

Uptown Task Force Meeting Minutes
February 7, 2019
8:00 – 10:00 a.m.
Duquesne University, Student Union, Africa Room

Present: Greg Alan (Duquesne Light), Roger Altmeyer (UPMC-Mercy), Angelica Ciranni (GBA), Derek Dauphin (DCP), Gary Desjardins (PPG Paints Arena), Jamie DuCar (University of Pittsburgh), Krysia Kubiak (Duquesne Light), Debbi Linhart (Bethlehem Haven), Sean Luther (InnovatePGH, Avenu), Breen Masciotra (Port Authority), Shantalaya Mathews (URA), Jeanne McNutt (Uptown Partners), Tim Parks (Life'sWork), Mary Ellen Solomon (Duquesne University), Andréa Stanford (Allegheny County), Marlene Williams (Uptown Partners), Joe Wingefeld (Uptown Partners) Joan Hayek (Duquesne University)

Guests: Chad Elish (HackPGH), Daniel Klein (HackPGH) to present on Tustin Park Art Project

Call to Order/Welcome: Mary Ellen Solomon convened the meeting at 8:08 a.m. with an introduction of all present Task Force members as well as new members including Marlene Williams, the new Neighborhood Advocate for Uptown Partners, and Jamie DuCar, Assistant Director of Community Relations at the University of Pittsburgh. Jamie will be taking John Wilds' spot as he has retired.

Approval of Minutes: Mary Ellen asked for a motion to have the January meeting minutes approved that were previously distributed to all members via email. The motion was approved with no dissent.

Agenda Discussions:

(1) Tustin Park Art Project Update: The Tustin Park project has been led by HackPGH, as well as City Planning and Uptown residents. Last summer, during the engagement process, HackPGH hosted a block party to seek input on what elements should be included in the park project, including art. HackPGH used this information to develop an art plan for the park that includes a kite theme featuring acrylic diamond shapes that fit within the holes of the park fence along Tustin Street. These shapes will come together in a pattern of several colors forming kites that go along the entirety of the fence in the selected color palette for the park. The theme, including a poem, will also be depicted on the billboard on the building adjacent to the park.

Other elements of the park project include Wi-Fi (already in place) and solar charging stations. These stations placed throughout the park will also be integrated into the theme of the park as the plugs on the stations will be shown as parts of kites. These stations will have signs with directions on how to use the stations and how to connect to the Wi-Fi, as well as integrated LED lights that will be on timers from dusk until dawn.

Some questions posed by Task Force members:

Do you have any baseline data on Wi-Fi users? No. Task Force members suggested that HackPGH find a way to get hard data on park users as that information will prove useful when talking about the park's successful transformation.

Will the same color palette be used in future Tustin Street slow streets projects? This will be visited as new projects come in the pipeline.

Is there a budget for long term maintenance? Yes, there is a 10-year maintenance plan, including a budget from the City, that HackPGH and MetaMesh will be managing.

Has this plan been submitted to the Art Commission? Yes, the final plan was submitted February 6. The Art Commission provided positive feedback, and there is a follow up meeting with them at the end of February.

Will the mural on the building be painted over? There are no plans to paint over the mural at this time as that is out of the scope of this project and budget.

(2) UPMC Mercy Construction Update: This update from Roger Altmeyer:

- The surface parking lot next to Mercy Hospital has been cleared and prepped for excavation that will begin on February 18. Excavation work will continue through September.
- The foundation construction will start in June of this year, beginning with the parking garage.
- This is overall a three-year project, with an anticipated completion in the Spring of 2022, with the building open for occupancy in Fall 2022.
- Locust Street between Marion Street and Van Braam Street will remain closed for the duration of the project. Marion Street will be open the entire duration of the project. The only time when there will be a work-around plan for Marion Street is when the overhead bridge is being built and a crane will be blocking Marion Street. Therefore, traffic will be sent down Van Braam Street. Van Braam Street will be closed for a period of about 7 months starting in the Fall of 2019 between the Boulevard of the Allies and Locust Street. It will re-open in early Spring of 2020.
- Goal is to have Boulevard of the Allies open to all traffic again by mid-February after some changes are made to the new median work that was just completed.
- The formal groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled for March 14.
- The new plaza on Locust Street will have a public art display and the updates of that display will be presented to the Task Force at the appropriate time.

Some questions posed by Task Force members:

Will there be improvements to the streets and sidewalks? Yes, the intersections and the sidewalks all the way from Marion Street to the Vision and Rehab Center on Locust Street will be improved with the potential to make Locust Street a slow street.

Will the construction fence have graphics? Yes, the construction fence will have the logos of many Uptown businesses including Uptown Partners and the Eco-Innovation District logo.

What are the construction hours? Most likely between 6:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. in the summer months.

(3) Follow-up Discussion of Uptown Task Force Framework & Protocols: Mary Ellen started the discussion by reviewing the conversations that have happened among the Task Force members around this topic over the last two meetings. Just as a reminder she stated, these discussions have been focused on membership expectation and responsibility for the Task Force and setting a minimum number of meetings that one must attend to remain an active member. These discussions have also included how it will be communicated to organizations that have been invited to the Task Force but never participated that they no longer will be on the member list if they continue to not participate. The ultimate goal of these discussions is to have an updated framework to send out to all members so that there will be an understanding among all as to what the expectations are of a Task Force member. The hope is to have this document finalized by the next meeting in March.

Key points of discussion that followed:

- Uptown Partners will act as the first “pass” for any neighborhood projects as projects must be presented to their Real Estate Design Committee first. Uptown Partners will maintain and provide a list of all project in the pipeline and will share that list regularly with the Task Force. The Task Force can decide which

projects need to be presented at a monthly Task Force meeting. The Development Sub-Committee is will notify developers of the appropriate review process and a list of projects will be posted on the Task Force website.

- The Task Force will write only letters in support of projects (not opposition). If an organization is opposed to a project, it can voice that opposition on its own behalf.
- Residents will not be voting members. Uptown Partners will represent residents with its vote. Residents who are considered members of the Uptown Task Force will be designated by Uptown Partners.

(4) Conflicts of Interest: Conflict of interest has been a re-occurring topic at the last several meetings. Key points of this discussion:

- It could be argued that any Member may have a conflict of interest regarding development projects at any given time. Therefore, there will need to be a process of self-disclosure.
- Conflict of interests will only be considered when writing a letter of support for a project.
- Any member can identify and introduce a conflict of interest to the group about a given project. If necessary, the Task Force will vote on if the matter if it is actually a conflict of interest, with the member with whom the conflict exists abstaining in the vote.
- If a conflict of interest comes up in a Sub-committee, it is the job of the Chair of that Sub-committee to bring up that conflict of interest to the Task Force.

Based on this discussion, final revisions will be made to the framework document and will be distributed for final review.

(5) Open Sub-Committee Chair Positions: There are currently two Sub-committee chair positions open: Development (formerly held by Avenu which was represented by Tad Hale) and Mobility (formerly held by DOMI which was represented by Justin Miller).

Development: Given his new role with Avenu, Sean Luther, who has been a member of the Task Force as Executive Director of InnovatePGH, has been serving in an interim capacity as the chair of the Development Sub-Committee. Mary Ellen asked Sean to explain the Avenu situation—and his role with Avenu-- further.

In the Fall the Boards of Avenu and InnovatePGH moved forward with a plan to appoint Sean as the Executive Director of Avenu while continuing to be the Executive Director of Innovate PGH. Given that he's now serving in that position and because Avenu was tasked in the EID Plan to oversee various elements and aspects of the Plan, Sean advocated that Avenu remain as the Chair of the Development Sub-committee.

After some discussion about possible conflicts of interest – Sean disclosed that he's resident home owner of Uptown, owns rental property, and has no additional plans for personal development projects in the neighborhood—members offered positive comments on Avenue (Sean) continuing to serve as chair. A vote of the Task Force affirmed Avenu (with Sean as its representative) as Chair of the Development Sub-committee.

Mobility: DOMI has served as the Chair of the Sub-committee, with Justin Miller as its representative. Justin left his position at DOMI so there was discussion about DOMI continuing to serve as Chair. Task Force members agreed that it is optimal for a DOMI employee to chair the Sub-committee, and to continue the conversation on the proposal for construction coordination efforts. Mary Ellen agreed to contact DOMI regarding this matter. If necessary, the Task Force thinks can vote on an interim Chair in order to keep Sub-committee projects moving.

Sub-Committee Updates:

Community: At the January meeting, the sub-committee discussed the different metrics it should be tracking. At the upcoming February meeting, it will discuss its work plan for 2019.

Development: There will be combined Development and Mobility Sub-Committee meeting in February to discuss the corridor management plan during and after the construction.

Infrastructure: The January meeting was very productive, including development of a draft work-plan for 2019. The work plan will be presented at the March Task Force meeting. In addition, it has scheduled meeting and priorities for the year, and would like to a collaborative conversation with all Sub-committees regarding a communications plan.

The meeting adjourned at 10:02 a.m.

Next Uptown Task Force Meeting - 8 a.m. on Thursday, March 7 at Duquesne University in the Africa Room, Student Union