

Oakcliffe Community Organization

Meeting Minutes - Wednesday, August 12, 2020

Opening

The regular meeting of the Oakcliffe Community Organization was called to order at 7:00 PM on August 12, 2020 by Elena Zaitsoff. The meeting was a virtual meeting conducted on Zoom.com. It was recorded.

Present

Elena Zaitsoff, Millie Sass, Geoff Becker, Jamie Ducar, Joan Dickerson, Liz Grey, Greg Fisher, Mark Oleniacz, Darlene Stevens, John Berkman, Joanne Cohen, Chris Vitsas, Deanna Wise, Douglas Spies, Shawn McCloskey, Megan Mooring

Presentation

The following team from UPMC gave a presentation on the new Magee-Womens Hospital building.

Chris Vitsas – Director of Hospitality and Operations – UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital

Deanna Wise - Director of Planning and Design - UPMC

Douglas Spies – Director of Architecture and Engineering - UPMC

Shawn McCloskey – Senior Project Manager – UPMC

Megan Mooring – Project Engineer - Magee

- It will house four new back-up generators fueled by two 20,000 gallon underground diesel tanks; for emergency use only by the NICU and operating rooms. Right now, if the system fails, NICU patients would have to be sent to a hospital in Ohio.
- Has the same footprint as the 1.5 story building it is replacing, but will be about 50' high plus the stack. Without the stack, it will be one story lower than the main part of Magee Hospital. Will be same red brick as the newer part of Magee.
- No ZBA variances are needed.
- Noise shielding has exceeded zoning requirements.
- No water pressure issues for city water service are expected.
- Stacks will be tested one at a time monthly; noise level of 55 decibels is allowed and 42-49 is projected. All four will be tested together once a year; 45-55 decibels are projected. Testing will be probably be done early in the morning and they don't think we will hear it.
- They are connected to a disaster plan in the event the tanks require refueling.
- Construction Timeline: Demo to start in Oct 2020, construction to start in January of 2021, completion expected in 2nd quarter of 2022.
- Rycon Construction is the contractor. All construction staging will be done on site. They will make sure we have contact numbers in the event of any after-hour issues; told to "call Shawn or Meghan". We also have Chris' contact information. 7-3:30 are expected work hours.
- Storm water mitigation was required.
- Not planning to have to close any lanes on the Blvd of the Allies.
- During construction, their shuttles will be rerouted to Emergency Entrance; after the project is complete, shuttles will return to current route.
- A request was made by a resident for more landscaping on the Blvd of the Allies side of Magee after the project is complete.
- That there should be no parking in residential neighborhoods will be addressed with construction teams for during construction and with employees for Magee and Craft Place Professional Bldg.
- Other sites:
 - Playhouse site – Magee Womens Research – no action plan; nothing in the near future
 - Craft Place building – now at 45% occupancy
 - Isaly's Building – many from there went to Craft Place building; plan is to completely empty it, but it's future is yet to be determined

Minutes

Minutes of the June 10, 2020 meeting were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Gene Rosner Recognition (Millie/Joan) Ceremony for the unveiling of the “Gene Rosner Corner” street sign will be held on Tuesday, August 18 at 6 pm. Family has confirmed. Mayor is attending and has suggested limiting attendance to 15 due to need for social distancing. Line drawing artwork is framed; full sized prints have been made for the family and smaller prints for others. Plaque will not be ready; possibly October. It is similar to those the History and Landmarks Foundation puts up. We need about \$1000 to cover the framing, prints, and plaque. Joan is contacting possible donors. So far the Mayor, Lavelle, and a private donor have promised donations, but more is needed. Joan has contacted other political officials and will now contact some corporations in our area. She would like suggestions for corporations to contact. We need information on our bank account; where do checks get written to? There could be an issue with donations since we are not a non-profit.

OCO Seeking Nonprofit Status We are partway through the process, waiting for paperwork from the state, which is needed for the Federal IRS form.

Greenway/ Promenade Capital Budget Process (Geoff) A brief overview of the proposal was given, and that the funds sought are for planning and construction. Phase 1 is the flat area from the Community Garden to the intersection of Lawn and Ophelia, and Phase 2 is the switchback trail down the hill. On July 15, 2020, the Capital Improvement Plan committee and representatives from Lavelle and Kraus’ office visited the Lawn Street site. Oakcliffe was represented by Millie, Elena, Geoff, Michelle, Dave, and John. Feedback from the group that day was favorable.

Elena asked Councilman Kraus for an update on the process and timeline but has not heard back.

New Niagara St Playground Demo is complete and rebuilding has started.

Lawn & Ophelia Rain Garden No official report; Geoff has not seen anything.

NEW BUSINESS

Active Allegheny Grant Program (Elena) This is a grant offered by the county which sounds like a good fit for the Lawn Street Promenade Project. It provides financial assistance to communities to develop plans and to design transportation projects that will provide bicycle and pedestrian connections to important local destinations and transportation systems and increase residents’ opportunities for physical activity. \$175,000 is available and \$50,000 is the highest awarded. The deadline is the end of November, with grants awarded on a rolling basis. Applications are accepted from Allegheny County municipalities and Councils of Government on behalf of its members, so Lavelle or Kraus may have to file for us.

A motion to pursue this grant passed unanimously. Geoff offered to help with the writing of the grant application.

REPORTS

University of Pittsburgh (Jamie) Students are back. There will be no block parties this year and they are looking for ideas for alternate activities that can be safely done. There will be paid positions for student advocates of public health relating to COVID. They will be very visible; walking around with hand sanitizer and masks to hand out, reminding students of safety issues and the Community Compact. The question was raised of rate of compliance with the signing of the pledge; answer was that students had to read it in order to access their Pitt account. The Pitt website if you have a COVID concern is covidconcern@pitt.edu. Dean Bonner, Vice Provost and Dean of Students, is going to hold a town hall with off campus students to encourage positive behavior. Since students like fire pits, a resident request was made to mention at any appropriate meetings and to put in writing that the Allegheny County Health Dept has asked that there be no open burning during COVID.

Oakwatch (Elena) Councilman Kraus was the speaker in July. He will advocate for getting residential parking enforcement back, at least in Oakland. He reported that part of the RPPP overhaul is getting it out of City Planning and into the Parking Authority. Councilwoman Strassburger is no longer taking the lead on the RPP reform process; Kraus may pick it up. Next meeting Wed, Sept 16 at 6 pm via Zoom.

OPDC (Liz) Communitywide Meeting on Tuesday, Aug 25 at 6 – 7:30 via Zoom

OPDC Fundraiser on Thurs, Aug 13 at 7 pm via Zoom

Zone 4 Public Safety Meeting – Thurs, Aug 20 at 6 pm via Zoom

Zone 4 is not having their usual Impact Teams for back to school, but Pitt Police are.

PWSA has money for private lead line replacement. Email Liz at lgray@opdc.org for details.

Neighborhood Plan for Oakland (Elena) Community Engagement Plan to be up next week. It promises to accept input even if you aren't on an Action Team, but sign up for one of the four Teams – Community, Development, Mobility, Infrastructure – is strongly suggested. More info + signup at pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/Oakland

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 by Elena Zaitsoff. The next Oakcliffe meeting will take place on Wed, Sept 9, 2020 at 7 PM via Zoom.