



February 18, 2015 Meeting Highlights

Attendees: David Cohen, Michael DiVietro, Bradley Flamm, Harry Fox, Lindsey Graham, Novella Hinson, James Hopkins, Morgan Hugo, Elise Mannella, Jean Mitchell, Chuck Romick, Tahirih Smith, Joyce Smith, Brian Traylor (PPTF Members); Candace Snyder, Jane Meconi, Spencer Gober, Mike Boyer, Brett Fusco(Staff)

Welcome and Meeting Overview

Tahirih Smith, PPTF Chair, welcomed members to the meeting, and introduced new PPTF member Lindsey Graham.

Presentations

What is the Pop-Up Economy?

Spencer Gober, an intern in DVRPC's Office of Smart Growth, presented different types of pop-up activities, such as stores, restaurants, events, and urban design, such as parklets or bike lanes. While temporary in nature, pop-ups may catalyze more permanent economic development and investment within a community, or help the public visualize how a landscape may be transformed.

Pop-ups benefit entrepreneurs, building owners, and the municipality. First, temporary stores or restaurants reduce the risk of testing the viability of a business, since less upfront capital is required. For building owners, pop-ups can activate the storefront and may entice longer-term leases. And finally, for the municipality, pop-ups increase the tax base and help in placemaking efforts.

Mr. Gober's presentation may be found at: <http://www.dvrpc.org/ASP/committee/Presentations/PPTF/2015-02.pdf>.

The Municipal Implementation Tool (MIT) on the Pop-Up economy, which contains information and resources, may be found at: http://www.dvrpc.org/asp/pubs/publicationabstract.asp?pub_id=MIT026.

Greater Philadelphia Futures Focus Group

DVRPC has worked collaboratively with a multidisciplinary group of regional stakeholders, including the PPTF, to identify the key forces of change that will affect the region over the next 30 years, as part of the next (2045) regional long-range plan update. Mr. Boyer and Mr. Fusco lead a discussion on five identified forces and the impacts they may have on the region:

Enduring Urbanism

- Is there such a thing as an equitable development policy? Could one be formulated for this?
- Rents in the City have been rising fast.
- Suburban poor seem to be people left behind in the recession, and seniors who can't afford housing, not poor people who moved out of the city.
- There are still a lot more jobs in the suburbs, where millennials don't want to be, and they can't reach because of poor or no transit access
- More density means greater need to reduce urban heat island impacts
- How do we allow families to stay in urban areas
- It is the middle-class that is getting squeezed out of urban areas? (which are becoming either very wealthy or very poor). Are people being displaced from the city?
- How can we connect food deserts with urban farms, and better transportation to either move food or people between them?
- Older residents / empty nesters do not want responsibility for maintenance.
- Need for accessible housing for older residents, particularly in new construction because it is too expensive to retrofit.
- Need for a mix of housing types, and to ensure universal design for all people.

The Free Agent Economy

- New companies are less hierarchical and need different types of office space, the region doesn't have much of this (so most offices need to be rebuilt/modernized).
- Maker community
- Educational curriculum is outdated for the current economy's workforce needs
 - Don't minimize blue collar skills. In Camden, there is a need for more welders, for instance.
 - Not everyone can be a doctor, lawyer, or teacher. Education can be "right-sized" and train people for jobs, even those in the creative economy or manufacturing.
- This may encourage people to put off, have fewer, or no kids. Less family support for individuals at the end of their life.
- There are service-economy impacts. For instance, food catering services that serve corporate clients. Less demand for this means fewer (low-skill) jobs.

Severe Climate

- What happens to the region's aging power grid?
 - Is there a way to focus on solar and other renewables?
- Climate change really presents risks to lower-income and elderly people. More heat waves will hit them harder, since they are less likely to have air conditioning in their homes and are more vulnerable to mortality and other health risks.
- Flood insurance maps, when was the last time they were updated in the region?
 - Remapping affects affordability of people already living in flood plains, and potentially causes more people to need flood insurance (that didn't previously need it).
 - FLOODMAPPER2.0
- What about aging PWD infrastructure?
- Infrastructure and equity impacts.
- NYC water
 - Competition for resources
 - Downstream flooding from their need to keep their high-wall dam water levels high
- There is a potential for climate emigrees

Transportation on Demand

- Ridesourcing services, like Uber, are convenient and can help save money on parking
- Are low-income people able to access the technology?
- What happens if taxi or transit service is weakened, and low-income communities are worse served/have less transportation access.
- Major safety concern, particularly for females, who ride alone in a car with a driver they don't know.
- Uber is also a part of the Free Agent Economy.

The U.S. Energy Boom

- In Marcellus Shale area, businesses have come with promises of money, but that hasn't always materialized as they leave before handing it over.
- There is a lot of local resistance to pipelines
 - We need the energy in the interim (but don't always recognize that).
 - We don't want the environmental damage.
- Energy companies employ all level of skillsets, offering up new opportunities.
- What happens when the boom goes bust?
 - How can we buffer against it?
 - The people who benefit the most (financially) will leave.
- There is a lot of volatility in energy as a result of international forces well beyond our control.

- Rail / pipelines often run through a lot of neighborhoods, many of which are low income, so safety is paramount.

A presentation is available at: <http://www.dvrpc.org/ASP/committee/Presentations/PPTF/2015-02.pdf>.

Committee Business and Upcoming Outreach, Events, and News

- Jane Meconi reminded members to fill out the expertise survey; a database of PPTF members will be distributed to DVRPC staff as a resource.
- The next PPTF meeting is scheduled for April 2, 2015. This meeting will be a “Facing the Future” event for the broader public. Novella Hinson and other members suggested a Camden-focused event. More information will follow.
- Members may suggest a guest speakers or present on a topic currently impacting their community.
- An EJ Work Group meeting is scheduled for March 24, with a focus on urban greening and infrastructure. More details will be available soon.
- Evaluation of public participation activities will be an ongoing focus for the PPTF this year. Performance measures will be researched and presented to the PPTF in an upcoming meeting.

One Minute Reports from PPTF Members

Task Force members were invited to provide updates on the activities of their organizations/municipalities/neighborhoods.

Jim Hopkins proposed some additional Camden-focused projects for the April 2 PPTF meeting.

Michael DiVietro commented that he attended the Healthy Communities Task Force and found it very interesting. Public health is such a large part of planning, and in recent years, the connections between the two have become stronger.

Lindsey Graham is working with the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia on the Women Bike PHL initiative, which is gaining momentum.

Bradley Flamm was a coauthor of a recent article researching bicycle/transit users: *Public Transit Catchment Areas: The Curious Case of Cycle–Transit Users*.

Elise Mannella reported that she curated an upcoming exhibit entitled “The Built Environment: Design for Life” at the Trenton City Museum at Ellarslie in Cadwalader Park. The exhibit opens on March 14 and highlights architecture in central New Jersey.

Morgan Hugo enjoyed the Pop-Up presentation. One should also rely on word of mouth for promoting those types of events, and to look to using tourist blogs.

Joyce Smith attended the PACDC press event for its recently released platform for promoting equitable development in Philadelphia over the next mayoral administration.

Chuck Romick reported on the Gloucester County 2040 Master Plan public outreach program. A survey was released and there have already been over 1,000 responses.

Public Comments and Questions

There were no formal public comments.

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