

Uptown Action Plan Community Meeting
Wednesday, February 22, 2006

Minutes

The next Uptown Action Plan community meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 22, 2006 at 5:30 p.m. at Fisher Hall, Room 324. The proposed agenda includes:

- Review of Minutes
- Status of "Celebrate Uptown Pittsburgh!"
- Status of Spring Clean Up
- The Hill District Consensus Group and Lessons Learned
- Committee Reports

Welcome

Maureen Hogan, Planning Consultant, facilitated the meeting. Through funding from the Hill District Growth Fund, Maureen is able to continue to provide some technical assistance to the implementation of the action plan.

Maureen introduced Steve Schillo and he welcomed the attendees to Duquesne University. As is the practice of the Uptown planning effort to date, he began the meeting with a discussion of "Good News in Uptown." First, he congratulated James Simon on the installation of his art work on the university's garage. Second, he noted that there will be a groundbreaking on the university's new development on March 13, 2006. This development is off of the Bluff down on Forbes Avenue and will include amenities that the community may use including a Barnes and Noble and a Starbuck's.

The Community and University Honors Seminar

Students from the Honors College presented an abstract on their proposal for "Celebrate Uptown Pittsburgh!" The event is scheduled for Saturday, April 22, 2006 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Working together with various neighborhood and university partners, it will include games, educational activities and cultural highlights. The festival will assist in advancing the work of the Clean/Safe/Green and Neighbors and Economy committees. It will be held in conjunction with the university's annual Spring Clean Up.

Community comments included the following:

- How will it be funded? The students will need to fundraise \$4,000 but will receive up to \$7,000 in in-kind services.
- The Hill District Consensus Group would be interested in partnering for this event.
- How will the media be contacted because it is important to get the word out? The Public Affairs Department of the University will be consulted.

Committee Reports

Sustainable Organization:

This committee has been in contact with both the Community Technical Assistance Center (CTAC) and the Legal Clinic of the university. Mark Fatla, Director of CTAC, advised the

committee that it was not in the best interest of the community to have the possibility of competing community based organizations. To this end, he advised the committee to meet with Councilperson Tonya Payne to see what her preferences are about the continuation of UCAG. Mark agreed to broker this meeting and get back to the committee.

Clean/Safe/Green:

The committee met and identified ongoing concerns including prostitution, drugs and violence among other issues. The Community Affairs Officer of Zone 2 will be coming to an upcoming meeting of the committee to discuss possible strategies. In their further discussions, the committee identified the following:

- The committee strategy approach should be based on clean first followed by beautification.
- Residents and business people may report problems online to the police.
- Demolitions are not necessarily the preferred strategy.
- The committee will be spending time understanding relevant laws and available resources.
- A van tour will be held on March 2, 2006 at 4:00 p.m. (leaving from Mercy Hospital) to better see and understand the extent of neighborhood blight.
- The annual Spring Clean Up will involve hundreds of volunteers. A lunch will be provided and organizers are looking into the lunch as a "Taste of the Community."
- Attendees discussed the how to advertise including billboards, door knocking, banners, posters, and the electronic signs at both the Polumbo Center and Pittsburgh Hearing and Speech. For further information, contact Luci Jo at dimaggi171@duq.edu

Neighbors/Economy:

The committee undertook the following:

- Consulted the Community Design Center of Pittsburgh about possible assistance related to visioning and design/development guidelines.
- Scheduled a meeting with David Blenk, Oakland Planning and Development Corporation (OPDC), to understand the extent of the prior partnership on housing development. David will be providing/sharing the neighborhood housing study. Additionally, the status of UCAG properties is being researched.
- Consulted City Planning on being included on the list for notifications on upcoming hearings before the City Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Adjustment. An application will be submitted to insure this. Further investigation will be made with the Bureau of Building Inspection (BBI) on the notification of demolition permits.
- Contacted the Planning Department to proceed with Map Pittsburgh. A new zoning map will be presented to the community by March 15, 2006. After community meetings have been held, hearings will be held before the City Planning Commission and City Council.
- Contacted the Pittsburgh Partnership for Neighborhood Development (PPND) about accessing their comprehensive neighborhood data base, Community Information System (CIS). PPND has agreed to the request.
- Contacted CTAC about accessing their neighborhood data base.
- Scheduled meeting with director of the South Side Local Development Corporation (SSLDC) to better understand community development as well as identify potential

development partners. In addition to SSLDC and OPDC, this may include the economic development arm of Hill House.

- Scheduled a walking tour for March 3, 2006 at 9:00 a.m.
- Met with current owners of the former Fifth Avenue High School to better understand the development opportunities.

Follow-ups

Maureen will draft the minutes of the community meeting and the university will post them on the community website. On this site, additional information will be posted including committee chair contact information, committee minutes and the Uptown Action Plan. The community minutes will also be distributed at upcoming community meetings.