



THE COMMUNITY TABLE

February 8, 2013 Monthly Membership Meeting

Bike Pittsburgh – Bike PGH came to introduce their organization and talked about their work “transforming our streets and communities into vibrant, healthy places by making them safe and accessible for everyone to bike and walk.” Originally, the group started as a couple of volunteers who wanted to make the streets safer for bicyclists. Today, they have become advocates for “complete streets,” a philosophy that streets should be safe and accessible for all users. Bike PGH expressed interest in working with the Consensus Group to promote safer streets and foster a bike culture in the Hill. www.BikePGH.org

Eric Ewell, Hill District Education Council – Mr. Ewell discussed the high number of absences and tardies at Millions School. In just half a year of school, there have been 872 absences and 1900 tardies. The Education Council is seeking volunteers to contact parents to address these issues as well as the achievement gap in our schools. For more info: 412-621-3341 or eric.ewell@hdec15219.org

John Ford – The Consensus Group invited Mr. Ford to be a guest speaker for a special Black History Month presentation. He discussed his life growing up in the Hill, his work as a historian, and the importance of understanding history.

Public Source – Public Source is an “independent, non-profit news group that focuses on original investigative reporting about critical issues facing Pittsburgh and the Western Pennsylvania region.” They came to introduce the organization to the community and discussed their latest project, a series for Black History Month. www.PublicSource.org

Dr. Thomas Mattei, Duquesne University and Hill Pharmacy – Dr. Mattei spoke briefly about the importance of health and wellness in our lives. He emphasized the need to take a more active role in staying healthy. The Hill Pharmacy is participating in a Million Hearts, a nationwide effort to reduce the incidence of heart attacks and strokes. The Pharmacy is offering free blood pressure and cholesterol screenings and is looking for local partners. 412.246.0963

Thomas Sumpter, Pittsburgh Public Schools – Mr. Sumpter discussed the vision study for Pittsburgh Public Schools. If the school district continues along its present path, it will be broke by the year 2015. The district is forming a city-wide advisory committee to address these issues.

Jonathan Kline, Studio for Spatial Practice and Comprehensive Vacant Property Strategy Team – Mr. Kline presented an overview of the Vacant Property Strategy. He discussed some startling statistics and shared some of the team’s findings and recommendations. The team has worked over several months to assess the vacant property situation in the Hill, developed recommendations, and created a vast interactive database mapping out their work. The database will be available to full Consensus Group members with paid memberships.

The mission of the Hill District Consensus Group is to work together through the differences and with the commonalities, to establish and enforce standards and processes in all aspects of community life: economic, political, spiritual, and social, for the ongoing health and prosperity of the community.