



THE COMMUNITY TABLE

**Hill District Consensus Group  
Monthly Meeting  
August 9, 2013**

**Hill District Curtain Call Campaign – Brian Brown, HDCG Community Organizer**

Brian spoke about the Hill District Curtain Call project. As part of the new Consol Energy Center development, the Sports & Exhibition Authority (SEA), Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), and the Pittsburgh Penguins commissioned a New Arena Public Art Plan. The developers proposed building a pedestrian walkway called the Garden Passage, connecting Centre and Fifth Avenues between the Consol Energy Center and Epiphany Church. Over several months, these groups worked with artist & landscape architect Walter Hood and the community to create the Curtain Call, an ecological public art project celebrating the Hill District. Community members contributed hundreds of old photos to the project, to go up on the Curtain Call wall.

Once the plan was completed, the developers said they didn't have the money to build the project. The Penguins later built a statue of Mario Lemieux on part of the project location. As a result, the Consensus Group teamed up with Fight Back Pittsburgh to start the Pittsburgh Percent for Public Art Campaign. The campaign is lobbying elected officials to enforce existing city ordinance that requires publically funded developments to dedicate at least one percent of their budgets:

175.08 (a) At least one (1) percent of the maximum authorized amount for municipal construction or renovation of public buildings costing fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.00) or more shall, except as hereinafter provided, be reserved for the inclusion of works of art, as hereinafter defined, as approved by the City Art Commission.

**Pittsburgh Percent for Art Campaign – Carolyn Speranza, Pittsburgh Artist and Activist**

Carolyn talked about her experience as an artist & activist and introduced the Pittsburgh Percent for Art team. She also mentioned that City Councilman and Democratic Mayoral Candidate Bill Peduto and his chief of staff showed their support at a major outreach event.

**Kimberly Slater-Wood, Director of Outreach for the Pittsburgh Penguins**

Positions available at the Arena and with the Pittsburgh Penguins, available on HDCG website

## **Transit Tales – Helen Gerhardt, Pittsburghers for Public Transit Community Organizer**

Transit Tales Project is collecting your memories, hopes, concerns, and stories about public transit and what it means to you. Pennsylvania will be facing major public transit cuts, likely in Fall 2014/Spring 2015. Share what transit means to you, next Thursday, August 22<sup>nd</sup> 1:00pm-5:00pm.

## **Sports & Exhibition Authority Application to Federal Grant – Carl Redwood, HDCG Co-Director**

The Sports & Exhibition Authority applied for a federal grant to pay for Lower Hill infrastructure development. The public hearing is August 27<sup>nd</sup> at 6:00pm, Two Chatham Center. The community needs to go and we need to voice our questions and concerns. We also need to bring up the issue of Curtain Call: millions for a new arena, but they can't find \$1.5 million for Curtain Call. Before any more public funding is given to the Penguins, we want to make sure the SEA & Penguins fulfill their promises made to the community.

## **Hill House Charter School & Grocery Store Update – Cheryl Hall-Russell, CEO Hill House**

Hill House Charter School update. Community members showed their support at school board meeting. Pittsburgh Public School Board said that it was one of the best applications they have seen. Superintendent Linda Lane voiced her support. Board of Directors Thomas Sumpter has been a strong advocate for education in our community. The Hill House plans to open the Charter High School in September 2014. The school aims to help kids who dropped out of the public high school system. The program will connect with the CCAC, YMCA, EIC, and other local resources. The goal is not just to help kids get a diploma, but to help them move onto higher education and careers with living wages.

Grocery store. The grocery store opening is planned for October/November 2013. They still need to deliver equipment and furnish the inside of the building. A big community celebration will happen after the grand opening. The store is already taking job applications through the First Source Center, re-opening in the Blakey Building next door.

**Carl Redwood, HDCG Co-Director.** In 2007, the community created a Blueprint for a Livable Hill. From that plan, the top priority was the grocery store with three key desires:

- Community equity stake to ensure full community support and investment, with the Hill House Association as the owner of the building
- Family sustaining jobs with health benefits
- A range of healthy and affordable food for residents

If we don't pay livable wages, these jobs won't support Hill residents. This will lead to indirect displacement and residents won't be able to afford to live here anymore.

## **Presentation from Youth Organizers – Brian Brown, HDCG Youth Organizer**

Presentations from youth in the Youth Organizing program for Educational Change. They shared their experiences from their summer trainings and site visits.