

Meeting Minutes for Uptown Partners 2-28-07, Mercy Hospital

- **Steve Schillo opened with some history on how we got to this point with the proposed “Uptown Partners” group.**
 - o Included a description of the three subcommittees and an emphasized that Duquesne did not want to be the heavy handed controlling partner.
 - o Touched on the Keystone Innovation Zone that was identified by the state for high tech businesses in Uptown.
- **Jeanne McNutt reported on the Housing and Development Committee**
 - o Applications were made by her for notification of demolition and zoning variances for this year
 - o Determined that many of the new parking lots are not in compliance with zoning code and as a result a conversation was begun with Sal Williams about possible compromise. Sal is open to hearing ideas from the group on the development of those properties as the leases are only for one year. Possibly, there is a way to compromise on design standards.
 - o Opportunity to do another mural like the one at Myriam’s. This one may be on Tommy Small’s building on Fifth, across from Excel Kitchens. We need OK from UPMC, who’s leasing the property from Sal. Sal and Tommy approved.
 - o Vacant Properties Working Group presenting a workshop/lunch on how community groups and individuals can acquire properties that come up in Sheriff’s and Treasurer’s. The event is March 27 at PCRG office in the Hill. Deadline to register: Mar. 20 . For more, contact Jeanne 471.2323.
 - o Meeting on Feb. 15 at Soho with Kyra Straussman, Steve Schillo, David Blenk, Neha G., Jeanne and Dale McNutt to discuss economic development strategy. Krya will do market analysis of Uptown.
 - o Jeanne introduced Aaron Gordon, new legislative aide to State Rep. Jake Wheatley..who will attend UP meetings.
 - o Jeanne introduced Nick Pantano, who has offered to help build UP.
 - o Community needs to continue to market the OPDC rehabbed homes in Uptown
 - o Architect Rob Pfaffman and preservationist Steven Paul are advocating to save properties slated for demolition on Fifth for the proposed arena. The new board needs to be involved in the arena issue.
- **Neha from City Planning reported on SNAP (Sections Neighborhood Asset Profile)**
 - o Uptown will have a SNAP by May or June
 - o City encourages neighborhoods to use this new data set for community planning
 - o Also spoke of the benefit of partnering with CTAC to do this
- **Steven Paul from Preservation Pittsburgh gave explanation of the organization he represents**
 - o Preservation Pittsburgh advocates for communities when institutional partners (i.e. large companies, city/county gov’t) begin development.
 - o Stressed that whatever happened with development in Uptown, the residents of Uptown should have a say in. Preservation Pittsburgh would like to help with this process.
- **Michele Cooper from Mercy Hospital reported on OPDC’s plan to buy houses on Van Braam for rehabilitation.**
 - o This plan to sell the parcels to OPDC was in the works before the UPMC merger discussions began, but reached a standstill as details of the merger were being worked out. Some of the homes are owned by Mercy’s parent corporation, Pittsburgh Mercy Health System; some are owned by Mercy Hospital. Since the merger is pending, Pittsburgh Mercy is unable to sell the properties owned by the Hospital.
 - o After an assessment of the properties, it was found that none of the homes were structurally sound enough for rehabilitation. Mercy’s intent was to eliminate any danger to the community, but determined that it was unsafe to enter the homes for this remediation. A decision was made

to raze the properties until such time as discussions can be held with UPMC after the merger. In the interim the lots will be turned into green space.

- **Renee Aldrich reported on the Clean, Safe, and Green Committee**
 - o C,S, and G would like to begin to involve the media in their efforts as well as invite the new Chief of Police to a meeting
 - Officer Janine Davis expressed that that may not be feasible and so offered to serve on the committee herself.
 - o Wants to concentrate on the area between Birmingham and Washington Square in regards to working to end the open air drug trafficking going on in these areas.
- **Officer Janine Davis reported on headway being made and tools available for community**
 - o 311 line up and running to report non-emergency crimes
 - o C-Tips has been investigating in Uptown
 - C-Tips is a new squad of seasoned detectives that investigate areas of on-going crime
 - o Since 1-1-07, 26 drug arrests and 6 prostitution arrests have been in Uptown
- **Eric Chir of the DU Law Clinic and Evan Stoddard reported on recent filings and gave summary of draft of bylaws**
 - o Articles of Incorporation have been filed with the state and the official name of the group is now Uptown Partners
 - o With the help of CTAC, bylaws and were put together using input of a small group of residents, business, owners, and institutional partners in Uptown. Evan and Eric felt that the bylaws reflected the kind of organization that UP would be and how it would function
 - o Evan and Eric went through the bylaws draft step by step for everyone present. Various questions were asked about the bylaws including inquiries about dissolution, ability to remove institutional partners as well as poorly functioning board members from the Board of Directors and creation of an auditing committee.
 - o Time frame given by Eric until Uptown Partners is completely ready to be up and running: end of this summer. This includes
 - Processing of the paperwork by the state for Incorporation (filed, but not returned from state)
 - Advertising in two newspapers stating that we now exists as an incorporated entity
 - Appointment of Founding Board of Directors and approval of bylaws
 - Filing of 501c3 papers with IRS
 - o It was also pointed out that bylaws can be amended by organization after all paperwork has been filed and in fact most organizations do amend their bylaws after they get started
- **Endorsement of Bylaws Draft**
 - o Steve Schillo took a show of hands for an endorsement of the draft of the bylaws
 - 27 Yeah votes
 - 0 Nay votes
 - 5 Abstentions
 - o Bylaws were endorsed
- **Nominating committee was announced**
 - o Mary Broddie – Resident
 - o John Fleenor – Resident
 - o Evan Stoddard – Duquesne University
 - o Marilyn Sullivan – Bethlehem Haven
 - o Nominating Committee members cannot apply for board of director’s positions. They will take the applications for board members and appoint members from applications taken. They will also run the election of officers when that time comes
 - o Applications forms for Board of Directors were passed out.
- **Margorie Howard of CTAC reported on application for and function of board members**
 - o Two parts of the Board: Officer board members and non-officer board members

- Margarie stressed the importance for board members to really have an understanding of the bylaws and work to stick to them. This makes for good leadership and helps to avoid troubles with the IRS.
 - Applicants may list their areas of expertise useful to the organization on their application
 - Nominating committee also has the right to seek out board members
 - Nominating committee cannot recommend officers. The board will vote on its officers once it is in place
 - Founding Board will only be in place until the end of this calendar year
 - Applications for the board are due by March 16th
- **A meeting will be held on April 11th for the community to vote to approve the board of directors**