

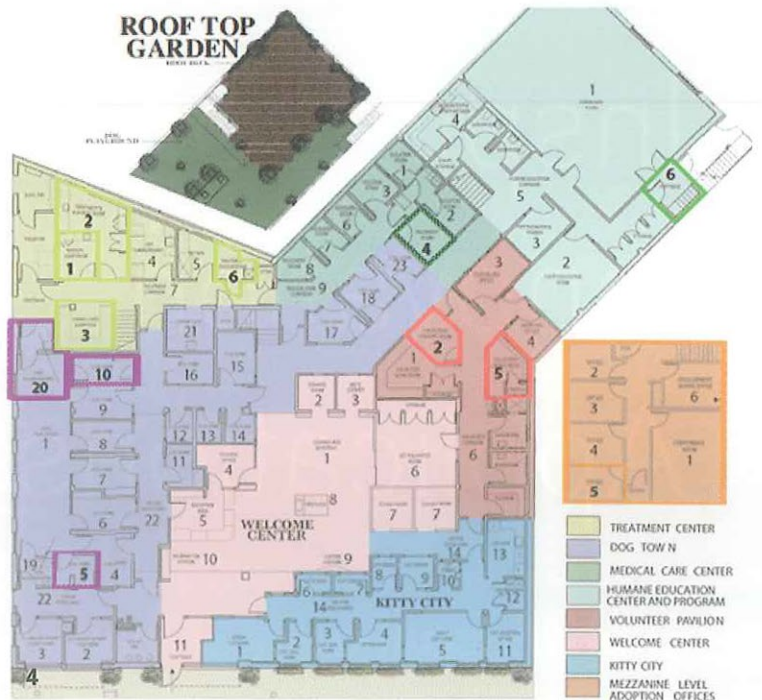
PAWS Tells Another Tale

On the western edge of Lincoln Park is another kind of animal shelter. Founded in 1997, PAWS Chicago (Pets Are Worth Saving) opened the Midwest's first No Kill, cageless pet adoption center at Clybourn and Armitage in 2007. Architect Jeff Case, AIA, of Holabird & Root calls the organization's founder, Paula Fasseas, "a brave and focused client" who was undeterred when the building they hoped to remodel proved to be a teardown instead.

The Pippen Fasseas Adoption Center occupies the footprint of a former welding company and its stable. It had been turned into a nightclub when PAWS bought the building with the intent of adaptive reuse. But existing conditions included a lack of footings, so all but one wall had to come down. Nonetheless, Fasseas wanted to recreate the character of the old building, with its high ceilings and abundant natural light. In keeping with the Clybourn Corridor's transformation from industrial to retail, large storefront windows provide views of the adoption-ready cats and dogs.

The ambience of the Welcome Center is appropriate for a shelter in which, as the website puts it, "homeless animal guests" reside in suites instead of cages. Residential features like bookcases and a fireplace are executed in commercial-grade materials such as pressed wheatboard, stone, and plastic that looks like wooden beadboard; floors are of stained concrete. Above are new iterations of the original bow-string trusses and large clerestories. "Natural light is key for the animals," says Fasseas, so they can maintain a normal diurnal rhythm. Opaque glass conceals views of the huge mechanical units that provide 100% fresh airflow. Visible through the clear glass is a tree in the rooftop garden where dogs get daily outdoor exercise.

A large welcome center is at the core of the building, and staff offices are tucked into a mezzanine. PAWS has a separate building in the Pilsen neighborhood for its spay/neuter clinic and animal rescue/recovery, making it easier to keep the adoption center population healthy. → **Laurie Petersen**



(1) Bow-string trusses and clerestory windows lend the interior of the PAWS facility an old-time industrial look that suits the Clybourn Corridor location—but both are new takes on the originals. Opaque glass in one bank of windows conceals air circulation units that provide the animal residents with constant fresh air.

(2and 3) The facade at PAWS picks up on Clybourn's retail milieu, with an exaggerated parapet and storefront-scaled windows.

(4) Interior spaces are zoned: cats on one side, dogs on the other, and visitors in the middle of all that four-legged cuteness.