

Uptown Task Force Meeting Minutes
October 5, 2017
8 – 10 a.m.
Duquesne University

Present: Anthony Boule (Parking Authority), Derek Dauphin (City Planning), Gary Desjardins (PPG Paints Arena), , Rich DiClaudio (Energy Innovation Center), Ruari Egan (PWSA), Robby Frantz (Duquesne Light), Bill Generett (Duquesne Univ.), Katie Graver (City Planning intern), Tad Hale (Avenu), John Kraemer (NRG), Brian Kurtz (PDP), Sean Luther (Envision Downtown), Jeanne McNutt (Uptown Partners), Justin Miller (City's Mobility & Infrastructure), Simona Loberant (SEA), James Myers, Jr. (UI 21), Mary Ellen Solomon (Duquesne Univ.), Janet Strahosky (Bethlehem Haven), Joe Wingenfeld (Uptown Partners), John Wilds (Pitt)

Regrets: Roger Altmeyer (UPMC-Mercy), Terri Baltimore (Hill House), Craig Dunham (representing Pittsburgh Penguins), Courtney Ehrlichman (CMU), Amy Hart (Pittsburgh Deaf Services), Court Gould (Sustainable Pittsburgh), Breen Masciotra (Port Authority), Linda Metropolous (ACTION – Housing), Leslie Montgomery (Pittsburgh Blind & Vision Services), Kristen Osterwood (GBA), Tim Parks (Life'sWork), Jennifer Wilhelm (URA), Wanda Wilson (OPDC)

Invited/Absent: Antoine Davis (Pittsburgh Police), Kirk Holbrook (Rep. Wheatley), Marimba Milliones (Hill CDC), Carl Redwood, Jr. (Hill Consensus Group), Sonny Williams, Daniel Wood (Councilman Lavelle), representative of CORE Realty

Call to Order/Welcome: Mary Ellen Solomon convened the meeting at 8:10 a.m. with a welcome and an introduction of all Task Force members.

Approval of Minutes: Members voted to approve the minutes from the September 7 meeting in the form previously distributed via email.

Agenda Discussions:

Update on Previous Action Items/New Business

Derek Dauphin – supplied revised Task Force framework, noting there could be an additional co-chair of the development subcommittee in the future and that framework could be modified then; members approved the framework as it was previously distributed via email

City Planning/Uptown Partners/Avenu/Duquesne University – Derek shared that this group met to discuss the name of the task force; after considerable discussion it was agreed that it would called Uptown Task Force, and that the name could be revisited in a year; Mary Ellen shared that Duquesne University will now proceed to develop uptowntaskforce.org website and will share draft design with committee in near future

City Planning/Uptown Partners/Avenu – this group met to discuss UPP Design Review Committee and Task Force design subcommittee functions; it was determined that there is no overlap – one (UP) reviews for the community and the other (the subcommittee) reviews implementation of development as per the plan not for individual projects (more proactive than reactive); Derek offered that UP could invite members of the Task Force to their meetings, also projects of large scale, and those seeking letter of support to the UP design review committee; Sean Luther suggested sequencing large project approvals so that they go to UP first then Task Force; Derek suggested in some cases large projects may want to get a “gut check” which is different from approval and in such cases they should come to Task Force first

City Planning – Derek indicated that the goal is to have charrettes on Dinwiddie in November, over two days, multiple four-hour sessions repeated; goals of charrettes are to establish community vision, inform the RFP (for which there is currently no timeline); he'll communicate final dates to Task Force

Mobility & Infrastructure – Justin Miller convened the first meeting of the Mobility Subcommittee; group revisited mobility goals and potential projects; subcommittee discussed prioritizing projects including funding options; discussed Forbes & Gist in particular and Justin indicated that City will install traffic signal there in the next 9 – 12 months; Fifth & Robinson also targeted for installation of temporary traffic control devices; Justin will send digital materials and more details about projects to Task Force and Subcommittee

TF Member Updates:

Bethlehem Haven – reconstruction work continued on Watson property; trying to secure retail tenant for former Salad Café space; looking to secure properties on Fifth Avenue for residential expansion;

PDP – completing series of focus groups and survey of Downtown stakeholders to help direct future efforts; in search of elves for holiday season; Light Up Night is November 17

Parking Authority – working with City on some elements of EID plan; preparing for demolition of 9th & Penn garage Downtown as part of new Cultural District development

DOMI – working with Parking Authority on on-street parking strategies for EID plan

UPP – applied for funding for advocate position; held business/nonprofit meeting with new neighborhood resource officer; met with UPMC Mercy to discuss preservation of St. Ann's building; fundraising for banners and art installations; followed up on 311 citations; working with City on Forbes & Gist traffic safety issues; working on new bike racks for neighborhood; marketing office space on 5th; working with CMU to install air quality monitors; outreach to Hill organizations re: 5th & Dinwiddie; working with developer at 5th & Pride on design; collaborating with DU on two fall courses on Uptown

City Planning – Grant Ervin will work on pulling together Infrastructure Subcommittee meeting; Planning Commission adopted EID plan unanimously with a few conditions – one-pager that they can use to review development plans for consistency with EID plan; requested additional data on crime issues and list of changes to make to plan; now plan has been recommended to Council to adopt it with Public Realm District; Derek will seek support of members by the end of November; national EcoDistricts team was in Pgh and City is competing for funds from Kresge Foundation to be one of its focus cities; Derek headed to conference in Atlanta to learn more about technology aspects and compare other cities

Pitt – they are working on campus master plan; holding community meetings; going beyond City's institutional master plan requirements; alignments with Strategic Plan

Avenu – engaging in gap analysis for space needs for Pitt, CMU and UPMC Mercy; looking at opportunities for maker movement facilities

Envision Downtown – most projects winding down for the season; will review technical assets to see how they can support work on Fifth & Forbes

UI21 – they're taking a deeper dive to determine how they can become more involved in EID

Duquesne University – Strategic Plan should be finalized in November – Uptown is areas of focus

PWSA – 5th & Dinwiddie should be fundable through green infrastructure; recently met with LandForce, workforce development group focused on green space and trail construction and will ask them to make future presentation to Task Force

Duquesne Light – work continues at Pride & Colwell

NRG – Stevenson still under construction; infrastructure work should be completed by end of year; intermittent closures on evenings to come; chilled water to be installed mid-October – DOMI would like to talk with them about issues they found

EIC – exploring opportunities with some tech companies; attracting interest from energy companies outside of region; engaging with Brookings Institute launch of Innovation District; collaborating on multiple projects including grants, Amazon bid

SEA – infrastructure work continues on Lower Hill; still pursuing funding for Curtain Call feature at arena

PPG Paints – Lower Hill work almost done; several major concerts this month and more coming in spring

Action Items:

City Planning – Derek to finalize dates for charrettes and communicate info to Task Force; Grant to convene first meeting of Infrastructure Subcommittee

Avenu – Schedule first Development Subcommittee meeting

DOMI – Justin to email additional details related to Mobility Subcommittee projects

UPP – Schedule first Community Subcommittee meeting

Duquesne University – Mary Ellen to email members to request photos; will work on website development

Items for Consideration:

Derek suggested that 10,000 Friends is interested in getting involved with Task Force; suggested inviting them to future meeting

Bill asked that challenges at Deraud be focused on – substandard housing; public safety issues; Jeanne shared that UPP has been trying to create advocate position who would work with residents and suggested that Community Subcommittee could take this on and make outreach to residents and property owners

Next Meeting:

Thursday, November 2 from 8 – 10 a.m. at Pittsburgh Blind and Vision Services, 1816 Locust St.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.