

Uptown Task Force Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 5, 2021

8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Via Zoom

Present: Roger Altmeyer (UPMC Mercy), Derek Dauphin (City Planning), Bill Generett (Duquesne University), Leonard Hammonds (Rep. Wheatley Office), Amy Hart (HDSC), Joan Hilton (Duquesne University), Dana Kramer (SEA), Sean Luther (InnovatePGH), Mike Madden (InnovatePGH), Alex Toner (Pitt), Breen Masciotra (Port Authority), Brittany McDonald (Uptown Partners), Sabreena Miller (Uptown Partners), Jamie Piotrowski (Uptown Partners), Alex Toner (University of Pittsburgh), Mary Ellen Solomon (Duquesne University), Paul Svoboda (Duquesne Light Co.), Megan Zeigler (GBA)

Guests: Scott Bofinger, Leah Yock (Uptown Partners Board), Jason Jones, Katie Grimm (J.S. Jones & Still Consulting)

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

Agenda Discussions:

(1) Backbone Support Findings & Recommendations Preliminary Report (Jason Jones and Katie Grimm, J.S. Jones & Still Consulting): The Consultant presentation included focus on:

- a. Survey themes – Community and/or Development as priorities; supporting aligned activities as key focus moving forward; work on affordable housing; traffic and improved infrastructure as most promising projects; need for decision-making process/protocol and better communication
- b. Challenges – leadership transition; waning engagement
- c. Assets – Regional Ecodistricts; supportive and knowledgeable community development sector; award-winning neighborhood plan; members of UTF are valuable
- d. Potential backbone options: (1) UP becomes backbone and convener of UTF with outsourced help, in which EID director will be housed in nonprofit partner and mobility work has TDM coordinator perhaps shared with Hill District and (2) Comprehensive fiscal sponsorship model in which EID manager works as contractor for umbrella nonprofit
- e. Future of UTF – In either scenario UTF becomes “advisory group,” possibly convened quarterly with composition more representative of “community”

Some follow up questions from UTF members included who would be the final decision maker and how would decisions be made; what are capacity capabilities among organizations that would be more involved than others; fundraising capabilities and who would be in charge of raising funds, and finally the specific roles of Uptown Partners and other entities.

Pending further discussion and feedback from UTF members, the delivery of the Consultant’s final report has been postponed.

Unfortunately, the meeting was abruptly adjourned when most members exited the Zoom when the consultants departed the call. The meeting ended at 9:30am. Further discussion of Consultant’s preliminary report will be the focus of the September 2 UTF meeting.

Next Uptown Task Force Meeting - 8 a.m. on Thursday, September 2, 2021 via Zoom.