

Hill District Consensus Group  
Minutes for Monthly Meeting  
Friday, June 8, 2012

### **Consensus Group Staff Activities Update**

Beautifying neighborhood-talk about the idea of a façade program for the Hill, a program like one offered in the city of Charlotte. Looking at how to get funding to start a program.

Vacant property project is ongoing, consultants will offer updates on the project.

The Community Education series is ongoing; the next one in the series is a workshop on beautifying your property through landscape. Also, be on the lookout for Hanging Flower Baskets along Centre Ave, sponsored by the Hill District Consensus Group!

HDCG is providing info on being a block Leader, Angela Howze the contact for that.

Neighborhood Partnership Program – Corporate tax credit program where businesses donate money to community groups/nonprofits, in exchange for tax relief. Current contributors include Bank of New York Mellon. They have provided six million dollars in 6 years. This is year 5, program has one year left. We would like to have a community conversation on whether or not the program should be continued and what type of projects should be funded.

Bus Rapid Transit – Representatives visited the community at the May meeting to have a discussion about the latest Bus Rapid Transit initiative. They received plenty of feedback, including the need for bringing back the Hill loop. Angela Howze from the Consensus Group is serving as a representative for the Hill at BRT meetings. Her focus will be assurance that the Hill will be equitably connected to the the BRT

### **Vacant Property Strategy Team**

Ms. Christine Brill

The purpose of the project is to recycle every piece of vacant land in the hill. Past month and a half the team has been out surveying all the vacant property. The team is amassing data so that there is a clear understanding of vacancies in the Hill.

The mission is to realize the priorities of the Master Plan.

Introduction to the team there is Christine, Liam and they are working with G-tech and East Liberty Development there is also UCSUR is providing Data and Earl Hurl? Junior and Irene M..

Incorporating youth in the urban planning/design process

Greenprint and Hill Master Plan as guides to their work, they will be creating this, as well as a database that will allow people to see all the vacant lots.

Thursday, June 21st - Vacant Property Strategy Meeting

412-4434210 is Ms. Brills number she is willing to take calls about any questions.

### **Clean Green Hill Update**

Phyllis Ghafoor gave an update on the Clean Green Hill activities they are recruiting people, youth, and folks who are already cleaning up the neighborhood. They hope to recruit 30 community volunteers for upcoming beautification activities.

Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation Awards Two Pennsylvania Organizations <http://www.keppabeautiful.org/Portals/0/lowespr6812.pdf>. They received \$5,000 .00 and they hope to match that money. This is a national grant and CGH was one of only 2 for PA.

The Spring cleanup campaign collected 200 to 250 bags of garbage. It is getting around that the Hill can be clean and viable.

The group will be taking a Tree Tenders class in anticipation of two tree planting projects in the Hill.

The CGH along with volunteers have been busy clearing vacant lots and working to identify community gateways for the neighborhood, teaching youth and community how to keep their neighborhood clean.

### **Sports and Exhibition Authority**

Update on labor statistics for the Civic Arena Demolition.

Detailed break up of employment is given.

11,750 minority work hours out of 40,000.

### **Oxford Group Update**

Nearly done with pulling down the Civic Arena.

### **Grocery Store Update**

Representative from the Hill House EDC

Working tirelessly to move forward with the development and address confusion around the project In Mid-March 2012 - some contextual changes and we needed some time to incorporate design changes. Architects and engineers had to check the designs and okay them. There will be 7,000 additional ft. of tenant space. Working to secure the necessary funding to get the project done. Did not initially understand the true cost of the project.

They need to Not just build the project, but also bringing in operators and signing sustainable leases for the longevity of the building. Wanted to find tenants who would bring services that fulfill community needs, so no check cashing, payday loans, etc.

Evaluating commercial tenants on: 1) economic capacity to remain open, 2) meet needs of community, 3)good corporate citizen

3 weeks ago - conversations with construction community and process to find builders. Massaro brought on and is currently handling pre-construction services and estimating real project costs, should have real estimated costs in about 3 weeks. Grocery store should be up by late Spring 2013. The hope is to start construction again in September.

### **Growth Fund Update**

Representative Jake Wheatley

Currently, finalizing the process through which the community can apply for funds. Goal is to grow the fund while growing the community. Use the money sustainably by making investments, leveraging it for matching money, local loans, etc. This is necessary because the fund exists to support the other Master Plan priorities. How much money will the fund give to the grocery store? Exact amount has not been determined. Grocery store is a special case because of its importance to the community. It's application will be considered immediately, but we do not know how much money the growth fund will contribute, if any at all. The growth fund aims to support community projects which we believe will be successful. We must have confidence in a project before we can approve the funds. Other details may include the fact that the Hill CDC is the only group that has received money from the fund, there is something less than \$3 million in the fund Hill House EDC applied for a \$400,000 grant and \$400,000 recoverable grant. Who are the stakeholders on the board of the growth fund? Hill House EDC, Hill CDC, HDCG, Schenley Heights Development Corp, Historic Hill, Hill District Credit Union, and more.

**Other Announcements**

Jake Wheatley - Health and Wellness Fair Oct. 14th 11am-4pm at the Thelma Lovette YMCA

The UJAMAA collective has 2 acres under production at the Dwayne Cooper Garden of hope is located at the Francis street projects. New beds will be going in. There is also a 70s cabaret that is coming up at the Northside Elks on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June.

The Hill CDC is having a community meeting on June 28th at the YMCA at 5:30pm.

Pittsburgh Penguins in conjunction with First Source will begin a hiring workshop series starting on Wed. June 13th.

Pathways to Kindergarten Success, is looking to have people join the kindergarten club one in Mid July and one at the end of July.