

Uptown Task Force Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 1, 2021

8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Via Zoom

Present: Gary Alan (Duquesne Light Co.), Roger Altmeyer (UPMC Mercy), Steven Auterman (DOMI), Dara Braitman (DOMI), Derek Dauphin (City Planning), Amy Hart (Center for Hearing & Deaf Services), Joan Hilton (Duquesne University), Jordann Kline (SEA), Carly Koza (Pittsburgh Penguins), Tracey McCants Lewis (Pittsburgh Penguins), Mike Madden (InnovatePGH), Brittany McDonald (Uptown Partners), Kalyani Singh (InnovatePGH), Mary Ellen Solomon (Duquesne University), Paul Svoboda (Duquesne Light Co.), Alex Toner (University of Pittsburgh), Marlene Williams (Uptown Partners)

Guests: Mora McLaughlin (PWSA), Doug Minnigh (Peoples Gas), John Walko (Peoples Gas)

Call to Order/Welcome: Mary Ellen Solomon convened the meeting at 8:05 a.m. with an introduction of all present Task Force members.

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

Agenda Discussions:

(1) Peoples Gas Overview of Work in Uptown (Doug Minnigh and John Walko, Peoples Gas): Peoples Gas (PNG) provided a presentation of the Uptown project. will replace its lines in Uptown as part of advance work related to Bus Rapid Transit project. PNG will replace about 5,000 feet of cast iron pipe that was installed in the 1880s. It's a two-phased project starting on Fifth Avenue, up Chatham Place, down Forbes Avenue to Moultrie St. Work began in October 2020. Project completion scheduled for November 2021. Work will involve lane restrictions, and in some locations sidewalk restrictions. The project involves temporary restoration of street pavement. Complete street resurfacing will not happen until BRT project is completed in late 2023.

Customers whose service or property access will be affected will receive letters (in their doors) and robocalls in advance of any interruption. Updates on this project can be found at peoples-gas.com/street-work.

Questions posed by the Uptown Task Force:

- *Will there be any full road closures?* Moving forward, along Forbes Avenue, one lane, potentially two lanes, will be closed in the block where the construction is occurring. PNG does not anticipate any intersection closures.

(2) PWSA Overview of Work in Uptown (Mora McLaughlin, PWSA): PWSA provided an overview of its work in Uptown as part of advance utility work related to BRT. PWSA will install new water mains and, where necessary, replace lead service lines in Uptown on Forbes Avenue, from Sixth Avenue to Brady Street, and on Fifth Avenue, from Sixth Avenue to Kirkpatrick Street. This work will upgrade the aging infrastructure and improve water quality and service for customers. Construction will begin May 2021 along Sixth Avenue on Forbes Avenue and Fifth Avenue, and continue east toward the Birmingham Bridge, and is scheduled to be completed in May 2022.

Construction will occur weekdays from 9am to 7pm, but all work west of Washington Place and Chatham Square on both Fifth and Forbes Avenue will take place at night from 8pm to 6pm. Work on Wyandotte and Moultrie

Streets, north of Fifth Avenue, will take place on the weekends. Work along Forbes and Fifth Avenues will be completed simultaneously, and traffic will be restricted to one lane in one block sections throughout the project. Cross streets will be kept open. PWSA does not anticipate any major service outages during this construction. The project also includes stormwater improvements (10 bioretention sites, bioswales or tree trenches, and 7 sites with subsurface storage to hold backwater during storm events).

The PWSA team has attended two community meetings, as well as sent out letters to impacted customers in an attempt to inform as many community members as possible about the project. Updates to the project can also be found at www.pgh2o.com/FifthForbesWaterMains.

Questions posed by the Uptown Task Force:

- Is the PWSA coordinating with Peoples Gas to make sure that the two construction areas don't overlap?
DOMI is keeping track of construction schedules and it doesn't seem like there will be a problem with the projects running into each other.

(3) Community Action Team Proposed Work Plan (Brittany McDonald): At the March meeting, Brittany presented the Work Plan to the UTF. It was then sent via email to the group for review. Mary Ellen asked for a motion to approve the Community Work Plan pending any changes. There were no changes, and the motion was approved with no dissent.

(4) Forbes Fun Grant/Status of RFP (Brittany McDonald and Mary Ellen Solomon): The consultants have submitted an updated scope of work. The work will kick off on April 12th with some due diligence which will include interviewing and surveying Uptown Task Force members. The process in total will take about six months.

(5) Member Updates:

- **Duquesne University:** The semester will conclude at the beginning of May. Commencement ceremonies will take place May 6 - 8. Duquesne is currently running a COVID vaccine clinic in coordination with the County Health Department and Central Baptist Church in the Hill District.
- **University of Pittsburgh:** There has been a steady increase in new cases, therefore the University moved quickly to shelter in place. Pending COVID situation, Commencement will be held the first weekend in May.

Action Team Updates:

- **Community:** The gardeners presented their projects for the upcoming garden season. This will be the garden's 7th season. Gardeners will work with SEA, GrowPittsburgh and Uptown Partners to receive grants for these projects. The first cleanup of the garden is scheduled for April 17th, and planting is scheduled for May 22nd. The Portals to Power program, which is a program in coordination with Homewood Children's Village to help children create window boxes, will kick-off in June. The PittServes Program will be providing volunteers to help with fencing project.
- **Development/Mobility/Infrastructure Action Teams** had no updates.

Mary Ellen adjourned the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

Next Uptown Task Force Meeting - 8 a.m. on Thursday, May 6, 2021 via Zoom