

OAKLAND TASK FORCE MEETING
March 11, 2008
Pittsburgh Playhouse of Point Park University
Minutes

Present:

Andrews, Lena	Planning
Antonelli, Linda	Magee-Womens Hospital
Blenk, David	OPDC
Fink, Joe	Pitt
Fisher, Elly	OPDC
Graziani, Kim	Mayor's Office
Griffin, Jim	PPC
Jackson, Sheila	CLP
Layman, Jennifer	CMU
Leibow, Ron	Pitt
Mergner, Fred	PAT
Petropoulos, Georgia	OBID
Phillips, Sandy	Peoples's Oakland
Rainey, Mavis	OTMA
Robinson, Brooks	RIDC
Sass, Richard	Oakcliffe
Supowitz, Paul	Pitt
Vinski, David	Playhouse
Walnoha, Adrienne	CHSC
Wilds, John	Pitt

Presentations

Eli Shorak and Park Rankin presented the update to the University of Pittsburgh's Master Space Plan. The current draft has several districts which are being planned over the next ten years.

1. Schenley Park/Museum District: There is the future potential for a small addition of 2,500 s.f. which would be complimentary to the current architecture of the Frick Fine Arts Building. The new space would be used to increase the size of the art gallery.
2. East Campus: The Master Plan for East campus is being amended to add housing to the potential future uses of the RA parking lot. Any structure on that site would be designed with sensitivity to the Music Building. The current draft plan calls for 24,000 sf keeping with the current architecture of the surrounding buildings and adding a front "green area."

3. Mid-Campus: Potential future use of the PS parking lot and the physicians building to build a new 30,000 sf space which would be 8-10 floors.
4. Lower Hillside: This amendment identifies the potential for a small addition and possibly connecting to the Chevron Building or Eberle Hall which would be no more than five stories. Parking would be addressed in either case.
5. West Hillside: The former “Robinson Court” is currently owned by the Housing Authority. The University is party to an agreement to purchase the parcel. The space is to be used as athletic fields (softball, soccer, and track) and will be rezoned from RP to EMI. The rezoning plan will be presented to City Council in July of this year.

In summary, Eli stressed that where possible for development, green space would be added to the front side (similar to Alumni Hall). All development would be in keeping with the historic districts, such as the Music Building, and all planning will be presented to community groups that may be affected.

Create a Sense of Place

Stimulate Neighborhood Revitalization

Adrienne Walnoha, Sandy Phillips and Richard Sass raised the question of students being invited to attend Task Force meetings to involve them in the safety and cleanliness issues in Oakland. David Blenk reported that the OCC public safety committee will meet on April 5th for their block watch program. The Bates Street interchange has developed a homeless/panhandling problem which needs to be addressed.

Oakland Task Force Environmental Committee

Georgia Petropoulos requested in put from the OTF on the goals of the Environment Committee. The first two meetings were more fact gathering and goal setting with outside guests invited to attend. The Committee has set, with the approval of the OTF, the following goals:

1. Oakland as a “Gold Star” neighborhood.
2. Look into having a recycling drop off center in Oakland.
3. The OTF taking on the “educational” component of the program.

The membership decided that for the first year, these goals were achievable.

Make it Easier to Get Into and Around in Oakland

Mavis Rainey reported that the Boulevard of the Allies Bridge project is going smoothly and is still on schedule for a November, 2008 completion. Fifth Avenue traffic congestion should ease up with the reopening of the Birmingham Bridge. The Railing Project has had weather delay but is scheduled to start in April. The first section of railing will be done by Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh.

Ron Leibow reported that the Attorney General will be signing off on the project soon, PennDOT has set a deadline of April 7 for bids and a pre-bid meeting will be held within the next couple of weeks. PennDOT should make the bid award sometime, hopefully, in May.

Advocate for Quality Development

Announcements

OCC – Code Walks are going well and Elan Strait is currently preparing a list for the Building Inspector dedicated to Oakland.

OTMA – Mavis reported that she has presented to over 2,000 UPMC employees who are being transferred downtown and has passed out educational materials regarding public transit and commuting alternatives to downtown. On February 27, there was a meeting of Pitt representatives, OTMA, CHP and Port Authority, met to discuss the unsafe traffic tie ups in the curb lane in front of Children's Hospital on Fifth Avenue. Several ideas were discussed: Valet parking, revisit the 2004 parking study to see where there are empty spots and direct visitors there and off-site parking.

City – Kim Graziani introduced herself to the Task Force and outlined her role in the Mayor's Office.

PPC – Jim Griffin introduced himself as the new Manager of the Schenley Plaza.

2008 OTF Meeting Schedule

January – University of Pittsburgh

February – Magee Womens Hospital of UPMC

March – Pittsburgh Playhouse of Point Park University

April – Carnegie Mellon University

May – OPDC/OBID/OTMA/OCC

June – Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh/Carnegie Museum of Pittsburgh

July – Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy

August – No Meeting

September – University of Pittsburgh Medical Center

October – Western Pennsylvania School for Blind Children

November – Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh

December – Carlow University