

Uptown Task Force Meeting Minutes
Thursday, December 5, 2019
8:00 – 10:00 a.m.
Duquesne University, Student Union, Africa Room

Present: Derek Dauphin (City Planning), Gary Desjardins (PPG Paints Arena), Grant Ervin (City of Pittsburgh), Ben Grunauer (PWSA), Amy Hart (HDS), Simona Loberant (SEA), Breen Masciotra (Port Authority), Mike Madden (Pittsburgh Innovation District/Avenu), Sean Luther (InnovatePGH/Avenu), Alyssa Lyon (GBA), Jeanne McNutt (Uptown Partners), Sarah SanGiovanni (Uptown Partners), Kalyani Singh (InnovatePGH), Andrea Stanford (Allegheny County), Mary Ellen Solomon (Duquesne University), Alex Toner (University of Pittsburgh), Joe Wingefeld (Uptown Partners), Megan Zeigler (GBA), Joan Hayek (Duquesne University)

Call to Order/Welcome: Mary Ellen Solomon convened the meeting at 8:15 a.m. with an introduction of all present Task Force members.

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

Agenda Discussions:

(1) EcoDistricts Certification: Rob Bennet, CEO of EcoDistricts, was unable to present today, so Grant Ervin of the City of Pittsburgh presented as an EcoDistricts Board Member to inform the group of the certification process. The EcoDistricts Organization was in Pittsburgh a few weeks ago and hosted a very successful summit thanks to many people on the UTF as well as around the city. One of the things that came out of the summit was that the EcoDistricts Organization would like to help neighborhoods that have gone through the EcoDistrict process and planning pursue a certification. Some areas UTF members indicated they'd like to ask Rob to address include what are the benefits of certification, what's the rigor of the process, what kind of support is provided, what are the costs, how would that process factor into UTF governance determination process, and is Uptown truly an EcoDistrict by their definitions and standards? Mary Ellen will contact Rob to attempt to reschedule the presentation.

(2) Uptown Partners EID Community Summit: Jeanne McNutt, ED of Uptown Partners, reported that the community summit, hosted on November 21st at the Center for Deaf and Hearing Services, was a success thanks to many people including their sponsors: PPG Arena, Heinz Endowments, and an Uptown Partners Board member. Duquesne University provided volunteers, and 10 local businesses that donated gifts to the event. Overall, the event was very well attended by community members and families. There were plenty of fun activities including crafts, a magician, a balloon artist, and music, as well as Uptown neighborhood trivia.

It was UTF members' understanding that the primary goal of the meeting was to update Uptown residents on progress on the EID plan implementation. Post-event assessment indicated there wasn't significant engagement by residents in the information tables that were created and staffed by Sub-committee chairs. It was suggested that for any future similar efforts the format, program, etc., be assessed to ensure we're actually achieving the goals of education and feedback exchange. Regarding feedback and suggestions that were received at the tables, Joe Wingefeld will follow up with Sub-committee chairs to collect that information.

(3) Uptown Partners RCO Application: Jeanne McNutt stated that at the last Uptown Partners Board meeting, the Board approved a motion for Uptown Partners to apply to become a registered community organization (RCO). UP is hoping to have the application completed and submitted by December 25th or shortly after. Uptown Partners is currently working on a communications plan, which is requirement of an RCO, and UP has a meeting scheduled to discuss the application and process with Councilman Daniel Lavelle and Hill CDC leaders.

Derek Dauphin said that RCO review and approval process shouldn't take more than a few weeks. If UP is given the status of RCO, they will have it through the end of 2021.

In light of this action, the Development Sub-Committee will revise and finalize the Uptown development review process to reflect UP RCO status when granted.

3) Update on Meeting with Uptown Partners Board: Mary Ellen, Cory Day of UPMC (Mercy) and the Sub-committee chairs attended the Uptown Partners Board meeting to discuss the work of the UTF and the upcoming facilitated discussion around governance and a potential backbone structure. UTF members wanted learn more about the Board's vision for UP and what aspects of that vision might align with the UTF.

UTF presented the following three potential models of governance/backbone structure to the Board:

- 1) Advancing the collective impact model, which is essentially what the UTF is doing right now, but adding specificity at key ally organizations, as well as creating a stronger central convener, potentially with fundraising capabilities.
- 2) Identify or create a new implementation organization, which could be UTF (staffed) or a completely new organization.
- 3) Empower an organization to move the big pieces of the plan forward, which might be Uptown Partners, which would be contrary to the current strategic plan adopted by UP Board.

The next step is that the UP Board will discuss these options at their Board Retreat in January with Jeanne reporting back. If there is interest from the UP Board in considering UP as a possible option for the backbone structure, then the UP Board will be invited to attend the facilitated governance conversation. The RFP for that consultant will go out in February.

Sub-Committee Updates:

Community: The committee has decided to cancel the December meeting. In November, they continued their conversation around community land trust as well as the Love Your Block project.

Development: The next meeting is Thursday, December 12th where the committee will continue to finalize their process review. Most likely, the chair Mike Madden will be ready to present in January in the hopes to formalize their process review with a motion.

Infrastructure: The next meeting will be focused on the committee's goals for 2020. They will continue to work on a GIS map on all of the developments happening in the neighborhood.

Mobility: The Mobility Work Plan is mostly centered on what data the Sub-committee has. The November meeting was focused on parking data divisions, and the December meeting will focus on sidewalk data divisions.

Member Updates:

University of Pittsburgh: Pitt is hosting a community meeting tonight around the Central Oakland Housing portion of their Institutional Master Plan at 6pm in David Lawrence Hall.

Mary Ellen adjourned the meeting at 9:30 a.m. with best holiday wishes for the whole UTF.

Next Uptown Task Force Meeting - 8 a.m. on Thursday, January 2, 2020, at Duquesne University, Africa Room.