

Uptown Task Force Meeting Minutes

October 4, 2018

8 – 10 a.m.

Center for Hearing and Deaf Services, 1945 Fifth Avenue

Present: Derek Dauphin (DCP), Bill Generett (Duquesne University), Tad Hale (Avenu), Amy Hart (Center for Hearing & Deaf Services), Shantalaya Mathews (URA), Jeanne McNutt (Uptown Partners), Tim Parks (Life'sWork), Mary Ellen Solomon (Duquesne University), Andréa Stanford (Allegheny County), Joan Hayek (Duquesne University)

Regrets: Greg Alan (Duquesne Light), Roger Altmeyer (UPMC-Mercy), Terri Baltimore (Hill House Association), Cliff Blashford (NRG), Anthony Boule (Parking Authority), Brian Brown (GBA), Angelica Ciranni (GBA), Gary Desjardins (PPG Paints Arena), Rich DiClaudio (Energy Innovation Center), Craig Dunham (representing Pittsburgh Penguins), Ruari Egan (PWSA), Grant Ervin (City of Pittsburgh), Carol Hardeman (Hill District Consensus Group), Josh Henschel (Resident), Amber Jackson (Bethlehem Haven), Debbi Linhart (Bethlehem Haven), Simona Loberant (SEA), Sean Luther (InnovatePGH), John Kraemer (NRG), Brian Kurtz (PDP), Breen Masciotra (Port Authority), Mischelle McMillan (De Ruad Resident Council President), Linda Metropoulos (ACTION – Housing), Justin Miller (DOMI), Leslie Montgomery (Pittsburgh Blind and Vision Services), Ray Morrison (Uptown Resident), Stephanie Moyes (Bethlehem Haven), James Myers Jr. (Urban Innovation21), Kristen Osterwood (GBA), Rebekkah Ranallo (OPDC), Lama Shehadeh (DCP), Janet Strahosky (Bethlehem Haven), John Wilds (Pitt), Joe Wingenfeld (Uptown Partners)

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)

Guests: Nathan Clark (URA), Julie Edwards (URA), Claren Healey (URA)

Call to Order/Welcome: Mary Ellen Solomon convened the meeting at 8:13 a.m. with an introduction of all present Task Force members.

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

Agenda Discussions:

(1) Fifth Avenue & Dinwiddie Street RFP Update: Julie Edwards began the presentation by giving a brief history overview of the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA). (A copy of the presentation will be provided and circulated to the Task Force members.)

The URA and City Planning are currently working together to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a development site that includes parcels on either side of Dinwiddie Street at Fifth Avenue. In 2017, City Planning held a design charrette for the site to get ideas on re-development from residents, stakeholders, design professionals, and the non-profit community. All of the ideas generated from the charrette were posted to the Eco-Innovation District website. Ideas focused on open space, residential, retail, access and preservation. This information will be used to inform the RFP.

As for the RFP process, the URA will form a committee to review the submitted proposals. The committee will include representatives from the community, elected officials, City Planning, and URA staff. The committee will review the proposals to determine a short list to move forward for consideration. There will be public meetings regarding the proposals to obtain community input. The vetting process will follow standard URA processes and procedures.

The URA hopes to release the RFP before the end of the calendar year and will be working to determine the composition of the committee as soon as possible.

Some questions posed by Task Force members:

How long does the RFP process take? The fastest it has ever taken is about one year, but depending on the funding sources, it usually takes a few years. There are a variety of factors that can influence the timeline.

What are the expectations of affordable housing for this project? As the RFP will be kept broad, currently there is no set number or percentage of affordable units, but the expectation is that the affordable component will reflect what is outlined in Eco-Innovation District plan.

What happens if the final design of the project is drastically different than the original proposed plan? While developers' plans are usually general at the start of the process, they get refined over time. If the plan changes drastically, the developer need to go through the community engagement portion of the process again. There are multiple review meetings of the drawings by the URA Board, so it is hard to make drastic changes without the approval of the Board.

How is the RFP for the project being advertised? The URA uses an online platform called Public Purchase that allows them to post RFPs so that developers and others can follow the progress of the RFPs. The URA also has an email list, as well as social media, to let developers know about RFPs.

(2) Discussion of Task Force Role in Review/Approval of Development Projects: At the last Task Force meeting there was discussion about the Task Force's role in the review of and request for support of development projects. Uptown Partners provided some background on the role of the Uptown Partners Real Estate and Design (RED) Committee, as it reviews projects and provides endorsement on behalf of Uptown Partners. Uptown Partners is reviewing the role of RED in the context of its strategic plan development. There was then a quick discussion about how the City is managing Registered Community Organizations (RCOs). RCOs are new designations, and the application process to become an RCO has been finalized, and in the near future support from RCOs will be required for development projects.

After some discussion, it was suggested that the Task Force—which may never have an RCO designation—develops a set of criteria to determine what kinds of projects or policies the Task Force would consider endorsing or supporting. In addition, the Task Force should define consensus and determine how organizations can opt out as part of the endorsement process. As part of the consensus issue it was suggested that the list of organizations invited to participate as members of the Task Force be reviewed. Many organizations or representatives have never participated in any way, and there should be more discussion about expectations of membership, i.e., minimum number of meetings to attend, etc. One possibility is to require that a representative of each member organization attend at least 8 meetings per calendar year.

Next steps on this issue include drafting a potential protocol of criteria and to circulate the Task Force charter to all members with the meeting minutes.

Sub-Committee Updates:

Community: The Tustin Park Block party on September 16th was a success. WiFi is currently available at the park. It was noted that the artist that was to work with HackPGH on the public art installation will no longer be working on

the project, so both the Art Commission and the Park Commission are considering other options. There will be a public meeting regarding the Colwell Trail at the end of October to get the community's input on that project. The Sub-committee is also looking at issues on DeRaud Street, where residents have been experiencing significant challenges as tenants.

Development: The Development and Mobility sub-committees had a joint meeting regarding upcoming construction expected in Uptown in the next few years. They will be working with the URA to help local businesses plan for this time. Some Development Sub-Committee members recently met with New Sun Rising about metrics and the information obtained will be shared with Sub-committee chairs.

Infrastructure: The Infrastructure Sub-Committee will present its work plan at the next Uptown Task Force Meeting.

Mobility: No updates at this time.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

Next Uptown Task Force Meeting - 8 a.m. on Thursday, November 1 at Duquesne University in the Africa Room, Student Union