

Uptown Task Force Meeting Minutes
November 2, 2017
8 – 10 a.m.
Pittsburgh Blind & Vision Services

Present: Terri Baltimore (Hill House Association), Derek Dauphin (DCP), Ruari Egan (PWSA), Katie Graver (DCP), Bill Generett (Duquesne University), Tad Hale (Avenu), Amy Hart (Center for Hearing & Deaf Services Inc.), Joan Hilton (Duquesne University), Debbi Linhart (Bethlehem Haven), Jeanne McNutt (Uptown Partners), Justin Miller (City's Mobility and Infrastructure), Leslie Montgomery (Pittsburgh Blind and Vision Services), James Myers (Urban Innovation21), Kris Osterwood (GBA), Tim Parks (Life's Work), Mary Ellen Solomon (Duquesne University), Janet Strahosky (Bethlehem Haven), Joe Wingenfeld (Uptown Partners), John Wilds (Pitt), Jennifer Wilhelm (URA)

Regrets: Roger Altmeyer (UPMC-Mercy), Anthony Boule (Parking Authority), Gary Desjardins (PPG Paints Arena), Rich DiClaudio (Energy Innovation Center), Craig Dunham (representing Pittsburgh Penguins), Courtney Ehrlichman (CMU), Robby Frantz (Duquesne Light), Court Gould (Sustainable Pittsburgh), John Kraemer (NRG), Brian Kurtz (PDP), Sean Luther (Envision Downtown), Simona Loberant (SEA), Breen Masciotra (Port Authority), Linda Metropolous (ACTION – Housing), Wanda Wilson (OPDC)

Invited/Absent: Antoine Davis (Pittsburgh Police), Kirk Holbrook (Rep. Wheatley), Marimba Millions (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 8:15 a.m. with a welcome and an introduction of all members. She then thanked Pittsburgh Blind and Vision Services for hosting the meeting and invited Leslie Montgomery to give a brief overview of the 100-year-old organization and all that it accomplishes within in its 14 different programs in their new facility in Uptown.

Approval of Minutes: Mary Ellen motioned to have the previous meetings minutes approved that were previous distributed to all members via email. It was seconded and approved with no dissent.

Agenda Discussions:

Presentation by Landforce: Ilyssa Manspeizer and Thomas Guentner from Landforce gave a presentation about their organization, which restores and maintains land and green assets by providing professionally skilled crews who can assist in environmental management. Landforce works with community to address challenges with land stewardship and workforce readiness. They talked about programs in Northside (staircase restoration), Clairton (play space), and Homewood. They indicated considerable interest in the EID and invited the Task Force to consider them for future partnership opportunities.

Task Force members saw many applications and opportunities with Landforce, including recruitment at the soon-to-be formed chamber of non-profits, opportunities within green infrastructure with the URA, and potential hiring opportunities with Task Force member organizations. Further conversations will be held within the Infrastructure Subcommittee to begin to build a future partnership.

The presentation will be distributed to members via email. More info at www.landforcepgh.org.

Update on Action Items:

EID Plan Process: Derek shared that the EID plan had been adopted by Planning Commission with minor changes as requested by the Commission. Revised final plan will be posted to EID website. The plan now goes to City Council, with a hearing on November 16 at 3:30 p.m. Task Force members are invited to submit letters of support or testimony at the hearing.

Fifth and Dinwiddie Charrette: City Planning and the URA are collaborating to host a community charrette on November 29 from 8:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the Paramount Building. The event will develop development and open space ideas for this site, and the recommendations will help to inform the RFP that the URA issue in the near future. A second charrette will be planned, if necessary. A public open house to gain more input is also being planned.

Task Force Website: Mary Ellen Solomon said Duquesne's web team was working on website. She asked if anyone has any photos to please submit them to her as soon as possible. The website will be based off of oaklandtaskforce.org and will be very basic with information and pictures of the community. She is hoping to have a draft of the website to share in the next few weeks.

Subcommittee Reports:

Development Subcommittee: Tad Hale discussed that the first Development Sub-Committee meeting had been held and it went very well. The committee is working on is a heat-map approach to the real estate in the district, with a focus on availability, relationships, and what additional information is needed to guide development. Once this digital representation is built, a plan can be established on how to move forward with redevelopment.

Community Subcommittee: Joe Wingenfeld said the group will meet on November 20; invitations will be email soon.

Infrastructure: Derek mentioned that Grant had convened the first Infrastructure Subcommittee meeting, which went very well. The committee will meet again in December to develop a work plan and review a first draft of an opportunity map around renewable energy generation and important stormwater treatment areas.

Mobility Subcommittee: Justin Miller said they've not had a chance to meet in the last month, so no updates.

Member Updates:

University of Pittsburgh –A campus master plan is being developed which is going well. John is also working with the Oakland Planning & Development Corp. (OPDC). OPDC is hosting a town hall on November 2nd at 7 p.m. to discuss the Oakland Gateway Ventures project on Bates Street including a panel of elected and City officials.

City Planning – Derek mentioned that next Thursday, DOMI, PWSA, Pitt and DCP are holding two public events on November 7th at 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. to get public input on a proposal to make a number of improvements to Bigelow Blvd between Fifth and Forbes in Oakland.

Urban Innovation21 –Because of state budget delay, programming has been relatively slow, but engagement

efforts continue with the Hill District, Homewood, and Northside communities.

Bethlehem Haven – Exploring expansion possibilities; some may include retail on the first floor, and kind affordable housing.

Hill House Association – Walter Hood, landscape architect, is coming to Pittsburgh next year, hoping to have him at the Task Force meeting while he's here.

Duquesne University – The University has finalized a strategic plan and is now moving into implementation. Work is beginning on the new institutional master plan which will continue over the next year.

Lifeworks – Programmatically, everything is going well. From a facilities perspective, 60% of the current building is being. They are actively leasing office space and seeking tenants; a long-term strategic facilities plan is being developed. They have a building for sale in Manchester on Chateau Street.

Pittsburgh Blind & Vision Services – They just opened a 5,000 sq. ft. rooftop garden. They have been in the new space for about a year now, working on expanding programming, and are hoping to open a fitness area to the public, especially for people with disabilities in the next year or so.

GBA - They are expanding their program within Oakland to lower emissions by 50% by 2030. This program will be continued into the Uptown area so further discussions will be had with those building's owners.

Uptown Partners – Work continues on Strategic Plan and funding grants; held safety meeting with Zone 2, NRO and residents; installation of 50+ bike racks planned for Spring 2018; tagging any tax delinquent (even operating) surface parking lots into the property reserve; Participated in Pittsburgh/Glasgow Project, sponsored by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; lectured on Uptown and EID for Duquesne University's "First-Year Innovation Experience" class; got update from the Sustainable MBA class at Duquesne University (directed by Dr. Robert Sroufe) on their project; Engaged Duquesne University student who will work with UP 10 hours+ per week on communications beginning Oct. 17; collaborating with Carnegie Mellon's OPERA (Open Pittsburgh WirEless Research Accelerator Program) for wireless technology to advance EID plan recommendations; working with City Planning to implement interim changes in traffic patterns at Forbes and Gist and Miltenberger, between Locust and Blvd. of Allies and outreach plan

City's Mobility and Infrastructure - They are working on a phased approach to the traffic light installation at Forbes and Gist. They are re-routing traffic by creating a one-way road on Gist. They are also working on a phased approach to help the traffic re-routes in Oakland. In regard to the BRT project – they have been working to schedule a public meeting to provide updates about the project.

Avenu – They are working to identify shared "maker" space and space for a wet lab space. The Burrell building is currently for sale, and they are trying to identify best uses for it.

PWSA – A couple of green infrastructure projects are in progress. They are working on the storm water project on Bigelow Boulevard. They have requested funds for the grant program for 2018. Grants in the past have started at \$5,000 for mini grants and up to over \$40,000 for matching grants.

Action Items:

EID Plan Process and Dinwiddie Charrette – City Planning to report back on progress

Website – DU to create draft www.uptowntaskforce.org website for Task Force review

Next Meeting: Pittsburgh Deaf Services will host the December 2 meeting, and Lifeswork will host the January 4 meeting. Anyone interested in hosting the February meeting should let Mary Ellen know.

Adjournment: Mary Ellen adjourned the meeting at 9:57 a.m.