

Uptown Task Force Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 6, 2019
8:00 – 10:00 a.m.
Duquesne University, Power Center

Present: Roger Altmeyer (UPMC), Dara Braitman (DOMI), Angelica Ciranni (GBA), Derek Dauphin (DCP), Gary Desjardins (PPG Paints Arena), Jamie Ducar (University of Pittsburgh), Amy Hart (HDS), Krysia Kubiak (Duquesne Light), Debbi Linhart (Bethlehem Haven), Simona Loberant (SEA), Mike Madden (Pittsburgh Innovation District/Avenu), Laya Matthews (URA), Tracey McCants Lewis (Pittsburgh Penguins), Sean Luther (Pittsburgh Innovation District/Avenu), Jeanne McNutt (Uptown Partners), Tim Parks (LifesWork of Western PA), Rif Qureshi (SEA), Alex Toner (University of Pittsburgh), Mary Ellen Solomon (Duquesne University), Mercedes Williams (Rep. Jake Wheatley's Office), Joe Wingefeld (Uptown Partners), Caroline Woodward (Bethlehem Haven), Joan Hayek (Duquesne University)

Call to Order/Welcome: Mary Ellen Solomon convened the meeting at 8:14 a.m. with an introduction of all present Task Force members.

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

Agenda Discussions:

(1) Bethlehem Haven Affordable Housing Project Update: Debbi Linhart, CEO of Bethlehem Haven, began her update by sharing with the group that their affordable housing project has been about 4 years in the making, planning and understanding the community's needs. Bethlehem Haven has purchased the properties at 1402, 1404, 1406, 1408 and 1410 Fifth Avenue, and are currently in negotiations with 1400 Fifth Avenue, with the goal of tearing down these buildings and creating 32 to 40 affordable housing units. These units, which hopefully will all be 30% AMI, would be comprised of efficiencies, 1 bedroom and 2 bedrooms, with the potential for some office space as well as parking underneath. Currently, Bethlehem Haven has about \$3.5 million dollars in funding for this project, and they are hoping for the 4% tax credit as well. As of right now, they are just waiting on some pricing options from construction groups as well as the final paperwork from the sale of 1400 Fifth Avenue. As far as a timeline goes, they are hoping for demo around March or April of 2020 with a completion date 18 months out from the demo. Debbi will continue to update the group as the project moves along.

Some questions posed by Task Force members:

Will the façade of the buildings be maintained? We are not sure yet.

Have you talked to the UPMC Accelerated Housing team? We reached out to them but have not heard back yet.

With no further questions, Mary Ellen thanked Debbi for her time.

(2) Community Sub-Committee Work Plan Proposal: Mary Ellen asked the Task Force if everyone had a chance to review the proposed work plan that was circulated via email after the last meeting. Everyone said that they had, and that they were comfortable moving forward with approving. Mary Ellen asked for a motion to approve the Community Sub-Committee Work Plan. The motion was approved with no dissent.

(3) Summary Report of EDO Incubator: Mary Ellen gave a quick overview of the EcoDistricts Incubator that she and the chairs of the sub-committees attended that covered a lot of ground in three days in regards to EID protocols, governance, imperatives and priorities. She also passed around a summary report to all of the UTF members to review that she put together that covered the highlights of the incubator.

At the end of the three days, Mary Ellen said that the main take away for the group was that the Uptown Task Force needs to have a facilitated discussion around a governance structure in order to create a backbone for the UTF. Mary Ellen then opened the discussion up to the chairs of the sub-committees, asking them if they had any other major takeaways. Other takeaways that were discussed were how to celebrate and market the successes of the UTF better, developing a stronger communication strategy, especially to external stakeholders as well as to the Uptown community itself, and defining and clarifying what Uptown's specific EcoDistrict is doing and how it is influencing the neighborhood plan. Mary Ellen then stated that next steps included the four chairs getting together on a regular basis to make sure that the sub-committees were all on the same page and not duplicating their work, and inviting a consultant to come in and help create a governance structure. This led the discussion into the next agenda item.

(4) Facilitated Discussion of Governance – Next Steps: Mary Ellen stated that she was in the process of putting together an RFP to secure a consultant who could help with this discussion in potentially August or September. The Uptown Task Force has reached a lot of the key areas that it needs to as far as convening key stakeholders, each stakeholder contributing resources, creating shared ways of measuring date, creating work plans and implementation, but there isn't a backbone structure that is crucial in making this group truly successful and complete. Mary Ellen said that they are hoping a facilitator could come in and help lead this discussion on what models to look at, what options are out there for consideration that will help pursue and secure funding, and strengthen the resources of this collective model to make it more successful. The UTF also needs to decide whether or not it will apply for a certification through EcoDistricts, which will require funding. Mary Ellen then said that she is welcome to any suggestions on who that consultant should be to help facilitate that conversation. The following were suggested by the group:

- PACE (Program to AID Citizen Enterprise) – consultants who help put together strategic plans for non – profits and corporations
- Jackson Clarke Partners

Sub-Committee Updates:

Community:

- May Meeting was focused on prioritizing energy efficiency programs to work on in 2019 in Uptown. Committee decided to focus energy efficiency improvements in one block of Uptown (2000 Block of Tustin). Will work with residents on block to install solar, explore a solar co-op, focused weatherization improvements, etc.
- June meeting will focus on Public art (i.e. brainstorming public art ideas and funding sources and establishing a public art group in Uptown).

Development:

- Development is in the process of crafting our workplan, priorities, and indicators. We are using our May and June meetings to do so.

Member Updates:

Duquesne University: Bill Generett convened a group of people to help with the Fifth Avenue Business Corridor planning that is a part of the university's Institutional Master Plan. The goal is to create an RFP by the fall for a consultant to help with that planning.

SEA: There will be a groundbreaking ceremony on June 24th for the I – 579 at 2pm in the PPG Arena West Lot for the CAP project, which is a 3-acre park that will act as a physical connector between Downtown Pittsburgh and the Hill District community. The final design includes pathways, stormwater management features, kiosks, stages and programming. The construction of the project will run until November of 2021.

Life'sWork of Western PA: Life'sWork has retained the commercial real estate firm of Cushman & Wakefield/Grant Street Associates, Inc. to proceed with presenting to the market the potential sale of the building at 1323 Forbes (including – perhaps in a separate transaction – a .26-acre parcel affiliated with the property between Fifth Avenue and Watson Street). The offering (details available at www.1323forbesavenue.com) invites interested parties to submit proposals through a sealed bid process --- through the summer (deadline for proposals as August 29, 2019). Life'sWork will entertain proposals for a long-term lease back option for Life'sWork (which currently uses about 40% of the 125,000 square foot building). Interest or questions – contact Sam McGill (412-412-391-2635) or Randy McCombs (412-697-1678) at Grant Street Associates, Inc. You may also contact Tim Parks, Life'sWork CEO at 412-471-2600, ext. 310.

PWSA: PWSA selected Michael Baker and their team of subconsultants to perform the design for the MLK Field Green Stormwater Infrastructure Project located in the M-19 sewershed. M19 is one of the largest contributors to the overall Alcosan collection system, discharging approximately 115MG of overflow in a typical year. The project will focus on stormwater management source control opportunities in MLK Field and potentially downstream through Moultrie Street, if deemed cost-effective. The goal of the project is to manage runoff from at least 9 impervious acres from surrounding developments, hillsides, and rights-of-way by detaining it and slowly releasing it back into the combined sewer system while providing the opportunity for natural irrigation for the community gardens.

UPMC: Excavation work continues on UPMC Mercy Vision & Rehabilitation Hospital site. Full design underway for relocation of helipad to roof of hospital.

Uptown Partners:

- On June 11, UP will convene a Moultrie Street neighborhood meeting to meet with KBK Enterprises, the new purchaser of the Burrell Bldg. at Fifth and Kirkpatrick, to hear developer's proposed plans and gather feedback.
- On May 22, UP convened a neighborhood meeting to meet with proposed on-line, on-demand beer

distributor in 1800 block of Locust St., which will deliver beer to a five-mile radius. Alcohol application still open for public comments.

- May 29, public meeting for Fifth and Dinwiddie mixed-use development review. Two development teams will present their response to the RFP for the URA-owned property.
- UP initiated the first Breathe Uptown collaborative, in conjunction with the Breathe Project on May 20. The Breathe Uptown Collaborative is a grass roots initiative dedicated to advocacy for better outdoor and indoor quality in Uptown, and advancing tangible and impact projects. This collaborative will meet every other month and is open to any Uptown resident, business owner, employee, or institutional partner.
- UP held our regular Safe Streets Uptown meeting on May 15

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 a.m.

Next Uptown Task Force Meeting - 8 a.m. on Wednesday, July 10th at Duquesne University in the Student Union, Rm 110.