

Uptown Task Force Meeting Minutes
March 1, 2018
8:00 – 10:00 a.m.
Avenu – Paramount Film Exchange

Present: Roger Altmeyer (UPMC-Mercy), Anthony Boule (Parking Authority), Angelica Cirianni (GBA), Derek Dauphin (DCP), Bill Generett (Duquesne University), Amber Jackson (Bethlehem Haven), Laurel Johnson (Resident), Brian Kurtz (PDP), Simona Loberant (SEA), Breen Masciotra (Port Authority), James Myers (Urban Innovation21), Kristen Osterwood (GBA), Mary Ellen Solomon (Duquesne University), Janet Strahosky (Bethlehem Haven), Joe Wingenfeld (Uptown Partners), John Wilds (Pitt), Joan Hilton Hayek (Duquesne University)

Regrets: Greg Alan (Duquesne Light), Terri Baltimore (Hill House Association), Cliff Blashford (NRG), Gary Desjardins (PPG Paints Arena), Rich DiClaudio (Energy Innovation Center), Craig Dunham (representing Pittsburgh Penguins), Ruari Egan (PWSA), Court Gould (Sustainable Pittsburgh), Tad Hale (Avenu), Amy Hart (Center for Hearing & Deaf Services), Josh Henschel (Resident), John Kraemer (NRG), Debbi Linhart (Bethlehem Haven), Jeanne McNutt (Uptown Partners), Linda Metropoulos (ACTION – Housing), Justin Miller (DOMI), Leslie Montgomery (Pittsburgh Blind and Vision Services), Tim Parks (Life’s Work), Rebekkah Ranallo (OPDC), Jennifer Wilhelm (URA)

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)

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

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

Presentations/Discussions:

Slow Streets Update: Derek Dauphin gave the presentation in Justin Miller’s absence. Derek began by mentioning that the first time the Mobility Sub-committee met, they looked at all the different transportation projects in the plan and prioritized a few for early implementation based on having immediate benefits; Slow Street strategies emerged as a lead project. This project would entail slowing down traffic near residences and around corners and turns. The presentation included renderings of what a bump-out corner would look like that would ultimately slow down traffic turning off a road, while also decreasing the length of the pedestrian walkway and increasing the amount of safe-space for pedestrians on either side of the road. These bump-outs would be about 6 feet to 9 feet wide, and they would be on all four corners of the intersection.

At the second meeting of the Mobility Sub-committee, five different intersections have been identified where bump-outs could be located to create a cluster to slow down traffic in the neighborhood. (Justin is going to circulate map shown after meeting via email). Before bump outs are installed, the City will monitor traffic patterns in those areas and then again after they go in to study their impact. In addition, the design and construction of the bump-outs needs to be determined. Public design/art is being considered for these spaces. Derek shared different examples from other cities of bump-outs that include public art. In Chicago, the example was of a very large intersection that used paint, furnishings, and planters to decorate the space. In Austin, the example showed paint on the street, making up of dots and stripes, which as Derek explained, is probably closer to what would be seen in Uptown.

The public design/art part of the project was discussed with the Community Sub-committee and three different options for implementation of this project were identified: *Option 1*: Submit an RFP for an Art Educator to work with community groups (i.e., children from the YMCA, etc.) to create the art. Pro of this option: community involvement; Con: potential quality control issues. *Option 2*: Design the process like the Public Art Program where artists submit a concept, the committees would select the arts, and then the concept would be finalized through a public forum. *Option 3*: The Community Sub-committee would conduct a public meeting/workshop to design the art at no cost and the City would use the funds to install it.

Discussion around the Slow Streets project included a question about timing and whether or not the bump-outs could be built first and then the art could be installed later. Derek said that he believed that could be the case, or it could all happen at once. There was another question about funding for maintenance and whether or not this was considered permanent or temporary. Derek said that this would be a temporary project, and if it was successful, it would become permanent and the budget would be increased. Regarding which of the three implementation options would be best to complete the project - the Task Force ultimately agreed that it should be one of the first two options in order to involve the community, but further input was needed from the Community Sub-committee before the Task Force could confirm which option was best.

EID Plan Assessment/Metrics: Joe Wingenfeld gave the presentation in Jeanne McNutt's absence. Joe began by stating that the four sub-committees of the Task Force (Mobility, Community, Development, Infrastructure) need to start thinking about metrics in regard to priority projects that would be good indicators of success. Assessment planning will help with future funding opportunities and presenting information to the foundations, as well as to City Planning

Armstrong Tunnel Project: Mary Ellen said that the Armstrong Tunnel construction plan presentation scheduled for this meeting had been moved to April 5 at the request of the County due to scheduling conflicts.

Sub-committee Updates:

Development Sub-Committee –After the City Edge presentation at the February Task Force meeting, the Sub-committee wanted to learn more about how developments could connect to the new NRG plant in Uptown as City Edge was not able to do so for a variety of reasons. The Sub-committee would like to learn how future developments may be able to address similar challenges before planning even starts. Joe Wingenfeld suggested that NRG should meet with the Development and/or Infrastructure Sub-committees to determine best approaches for future projects.

Community Sub-Committee –The Sub-committee continues to work on prioritizing its projects.

Member Updates:

Sports and Exhibition Authority: The SEA met with 10,000 Friends to explore potential grant opportunities, especially for Curtain Call.

UPMC-Mercy: UPMC-Mercy recently met with the Uptown Partners Real Estate and Design Committee to discuss the plans for the new Vision Institute. They are now in conversations with City Planning on the setbacks of the 2012 plan compared to the new plan, and they hope to have everything finalized before going to the Planning Commission in early April. Joe asked when they needed approval from the Uptown Partners

Board for the plan; Roger stated around the beginning of April.

University of Pittsburgh: The University's 25-year campus master plan is due to be released this summer. They are also working on an institutional master plan, which would be a 10-year plan. The University is working with UPMC to turn 5000 Baum Boulevard into a new therapy center. UPMC is investing \$200 million in this project. Another major project will be Forbes Avenue. Other Oakland news: PennDOT street will begin a significant reconstruction project on Forbes Avenue including new paving, lanes, smart signals and bike lanes. The construction will occur from the Birmingham Bridge past CMU. A question was asked how this project will intersect with BRT. Breen Masciotra said that there are no issues of conflict, and nothing that PennDOT will do will be undone. The BRT lanes will just be added on top of what PennDOT does.

Some additional conversation occurred related to the planning and dissemination of information regarding transportation projects: A question was asked about whether or not the County has been invited to the Task Force. A question was asked about inviting a PennDOT representative to the next Task Force meeting regarding upcoming projects. Mary Ellen suggested that the April meeting focus should be on the County's presentation regarding the Armstrong Tunnel project, but that PennDOT could be invited for future meetings if appropriate. It was asked if the County should have a representative on the Task Force. Mary Ellen indicated she would contact the County to determine interest in representation.

Duquesne University: There are proposed renovations to the A. J. Palumbo Center. The University has tentatively scheduled a presentation to the Uptown Partners Real Estate and Design Committee (March) and the Uptown Task Force (April 5). Also, Duquesne is co-hosting, with Urban Innovation21, a campus event for WBE and MBE companies to network with Facilities Management. The event is full at this time, but the University send out information for future similar events.

Urban Innovation21: Kiva hosted their summit here this week at the Energy Innovation Center with a big culminating event last night that was very successful.

Uptown Partners: They are currently working on a Heinz grant submission that would allow them to bring on another staff member who would act as an advocate for the residents in upcoming projects. Also getting about 10 new trees which will be planted in two sites on Moultrie Street, a site by Life'sWork, a replacement tree on Washington and Fifth, and a few new trees by the gateway sign to Uptown. And they released their first e-newsletter which they will now be doing instead of the hard copy due to expenses. Also the Community Sub-committee will meet on May 2 at the Life'sWork building.

Bethlehem Haven: The 905 project is awaiting fire inspections is about 5 weeks behind on construction. There are no plans yet for 1402-1408 Fifth Avenue. The lease was extended on the Post Office through the end of the year. Finally, Amber Jackson will be replacing Janet Strahosky on the Task Force as Janet is retiring in May. The Task Force extended best wishes to Janet.

Green Building Alliance: They will host a trades-people training session beginning March 20 to help meet the needs of developers. This will be a two-week, twice a week session, and the information will be shared with the committee. The Annual Progress Report meeting will be on April 19 from 4 – 7 p.m. at a location to be determined, but will be shared with the committee as soon as possible.

PDP: The organization's annual meeting is next week on March 14 where they will be giving an update to stakeholders, as well as announcing priorities for this year. Also, LovePittsburgh is set to open a second

location at 803 Liberty Avenue.

Port Authority: The new CEO Katharine Eagan Kelleman is now board. Currently, 30% of the design of the BRT project is completed, and there will be meetings coming up in the spring to finalize those plans.

City Planning: They held an informational session with artists on Monday for the Uptown Public Art Program. There were about 20 different artists present. The RFP for the art program is due out tomorrow, and it will be shared with the Task Force. Next, the first internal meeting to start talking about storm water projects with the PWSA was recently held. The PWSA will be hosting public meetings in the future to discuss these projects. Internally, city planning is working on best practices for Institutional Master Plans at the request of various institutions. Finally, through the Bedford Choice neighborhood planning work, Hill District residents asked the City and Port Authority to look at the feasibility of re-routing the 83 bus for a small portion of its run down Dinwiddie. The re-routed portion is redundant with other bus lines so no service would be lost and this change would reconnect Hill District residents to Uptown and UPMC-Mercy and Uptown residents to Centre Avenue and the grocery store – a goal from the EID Plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:42 a.m.

Next Uptown Task Force meeting - 8 a.m. on Thursday, April 5 in the Africa Room at Duquesne University.