

Uptown Task Force Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 7, 2020

8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Via Zoom

Present: Gary Alan (Duquesne Light Co.), Roger Altmeyer (UPMC), Gwendolyn Bolden (Pittsburgh Parking Authority), Dara Braitman (DOMI), Keyva Clark (Rep. Jake Wheatley's Office), Derek Dauphin (City Planning), Lilly Freedman (URA), Joan Hilton (Duquesne University), Tracey McCants Lewis (Pittsburgh Penguins), Alyssa Lyon (GBA), Mike Madden (InnovatePGH), Breen Masciotra (Port Authority), Mary Ellen Solomon (Duquesne University), Paul Svoboda (Duquesne Light Co.), Marlene Williams (Uptown Partners), Megan Zeigler (GBA)

Guests: Rodney Dobish, Mark Minoski (Duquesne University)

Call to Order/Welcome: Mary Ellen Solomon convened the meeting at 8:04 a.m. with an introduction of all present Task Force members and wishes of a Happy New Year to the group.

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

Agenda Discussions:

(1) Duquesne University College of Osteopathic Medicine Building Update (Mark Minoski and Rodney Dobish):

Mark Minoski, Senior Director of Design, Construction and Utilities at Duquesne, presented a briefing of the status of the construction plan for the University's College of Osteopathic Medicine (former LifesWork building). The University's presentation was also provided to the Planning Commission on December 8, 2020.

The presentation included zoning photos, the demolition plan for the existing structure, including the demolition schedule. Abatement work is in progress. Demolition is scheduled to begin in June, and will continue through January 2022, with construction planned to start in March of 2022, and student use is anticipated by April 2024. Mark also shared building renderings and noted that the project will incorporate the BRT requirements into the site development plans.

Some questions posed by the Task Force members:

Will there be parking under the building? No. The remainder of the lot might be interim parking, but it will ultimately be the site of a second project, so it won't be parking long term.

Is there lab space in the building? No. It will be offices, classrooms, virtual anatomy space and clinical space. The lab spaces will be utilized in other buildings in order to encourage the students to use the rest of campus.

Has a construction contractor been chosen? No. The bids are due by the end of January.

With no further questions, Mary Ellen thanked Rod and Mark for their time and effort. The presentation will be circulated to the group via email.

(2) Member Updates re: COVID-19 Pandemic:

- **Duquesne University:** The semester is set to resume on January 21st pending any changes in government guidance. A staggered move-in system has been implemented to space out the students and their families. The students, faculty and staff will be completing pre-arrival testing. Campus access restrictions will continue this semester as part of COVID protocols.

- **DOMI:** The consultants for the parking and TDM study were in last month and did a walking tour of Uptown. The consultants will be doing some follow up in the upcoming weeks, and there will most likely be conversations with the Mobility Action Team starting in February or March.
- **Uptown Partners:** The holiday resource fair in December went very well. UPP was able to provide meals for over 85 families and toys for over 30 families. UPP has started a partnership with AHN to support people experiencing homelessness. UPP has met with other community partners to discuss this program.
- **Duquesne Light:** Later this spring or early summer, there will be a duct bank installation in coordination with BRT so that the street is only opened up once. There will most likely be installations of other utilities as well. There will many street closures as a result so as soon as those details are mapped out, the UTF will be informed.
- **Port Authority:** There are several upcoming community meetings regarding the BRT. The schedule of those meetings can be found [here](#).
- **UPMC Mercy:** There was a leadership change effective January 1, 2021. Mike Grace stepped down as President of UPMC Mercy and John Innocenti, the President of UPMC Shadyside, will be stepping in as President of both hospitals.

(3) Forbes Fund Grant/Status of RFP: Mary Ellen stated to the group that Dr. McDonald had been coordinating this effort and thanked her for her time. Several responses were submitted and reviewed by Mary Ellen and Action Team chairs. The finalists will be meeting with the Action Team chairs in order to make a final selection. They will then make recommendations to the Task Force after those conversations about next steps. The overall process was expected to take four to six months, so the timing will ultimately be good, hopefully allowing the group to emerge out of the pandemic with a backbone structure in place for implementing the neighborhood plan moving forward.

Action Team Updates:

- No updates from the teams at this time.

Mary Ellen adjourned the meeting at 9:02 a.m.

Next Uptown Task Force Meeting - 8 a.m. on Thursday, February 4th, 2021 via Zoom.