

Uptown Task Force Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 5, 2019
8:00 – 10:00 a.m.
Duquesne University, Power Center Ballroom Section A

Present: Roger Altmeyer (UPMC), Dara Braitman (DOMI), Ruari Egan (PWSA), Amy Hart (HDS), Simona Loberant (SEA), Breen Masciotra (Port Authority), Mike Madden (Pittsburgh Innovation District/Avenu), Sean Luther (InnovatePGH/Avenu), Alyssa Lyon (GBA), Laya Mathews (URA), Mischelle McMillian (DeRuad Street Tenant Council), Jeanne McNutt (Uptown Partners), Kalyani Singh (InnovatePGH), Andréa Stanford (Allegheny County), Mary Ellen Solomon (Duquesne University), Alex Toner (University of Pittsburgh), Sara Walker (Duquesne Light), Cassandra Williams (Councilman Lavelle's Office), Mercedes Williams (Rep. Jake Wheatley's Office), Joe Wingenfeld (Uptown Partners), Caroline Woodward (Bethlehem Haven), 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 August meeting minutes approved that were previously distributed to all members via email. The motion was approved with no dissent.

Agenda Discussions:

(1) DeRuad Fire Update: Jeanne McNutt gave a quick overview of the fire that occurred on August 17th, 2019. The 5-alarm fire had displaced 77 residents. Uptown Partners has convened two emergency meetings since the fire with members of the community as well as affected residents in order to plan fire relief aid. Many organizations have provided aid over the last few weeks including, but not limited to, The Red Cross, Councilman Lavelle's office, Rep. Jake Wheatley's office, URA, Focus, McAuley Ministries, Carlow, Pitt, Duquesne, the Hill CDC, the Port Authority, and more. McAuley Ministries provided a grant to help the victims that Duquesne University became the fiscal agent for. Pitt and Neighborhood Allies also provided funding, both towards providing aid that Duquesne became the fiscal agent for. Most of the families have been placed into other units throughout the city, and 5 families remain in a hotel while they await their new housing options. There hasn't been a decision yet on whether or not the affected buildings will be condemned or rebuilt, but it is of utmost importance that if they are rebuilt, that they remain low-income housing. Mike Madden of the Development Sub-Committee stated that they would look into whether or not the neighborhood was now under the required percentage of low-income housing units.

After Jeanne gave her update, Michelle (Mickie) McMillian, President of the DeRuad Tenant Council, stated how grateful she and the other affected residents were for all the help that each organization had provided. Mickie said that there would be a Resource Fair at Ebenezer Baptist Church in the Hill District on September 14th for all affected residents to come and be able to celebrate their community.

(2) Mobility Sub-Committee Draft Work Plan: Breen Masciotra presented the draft work plan to the Task Force. The goal was to create a one-year work plan that would help implement the overall mobility chapter of the Eco-Innovation plan. Following the format used by the other sub-committees, Mobility sub-committee drafted a purpose statement, prioritized goals, identified indicators, developed projects and programs in order to hit those goals, and finally drafted a meeting schedule.

The four goal categories of the sub-committee are Transportation Choice, Parking, Safe and Livable Streets and General. Prioritized indicators include encourage walking, biking and taking transit trips to, from and with the EID; ensure transit meets the needs of local users; implement a parking management strategy for Uptown; make a parking policy “work” for Uptown residents; identify or establish an organization to implement TDM for Uptown and prioritize streetscape improvements based on needs and critical pathways.

The upcoming meeting schedule was also included through January 2020 (September - micro-mobility; October - BRT; November - transit and parking; December - sidewalks; and January - transportation demand management).

(3) Facilitated Discussion of Governance: Mary Ellen stated that she was a bit behind on editing the RFP for a consultant so she will continue to work on that. She is attending the Collective Impact Forum on October 15th through the 17th and thinks it will help tremendously with this discussion. She also planned to follow up on meeting with Marimba Milliones at the Hill CDC to discuss what initiatives for possible collaboration.

Sub-Committee Updates:

Community: The August meeting had been canceled. More work was happening around tracking metrics.

Development: The next meeting is Thursday, September 12th, in which the committee will be discussing innovation. The fire at DeRuad will also be on the agenda. The City Edge project has gotten the green light and are expecting to break ground in about 60 to 90 days.

Infrastructure: The meeting topics are currently being restructured due to the availability of topic experts. The next meeting will be about tree inventory. In October, they will be discussing the Boulevard of the Allies. In November, the topic is the BRT, and in December, they will discuss the plan for 2020.

Member Updates:

Representative Jake Wheatley's Office: On October 23rd, Wheatley's office will be hosting their annual youth summit at Duquesne University's Power Center from 9am to 2pm. All are welcome!

University of Pittsburgh: Be a Good Neighborhood Back to School Block Parties are back this fall every Thursday at different locations throughout Oakland. The next one is tonight in Oakland Square.

The meeting adjourned at 9:16 a.m.

Next Uptown Task Force Meeting - 8 a.m. on Thursday, October 3rd at Uptown Partners Office