions of the new construction's west facing façade as oriented towards South Park will be expansive, glazed glass windows that will offer natural light, a sense of porousness with the outdoors, and create a feeling of continuity and connection with the natural environment and prominent surroundings.

The fiber cement exterior cladding that makes up the remainder of the exterior façade achieves important objectives that will allow the expansion to proceed. The fiber cement exterior material respects the heavily wooded surrounding landscape and is cohesive with the timber construction of the interior of the proposed structure, and avoids the creation of a false sense of architectural history because it does not attempt to replicate the design or materials of the existing structures on the Site. Alternative exterior materials and treatments were considered throughout multiple iterations of the project design, but were not practicable due to a number of considerations, such as construction cost, complexity and timing, as well as long term maintenance and replacement concerns. For example, compared to natural wood siding, the proposed fiber

cement panels are not susceptible to fading from UV exposure, rot, or to boring insects, and requires minimal maintenance, which is an essential consideration for the Society as a nonprofit with a fixed annual operating budget. Aesthetically, the panels offer a pleasant variation in texture, coloring and finish that offers a warm and organic feel to the exterior of the new construction.

In short, the Project's proposed design for the new construction features expansive glass paneling in strategic locations paired with appropriate fiber cement panel cladding that offers a sustainable, affordable, exterior solution that allows the expansion to proceed and ensures the Garden's ongoing economic viability, all while preserving the historic and aesthetic value of the Gardens as a cherished cultural resource.

### **Comment Category 3: Comments on Programming**

- *Summary of Comments on Programming:* Commenters generally indicated support for the programming and enhanced capacity to host events, and offered suggestions for additional programming (e.g. "grounding" opportunities, enhanced outdoor exhibits/walking paths). Other commenters expressed concerns and requests for consideration of how the expanded event components of the project will contribute to the Gardens without detracting from the serene surroundings and the visitor experience of the natural environment.
- *Society's Response to Comments on Programming:* Between 2016 and 2019, The Society saw that visitation grew by 63%. From 2016 to 2019 participants in the Society's educational programs grew by 52%, and in 2019 over a half a million people visited the Botanical Gardens and every single special event sold out. The Society found that it was at 100% capacity for on-site programming for students and that it had to regularly turn schools away because of a lack of space. The Society also found a need for modern and accessible amenities, including a more convenient and accessible entrance. Over 14,000 square feet of renovated space and more than 16,000 square feet of new construction as proposed by the expansion will meet those programming needs and provide a relocated, accessible visitor entrance, state-of-the-art classrooms for education, modern event spaces, expanded outdoor gardens, new exhibit spaces, modernized growing space to support our plant collection, an expanded gift shop, café, and gender neutral restrooms as part of the Society's focus on inclusivity and accessibility for the whole community. Expanded programming offerings are enhancements to existing offerings and will not result in a dramatic increase in the scale, intensity, or frequency of events on Site. Currently, the Society hosts events in the conservatory, and although picturesque, the glass structure is extremely hot or uncomfortably cold for humans for most of the year and hosting guests in the plant-centric spaces risks damage to the living collection. The expansion will, in fact, allow the Society to offer more respect to dedicated plant spaces and move events to more appropriate spaces within the new construction. The Society is committed to providing meaningful public access to world class living collections and a welcoming environment for visitors, members,

volunteers, staff, donors, community partners, and friends. All events and educational programs are carefully scheduled and monitored to ensure there will be no disruption to visitors' quiet enjoyment of the serene natural environment.

#### **Comment Category 4: Comments on Project Need**

- *Summary of Comments on Project Need:* One commenter indicated a general opposition to construction and growth and requested the South Park golf course be dismantled and returned to a natural state, and another comment questioned the need for the project in view of other environmental priorities.
- *Society's Response to Comments on Project Need:* We note that the South Park golf course is located outside of the boundary of the County-owned and Society-managed Site and therefore it is not involved in the Expansion. The Society is a 501(c)(3), not-for-profit organization whose mission is to deepen the connection between people and plants through beautiful gardens and extraordinary experiences. The Society's stated vision is for a happy and healthy world transformed by the power of plants. The Society's long term planning studies demonstrate the Expansion is necessary to secure key revenue streams and operational efficiencies that are essential to the long-term financial viability and success of the Gardens and the continued fulfillment of the Society's mission and vision. The Society respectfully submits that the Expansion is a worthwhile effort that will serve the public interest and promote respect and care for the natural environment.

#### **Comment Category 5: Miscellaneous Comments on Project Process**

- *Summary of Miscellaneous Comments on Project Process:* Several comments noted disapproval of the architectural firm changes since Project inception in 2015, and one comment indicated dissatisfaction with the duration of the comment period.
- *Society's Response to Miscellaneous Comments on Project Process:* The Society owes its continued operation of the Gardens to the general public as the primary patrons of the Gardens, and also to municipal leaders at all levels of government, as well as related cultural organizations and institutions such as the Buffalo Olmstead Parks Conservancy. Accordingly, since initial Project planning began in 2015, the Society has engaged in extensive public outreach to gauge community opinion and interest, including through numerous stakeholder events and frequent updates via letters, emails, social media posts, and meetings regarding the status of the Project. In 2017, the Society commissioned an independent, strategic fundraising consulting firm to conduct a project feasibility study that included one-on-one interviews with 63 study participants with an interest in the Gardens and included circulation of an online survey to more than 2,000 Society contacts, resulting in 165 e-survey participants who responded to provide insights to be considered in the design of the Expansion. The Project and information about its design and objectives has been spotlighted by local news outlets throughout project development, including regular features by The Buffalo News and other local outlets on the status of the Project. In response, the

expansion has received statements of support from a broad array of representative stakeholders, including the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Congressman Timothy Kennedy (NY-26), New York State Assembly Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes, New York State Assemblyman Patrick Burke, Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz, and City of Buffalo Common Council President Christopher Scanlon. In the ongoing spirit of the Society's extensive public outreach throughout the development of the Expansion, the Society was pleased to offer the October 23, 2024 public information session and associated comment period as a further courtesy and gesture of respect for the public's input on the Expansion. The Society appreciates the many comments that were submitted and is grateful for the opportunity to respond here.

After nearly a decade of work to realize the Project, and after many years of working with stakeholders, architects, elected officials, and various municipal agencies to design an expansion plan to meet the community's growing interest in the Gardens and ensure the long-term financial sustainability of this cherished public resources for years to come, the Project is viable and ready to proceed. The Society acknowledges that the Project design team has evolved since planning began in earnest in 2015 to correspond to the Society's needs and the Expansion's objectives. The Botanical Gardens started the process for the Project by first engaging with an architecture firm, Toshiko Mori Architecture, for the development of a Master Plan Update Study, and later as architect of record throughout 2019 in connection with a prior version of the project that was larger in impact, scale, and cost than is currently proposed. During the COVID-19 pandemic and throughout 2020, progress on the expansion plan naturally slowed while supply chain and other disruptions resulted in dramatically increased anticipated construction costs for the expansion. Accordingly, in 2021 the Society determined that the expansion plan needed to be more tailored, to-scale, and sustainable to correspond to economic realities and the Society's anticipated development and construction budget. The Society retained Wendel in 2023 as a full-service architecture, engineering, and landscape architecture firm that was tasked with evaluating all components of the site, budget, footprint, and sustainability, among other factors that would support a more achievable approach that could bring the expansion to fruition. Throughout 2023 and 2024, the Society and its Board have worked diligently with Wendel, the County, the City, BOPC, and other interested parties to develop a feasible project that preserves the majesty of the Gardens while meeting the need for accessible spaces and community demand for additional amenities and event spaces that sustain the Gardens financially. The Society appreciates the contributions of each and every firm and individual, past and present, that has made the Expansion a reality and is grateful to Wendel for its expertise and consultation throughout the remaining stages of Project implementation.

# Exhibit A

Relationship/interest in the Botanical Gardens and/or Expansion	Comment on the Botanical Gardens Expansion	Place of Residence Zip Code	Comment Identification	Comment & Response Category
General Interest/Visitor;Horticultural Interest;Architectural Interest	Feeling pretty underwhelmed with this expansion and its ambition to create a modern face for the facility. I don't find the architecture very inspiring and the entrance and public interface welcoming or inviting. The main door is small and reveals nothing about the vibrancy of what is happening inside. How about a meaningful cover or canopy, not small cheap umbrella structures. Where is the transparency?! Where is the creativity and craft from the Buchholz McCavoy team? Please provide some more thought and attention to the quality of this addition to a historical and important building. It feels like a pretty cheap tack on at this point that may meet the programmatic needs but does not create a meaningful addition to the architectural/cultural landscape of Buffalo. Also, bring more plants outside or blur the visual boundary between inside out. Please push for more!!!	14213	Comment 1	Category 2
General Interest/Visitor	Disappointed that you continue to change the design team. Mori is gone and it seems the Irish/American firm is out too.	14214	Comment 2	Category 5
General Interest/Visitor;Botanical Gardens Society Member;Botanical Gardens Employee, Board Member, or Volunteer;Horticultural Interest;Architectural Interest;Neighbor/live nearby;Educational/School Interest	whatever you decide to do to it, keep the Victorian aesthetic of the original greenhouses. its an asset to the city and the suburbs as well .	14001	Comment 3	Category 2
General Interest/Visitor;Botanical Gardens Society Member;Botanical Gardens Employee, Board Member, or Volunteer;Horticultural Interest;Architectural Interest;Neighbor/live nearby;Educational/School Interest	A very exciting project! So much potential at BECBG/ Arboretum. I am concerned about what appears to be a new entrance. Nothing beats the / majesty of walking into the dome! It has been the focal point of the gardens since it's inception. I am not adverse to change or expansion, but the original architecture is a treasure.	14218	Comment 4	Category 2
General Interest/Visitor;Botanical Gardens Society Member;Architectural Interest;Neighbor/live nearby	I was thrilled to hear about a new cafe coming to the neighborhood! Every time I go to the gardens, other visitors are asking me where to go to breakfast nearby. I hope that the buildings retain some of the 1900 charm. The dome is so beautiful, but these renderings look to hideously modern - like they'd be part of the art campus, not a historic property. I like the idea of space for events (we loved the 4H exhibits and train shows and my kids liked their field trips), though I worry if the space gets too big, the experience may feel overcrowded, which it never has in the past.	14218	Comment 5	Category 2
Horticultural Interest	I applaud the idea of this expansion. I'd love to see more beautiful gardens dedicated to specific plants, arboretum, rose garden, perennial gardens, test gardens. I do not agree with gender neutral restrooms. Why are those needed?	14094	Comment 6	Category 3
General Interest/Visitor;Neighbor/live nearby	I love that we are looking to grow and expand this amazing facility! I hope for more kid/teen friendly activities within the gardens. My kids love the play area and scavenger hunts. I am glad the new build is going behind the existing gardens so to not block its beauty. Could a playground areas be added to the outdoor area that is garden themed or woodland themed? To be honest I don't care if you take from the golf course to expand the gardens more!	14220	Comment 7	Category 1
General Interest/Visitor;Architectural Interest;Neighbor/live nearby	Great idea, poor design. Expansion design lacks cohesion with landmark structure, facade is uninviting for wedding space. Opposed to anything that visually alters conservatory silhouette. Too little info given, comment period too short.	14220	Comment 8	Category 2
Botanical Gardens Society Member;Horticultural Interest;Architectural Interest	I'm uncomfortable with how this seems to be leaning into a place to host events. Noise from weddings held there now disrupts what should be a peaceful and serene walk through the greenhouses to appreciate nature. I'm not entirely against events at such a place, but adding such a large space for that purpose seems to rub up against the intent of a public garden and the visitor experience	14225	Comment 9	Category 3
General Interest/Visitor	i think the expansion is a wonderful idea. the current Botanical Gardens are amazing, but they expand it will bring more to offer to everyone	14047	Comment 10	Category 1
General Interest/Visitor;Neighbor/live nearby;Educational/School Interest	Love the idea of being able to expand. I would love to see it go towards more space for field trips or a Cafe. I remember as a kid always going to The Gardens on a field trip and looked forward to it as it seemed S. Buffalo was in another city and being on the East side, we didn't venture out that way to much. Sad that you guys have to turn buses away as you can't accommodate. They're missing it on a true treasure. And of course a cafe to keep them there so they don't have to leave and possibly won't come back.	14215	Comment 11	Category 3
General Interest/Visitor	Great use of the facility for hosting events outside of the garden, this is such a wonderful place to visit and allows more individuals who may not normally visit the site to see it beauty.	14043	Comment 12	Category 1
General Interest/Visitor;Horticultural Interest	I have been going to the Botanical Gardens since I was a small child and have taken many non-plant types of people there and to see their reaction to the wonders of plant life that live beyond those doors is amazing. As a professional forester for the State I feel this expansion is long overdue and the residents of WNY would greatly benefit by the expansion of the facility!	14719	Comment 13	Category 1
General Interest/Visitor	Should have been done a long time ago. The expansion should be bigger, too. Double the size of the facility and make it the focal point of the South Buffalo area.	14201	Comment 14	Category 1
General Interest/Visitor	The more enjoyable, educational, bonding experiences we can cultivate in Buffalo, the better! The Botanical Gardens does great work with local youth, as well as offering a rich and unique event space for us "older kids". The more we invest in Buffalo, the more we can all enjoy and prosper	14075	Comment 15	Category 1
General Interest/Visitor;Horticultural Interest;Architectural Interest	I think it's a great idea and amazing opportunity! We would have had our wedding here if the venue could have accommodated our large family.	14075	Comment 16	Category 1



Neighbor/live nearby	In general, construction is bad, growth is worse... especially near bodies of water. I'd be more interested in seeing the surrounding golf course dismantled, and the land returned to natural habitat for wildlife.	14218	Comment 17	Category 4	
General Interest/Visitor	Why waste money on gender neutral restrooms? Another nod to the woke culture.	14224	Comment 18	Category 3	
General Interest/Visitor	Hi there! One thing I have thought about regarding the type of environment the Botanical Gardens can provide for people during harsh Buffalo winters, is the potential to host a space for barefoot grounding. Grounding has been shown to have incredible anti-inflammatory benefits, and can be paired with activities like yoga. It is gaining in popularity and appeals to people of all age groups. I believe the botanical gardens could become the only location that is available to people for barefoot grounding during winter months when snow covers the ground. This would also provide an easily marketable offering to the community. Very excited to hear about the planned expansion, and hope to hear from you soon!	14227	Comment 19	Category 3	
Horticultural Interest;Architectural Interest	If this expansion includes changes to or destroying the old buildings, that would be a great mistake. The original building are as Beautiful as the plants and flowers they contain. The new proposed Buildings are too modern and the original buildings would be a great loss to the community and the county	14150	Comment 20	Category 2	
General Interest/Visitor	The Botanical Gardens is a jewel of WNY. I'd love to see it expand and be accessible to more people. This new expansion is beautiful and fits perfectly with the current unique design.	14075	Comment 21	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor	The renderings look very nice. One thing of note - when I visit botanical gardens in other cities, they often have large plant collections displayed outside their buildings. I realize our winter climate is a bit harsher than most places, but I've always felt the outdoor areas surrounding the buildings are somewhat lacking. Perhaps this would be a good time to incorporate more outdoor elements as well?	14217	Comment 22	Category 3	
General Interest/Visitor	I love how the plans honor and compliment the amazing architecture that already exists while also providing the means for the Botanical Gardens to grow and serve our community for the future. I am all for the expansion and can't wait to visit when it is complete!	14127	Comment 23	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor;Horticultural Interest;Architectural Interest	I love the idea of an inner courtyard and more accessible entrances. I love the art pieces leading up to the entrance. The part that I'm not a huge fan of is the entrance itself. It doesn't feel grand enough. It feels like I'm entering a warehouse or school from the secondary entrance. When you turn that corner and see that sign, it should be a "wow" moment. It should make people stop and stare for a brief moment. The botanical gardens are a legendary piece of Buffalo's history. I feel that this entrance design degrades it down to something so much less than it is.	14222	Comment 24	Category 2	
General Interest/Visitor;Horticultural Interest;Architectural Interest	I am very much in favor of and looking forward to visiting an expanded and updated Botanical Gardens! Not only having additional exhibition space be valuable but classroom and event space will be an asset to the community. I certainly hope to see this happening!	14222	Comment 25	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor;Horticultural Interest;Architectural Interest	We have loved the gardens. I would be nice to be able to get some food there with the kids and more water features. The kids really love those fish.	14001	Comment 26	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor;Horticultural Interest;Architectural Interest	I am very much in favor of and looking forward to visiting an expanded and updated Botanical Gardens! Not only having additional exhibition space be valuable but classroom and event space will be an asset to the community. I certainly hope to see this happening!	14222	Comment 27	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor;Architectural Interest	Expansion is wonderful, however I am against moving the main entrance to the addition. I believe this favors people visiting by car and makes it more difficult for users coming via public transit.	14213	Comment 28	Category 2	
General Interest/Visitor	I feel it will be a worthwhile addition to the existing buildings. A reasonable induction of new while respecting the old to bring excitement to current members and visitors as well as welcoming new interest.	14086	Comment 29	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor	I think itâ€™s a great idea! They are a wonderful venue to host special occasions. Iâ€™ve attended a few.	14075	Comment 30	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor;Horticultural Interest;Architectural Interest	I would prefer the new construction to be less modern in appearance, and more traditional and faithful to the time the original building was constructed, if possible. Otherwise, I favor the expansion plan.	14127	Comment 31	Category 2	
General Interest/Visitor;Architectural Interest	Love it. Always great to see expansions to local cultural institutions. Making it more visitor friendly is a great idea.	14222	Comment 32	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor	Whenever out of town visitors are with me, they often express interest in visiting BBG. Considering how much increased revenue the AKG brought, I imagine an expanded BBG would too. I see the plan includes new special event spaces which would be a huge draw.  All in all the expansion is a great idea!	14209	Comment 33	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor	I hope this becomes reality! I would love to visit more often but the current building seems so old and outdated. I'm happy to see the Botanical Gardens get the same attention as some of our other beloved cultural institutions!	14217	Comment 34	Category 1	
Botanical Gardens Society Member	Love the idea, but that orange and yellow boxy monstrosity is hideous. Why not expand in a way that reflects and enhances nature and classical style? Mind you, Iâ€™m pretty punk in my aesthetic, but these designs are so ugly. It looks like like a childrenâ€™s daycare center and a beautiful respite from the city and winter.	14216	Comment 35	Category 2	

General Interest/Visitor	I am a Niagara Falls resident (As well as a Buffalo State and UB graduate) who had fond memories of the Wintergarden as a child and teenager. It getting torn down was a travesty.  You could, in your expansion, rebuild a version of the Wintergarden that could be appreciated with the rest of the gardens.	14305	Comment 36	Category 3	
General Interest/Visitor;Botanical Gardens Society Member;Architectural Interest	I lived in Richmond, VA for years and was a member of Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens. Even though we're farther north here, I would like to see more outside exhibits and a brick walking path. Frankly, I think the golf course is too close and hinders expansion. People should be able to walk around the pond, etc. There should be a dock on the pond. Check out Lewis Ginter. It's a great example.	14075	Comment 37	Category 3	
General Interest/Visitor;Architectural Interest	It's hard to see this proposed addition as anything other than an insult to the proud edifice our civic-minded ancestors entrusted to us.  If more financing is the issue, perhaps these renderings can at least serve as a threat. This is the kind of disheartening mediocracy we will have to accept if a more robust fund-raising campaign is unable to meet with greater success.	10028	Comment 38	Category 2	
General Interest/Visitor;Horticultural Interest;Neighbor/live nearby;Educational/School Interest	I think the expansion is very exciting for the next generation of our community and visitors. The new building brings a sense of contemporary design with respecting the beautiful historical nature of the existing building. I wouldn't want to see a "replica expansion" bc no one has the same skill set to build a building like the original campus. The sustainable aspects with the building materials and plantings are an exciting wave to the next generation and also being respectful of the amazing heritage these gardens have.	14075	Comment 39	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor;Horticultural Interest;Architectural Interest	As a lifelong Erie County resident, I have visited the Botanical Gardens since childhood. I now take my own children there. I love this expansion! It's a beautiful wooden contrast to the existing Botanical Gardens that will compliment it perfectly. Please do not delay this project any further.	14059	Comment 40	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor;Horticultural Interest;Architectural Interest;Neighbor/live nearby;Educational/School Interest	Looking forward to new possibilities with the expansion. There are plenty of things to consider, but the first and foremost to me would be the appropriateness of the design to the original architecture, and these designs are not it. This is a local and dare I say national architecture treasure, and nothing presented here even kind of says that we understand that. Need better materials and a more cohesive design. Please go back to the drawing board and don't accept anything less than perfection for this project.	14209	Comment 41	Category 2	
General Interest/Visitor	I think the plans as pictured are wonderful. We definitely deserve a bigger space devoted to natural beauty, education, and just a good place for people to go that doesn't involve a bar or sports. With the existing magnificent architecture remaining front and center, this is a very exciting plan. I fully support it	14225	Comment 42	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor	I think an expansion of the Gardens is a strategic example to keep it relevant and I welcome this proposal.	14120	Comment 43	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor;Horticultural Interest	Love it! Need more space for unique displays, I don't know what is going into these new spaces but I don't think it should be event spaces, I'd like to see more plants, animals (maybe butterfly conservatory), something that would keep me coming back. I do visit about 2x per year but it's more or less the same things I'm looking at. Maybe more changeable displays would be attractive to bring repeat visitors. The Bot. Gar. has come so far in the last 20 years compared to when I was a kid (I'm 49 and grew up in Blasdell so I'm REALLY familiar with the gardens).	14086	Comment 44	Category 3	
General Interest/Visitor;Horticultural Interest;Architectural Interest	I am very concerned about the renderings shown--the new buildings, as shown, are not appropriate/do not complement the Lord & Burnham building. We have an incredible opportunity to further this world class site--please do not sully it with mediocre new construction. Bring back Toshika More!	14216	Comment 45	Category 2 & 5	
General Interest/Visitor;Architectural Interest	This is quite a bland addition that pales in comparison to the architectural gem of the original building. Why?	14207	Comment 46	Category 2	
General Interest/Visitor;Architectural Interest	Being that these gardens are the product of world-renowned landscaping architect Frederick Law Olmsted- and the building is my world-renowned glass-house architects Lord & Burnham, the utmost respect should be employed to this jewel in the City of Buffalo. It is a 125 year old major landmark in this area.  As such, it should require a treatment that enhances the campus/grounds in a way that shows off that respect. As many interested residents will have differing opinions as to what that might mean, I would hope that a great architect and/or firm capable of that would be employed. This building looks more like it was designed to be something like a suburban High School...I feel it hardly does the original building the justice it deserves. As much as it may serve functionally, it seriously lacks the character and quality we should expect for an addition to this local and unique marvel. Additionally, these renderings are obviously sufficiently vague as to make it impossible to judge the materials they might employ. T H A T building does NOT look inspired, if that was the original intention. . .	14222	Comment 47	Category 2 & 5	

General Interest/Visitor	<p>Happy to see this expansion project moving forward. It will be such a great benefit to the botanical gardens. My one negative about the gardens is it is a 45min to hour experience. Now I'm running around with kids so there's that, but if they can do anything about making it more than a short experience I am all for it.</p> <p>The new entrance seems super appropriate too with the parking lot there. Hoping current event space in the conservatory and entryway/gift shop turn into garden areas. Would like to see the gardens, especially in the dome and larger buildings, have some different viewing platforms to see the gardens from different heights and elevations. Similar perhaps to the old Winter gardens in NF and the butterfly conservatory in NF Ontario.</p> <p>While, I understand the event space and gift shop is important to the Gardens bottom line, I hope this project can prioritize the expanding and enhancing an already great garden experience. Perhaps a display and exhibit on native plants and flowers? Thank you and keep up the good work.</p>	14075	Comment 48	Category 3	
General Interest/Visitor	If we can't afford to stop dumping raw sewage into our drinking water every time it rains, then we can't afford this.	14075	Comment 49	Category 4	
General Interest/Visitor	Love to see you expanding and it looks nice. We lived in Atlanta for a while and loved going to their events - They'd do Friday "wine in the woods", several events with specialty themed cocktails through the year, cooking demonstrations, and all kinds of engaging events to get people in. Not related to the expansion, but would love to see more stuff like that here - we'd sure go more often to things like that anyway. Love that you're taking some of that extra space to turn into more to see, though.	14072	Comment 50	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor	A Restaurant will be a welcoming and beautiful addition surrounded by plants and trees with glass looking out to more plants and trees lit up especially at night. I often visit Buffalo especially Bills games there are no restaurants open Sundays late, even the players mentioned this. So my family and I would love it to visit and have a warm green environment all year long even when winter comes itâ€™s green and gorgeous and colorful.	14051	Comment 51	Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor;Architectural Interest	This is exciting to see the Botanical Gardens get an expansion. The renderings look great, but I would like to see more connection between the outdoors and indoors. West elevation looks like it would be a great place to extend the patio and transition into the landscape. Looks like an abrupt transition from indoor to outdoors.	14051		Category 2	
Architectural Interest	What relation does this have with the existing site. This design looks as if it was an expansion for an elementary school. It does not blend well with the current building. This is something I expect from a developer that is trying to make the lowest cost building and not something that is architectural to compliment the great building we have today. I suggest finding a new architect.	14224		Category 2	
General Interest/Visitor;Botanical Gardens Society Member;Horticultural	Your expansion plans look great! That area could use this boost. My only comment/concern is making sure that the beauty of the original Conservatory is front and center!!!	14052		Category 1	
General Interest/Visitor	I'm very pleased the botanical garden is in a position to expand. I am sure the proposed expansion will help serve the gardens mission in a very functional way. With that being said, the proposed renderings lookâ€¦boring. Aesthetically underwhelming. For a city that prides itself on architecture this is far from a statement. It looks like a remodeled basement. Functional, helpful, better than doing nothing. But a lost opportunity to really make a splash	98221		Category 2	
General Interest/Visitor	As long as none of the historic building is dismantled I look forward to an expansion. I also hope the style design will be characterized in the expansion.	14219		Category 2	
General Interest/Visitor;Botanical Gardens Society Member	Please do not transform the facility into a theme park/Disneyland. I visit the Botanical Grader to appreciate the plants - I enjoy the elegance, the serenity and the staying power of tradition at the Garden. Put your frou-frou stuff somewhere else.	14075		Category 3	
General Interest/Visitor	The South Park and Botanical Gardens deserve a first-rate building. If you want to attract visitors, that's what you need to do. Talk to the folks at the Martin House and AKG. It's the quality of the design of their campus buildings that has them bringing in NEW visitors. And you can do the same at South Park. It's not too late to get this done right.	14226		Category 2	
General Interest/Visitor	1. PLEASE improve the neglected outdoor side gardens, now looking horrible with overgrown weeds. It can be a beautiful outdoor garden with many flowers and plants. Visit the beautiful Hamilton and Toronto Botanical outdoor gardens as an example. Why can't Buffalo have the same? 2. Open the entire park to car traffic and make it an attraction in winter with holiday light displays. Think outside the box! 3. Build greenhouses for new plant displays, which is what visitors want the most and come to see daily. New classroom and event space really limits the use and will only be used for limited hours and time of the year. I was very disappointed to hear that there weren't any additional greenhouses being added. Please seriously consider these suggestions. Thank you	14206		Category 3	
General Interest/Visitor	The addition looks like a SUNY project. Very institutional. More effort should have been made to incorporate the original structure into the new design. Not a historic recreation but take a few cues. Light, graceful, airy. The current renderings look like a slab of pavement propped up vertically.	14216		Category 2	
General Interest/Visitor;Botanical Gardens Society Member;Botanical Ga	Restaurants in a garden with glass to lookout to more gardens!	14220		Category1	

Botanical Gardens Employee, Board Member, or Volunteer	The gardens is a landmark and so worthy of careful expansion. There is room. If BOPC brings back	14202		Category 1		
General Interest/Visitor	I fully support expanding the Botanical Gardens. I've visited other city's gardens and am always im	14223		Category 1		
General Interest/Visitor;Architectural Interest	The exterior design isn't inspiring.	14222		Category 2		
Botanical Gardens Society Member	The design is dory lacking in relationship to the current magnificent buildings and to the environment. Please go back to the drawing boards and give us something worthy of the Botanical Gardens!	14223		Category 2		
General Interest/Visitor	Maybe it is necessary to make the gardens economically viable, but this looks like it detracts from the plants. I go to the botanical gardens to see plants. Any additions to the garden should add more plants instead of removing plants. I wish this botanical garden could do something more daring, groundbreaking and visionary, and focus less on being a wedding venue.	14221		Category 3		