

Uptown Action Plan Community Meeting
Wednesday, October 25, 2006
6:30pm 1410 Fifth Avenue (Miryam's)

Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Steve Schillo at 6:40pm with 34 people in attendance. Steve welcomed everyone, reviewed the agenda and turned the meeting over to Michele Cooper from Mercy Hospital.

Michele introduced Mr. David T. Martin from UPMC who wanted to discuss the planned merger between Mercy Hospital and UPMC. Mr. Martin addressed the following points:

1. He told those in attendance that the status of the merge is in the due diligence phase and final approval was needed from the parties involved in addition to the Vatican, State and Federal approvals.
2. The goal for concluding the deal was January 1, 2007 is a good timeframe since the date corresponds to the beginning of the fiscal year.
3. He stressed that UPMC wants to be involved in the community but at the current time was not sure what role they would have or should have as the deal progresses.
4. He answered several questions from the attendees.

Clean, Safe and Green Report - Sister Carolyn Schallenberger, RSM, RN, MSN

Clean , Green and Safe Committee from October 18th, 2006 meeting

Attendees:

Renee Aldrich, chairman

Mary Pacini

Rosalie Francis

Frank Francis

Dolores Di Pofi

Sister Carolyn Schallenberger

Rev Dester Tines

Rod Dobish

Luci Jo Dimaggio

Deborah Pittrell- Parker

The meeting opened at 6:00p.m. with 10 people present.

Open discussion addressed Clean up by Duquesne students who would like to meet the people in the neighborhood. Neighborhood families will be notified about where and when the students will be in their blocks. There is a need for mutual responses with the students.

The consensus was that Uptown is not viewed as a Community. How do we get this concept back?

Consideration was given to call attention to the Uptown problems through the news media. Some Uptown problems identified are: no major play ground for children, no senior citizen center, drugs and prostitution, and little police presence.

Participants told of varying ways that they requested the “ladies” to move from their property.

Discussion was held about a building that has approximately 40 people wandering in and out during all hours of the day.

There was a request for anyone having a Cole’s Directory to share with this committee. (This directory lists names and addresses of property owners.)

The meeting ended at 7:30p.m.

The next meeting is planned for November 16th, 2006 at Mercy Hospital at 6:00p.m. in room 2126B.

All are welcome.

Other discussion items:

Ms. McNutt expressed her concern about the number of fires in the neighborhood over the past few weeks and wanted to get the Bureau of Building Inspection (BBI) to inspect the buildings. Rod Dobish and Leonard Billian expressed concern that having BBI involved could cause other problems and additional citations other than the buildings in question.

Dr. Evan Stoddard mentioned a meeting on November 2, 2006 that is sponsored by the city of Pittsburgh. Information regarding this can be obtained by calling (412) 255-2636.

Neighbors and Economy Report – Jeanne McNutt

Housing & Economic Development
October 18, 2006 at SOHO invention

Welcome

Review Goals:

Create a healthy environment in which businesses can succeed and grow

Maintain and improve existing structures

Advocate for new housing development

Identify and support appropriate residential zoning

City Neighborhood Asset Profile/Plan Update:

Since we met last, and at the urging of our committee, we now have the ear of dept of City Planning. Met with Dir. Of City Planning and now Uptown is the largest of 5 neighborhoods the City has chosen to provide a comprehensive asset and needs profile, of our community

(Topics inc. Housing, transportation, crime, employment, public service coverage,...)

Almost finished with data collection and descriptive portion. City working with Community Data Initiative tool for parcel by parcel building info. I also recently met with the new Associate Director of City Planning, who, with Neha Gabawala, our city planning representative, will soon begin an urban design plan, *with our participation*, as part of that report...i.e. Sidewalk design, public spaces, lighting, landscaping...very pro-pedestrian.

SNAP should be finished by end of year, and then put before Planning Commission for approval.

CTAC Community Data Initiative Update and Community Information System

Two data and mapping tools... One is funded through PPND and the work conducted by CTAC. Past summer four staffers walked our neighborhood to record information on buildings, conditions, etc.. Most visual data in the form of charts and maps. CDI is almost complete... needs an executive summary, and then we'll get a CD of the report...which we hope we can use for development and marketing purposes. The other tool, CIS comprises a host of other info culled from city and county files. Limited number of community groups is now being trained to interpret this system...and we will hopefully receive that training in the coming months.

Map Pittsburgh Zoning Update

Map Pittsburgh Zoning changes have been before City Review Commission and City Council. A couple of us spoke before both these bodies to enforce that Uptown have a stated vision ..and that we have an energetic, growing organization that is working to achieve our goals.

We need to remember that Zoning codes are our protection against development that does not match our vision for the community. When a property owner or developer wants to have or build something that does not meet code he has to get an exception (or permission) from the city ...A community voice is very powerful tool in countering private interest that does not add to the quality of life in our neighborhood. Hope we can count on our membership to fight for zoning compliance to protect our rights and interests.)

Arts Update (Mural, Gist St., Meet with City public arts administrator, funding).

Thanks to artist Gregg Valley, the Sprout Fund and a small adhoc group from our committee, we now have a beautiful, colorful mural on the Miryams... our first new 'green space' in Uptown, with more actual ones, we hope, to follow.

OPDC Homes Update

Homes rehabbed by Oakland Planning and Development are 80% ready. Scattered sites, 2 on Miltenberger, 1 on Forbes Avenue. Homes are gutted and renovated, and fit with all new electrical and plumbing... run around \$60K, after URA picks up part of the mortgage. ... homeowners must live on the property for a minimum of five years. Since this project was originally collaboration with UCAG, OPDC would like for us to help market the properties. Questions regarding these homes, call OPDC at 621.7863

Casino Update

Lot of rumbling politically regarding which outfit should be awarded slots license. If it comes to Uptown, we need to be proactive to ensure that any development related is a positive one for the community. To date, the Stadium and Sports Authority has used powers of eminent domain to enforce the purchase of several buildings at the arena site....The response from those property owners has been mixed.

KIZ Update

For past several months the Hill House Dev. Corp and DU have been working to establish the Pittsburgh Central Keystone Innovation Zone..to serve as a catalyst for economic development in the Hill and Uptown. The KIZ's goal is to attract technology companies specifically through tax relief incentives and other benefits-- including the resources the university can provide.

Dept. of Community & Economic Development supposed to visit Uptown this week to discuss the proposal...whose goal is to attract two businesses a year ... new businesses have already been identified as expressing interest.

Housing Niche

One thing UP can do is try to catch the wind on the downtown housing movement ...With high-end housing units being built downtown, there's a great call for mid to lower end housing options...and we think we can fill that gap.

(Next week I meet with Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership to discuss how we can work together to promote housing development ... (in an area the PDP is calling the Greater Downtown area....neighborhoods walkable from downtown

Next Meeting(s): Anyone interested in Housing and Economic Development Committee, please see me.

311 for City Services (reopened City Service Center) concerns sent to appropriate city department....abandoned buildings, litter issues,,,

Everyone was pleased with the Mural on the side of 1410 Fifth Avenue. Peter Smerd mentioned that the sprout fund was willing to do more if buildings could be identified. The thought was that Uptown over a period of time could be thought of as the area with murals.

Sustainable Organization Report – Steve Schillo

The following is a handout from the meeting that has the sustainable organization report:

Sustainable Organization Recommendations

- A. Form new community organization to represent neighborhood and advance Uptown's agenda.

B. Authorize an Organizing Committee to:

1. Recommend a name for the organization. Suggested name is **Uptown Partners**.
2. Identify an address for the corporation.
3. Draft articles of incorporation to legally establish the organization.
4. Define the structure and estimated budget of the organization.
5. Draft Bylaws that describe the rules for the organization.
6. Nominate people to the organization's board.
7. Plan for the next meetings, membership drive, and election of the new board.

Volunteers to date for the Organizing Committee:

**John Fleenor
James Simon
Jeanne McNutt
Michele Cooper
Dr. Evan Stoddard
Jaclyn Cherry
Alida Baker
Mary E. Broddie
Renee Aldrich
Harry Orlando
Rod Dobish
Peter Smerd
Joe Shapiro
Mike Bonato
Deborah Pettrell-Parker**

Review Recommendations- James Simon and John Fleenor

James and John recapped their work over the summer with legal council to develop the next steps for the organization to proceed. The following two (2) items needed attention first.

1. **Have name for the organization. Uptown Partners was approved by the group in attendance.**
2. **The organization needed to develop a mission statement.**

The organizing committee agreed to have a meeting during the week of October 30 to begin work on the mission statement and their other duties.

The group agreed to have the next community meeting on November 15, 2006 at 6:30pm at 1410 Fifth Avenue.