



May 13, 2015

Meeting Highlights

Attendees: David Cohen, Michael DiVietro, Quibila Divine, Marguerite Dube, Bradley Flamm, Lindsey Graham, Rev. Ricci Hausley, James Hopkins, Morgan Hugo, Dick Linderman, Elise Mannella, Jean Mitchell, Peter Meyer, Tahirih Smith, Brian Traylor (PPTF Members); Karen Cilurso, Alison Hastings (Staff); Lisa Feldman, Jessica DiVietro, Joe Henwood, Straso Jovapvski (Guests)

Welcome and Meeting Overview

Tahirih Smith, PPTF Chair, welcomed members to the meeting, and introduced the featured presentation on Classic Towns and Downtown Revitalization.

Presentations

Promoting the Benefits of Older Communities through Cooperative Marketing

Karen Cilurso, Manager of Community Revitalization programs at DVRPC, gave an in-depth presentation on the Commission's efforts to revitalize older communities through cooperative marketing. The Classic Towns of Greater Philadelphia program was launched in 2007 as an intermediary for selected older communities to market livability, residential choice, and transit access, and to promote local events. Participating communities pay nominal fees, used for advertising and promotional efforts. Learn more about the program at www.classictowns.org.

Ms. Cilurso touched upon a recent DVRPC study – *Revitalizing Suburban Downtown Retail Districts: Strategies and Best Practices*. This study also recognizes that businesses follow residents – where people choose to live often affects the business community and especially traditional downtown communities. However, many land use and zoning policies that address retail and commercial development often fall short of creating and sustaining a thriving retail district that fits the changing retail needs of the surrounding population.

PPTF members asked many questions about the Classic Towns program and downtown districts in general, and shared relevant stories about their own communities.

Open Discussion: PPTF's Fiscal Year Accomplishments and Plans for the Next Fiscal Year

Alison Hastings, Manager of DVRPC's newly minted Office of Communications and Engagement, shared her work experience and professional training in stakeholder-based planning processes, meeting facilitation, and conflict resolution with PPTF members. She also explained that the new office is currently developing its roles and responsibilities; however the PPTF will continue to be a priority for DVRPC and especially the Office of Communications and Engagement (OCE).

To quickly learn about the group's interests, Ms. Hastings facilitated a discussion on what members considered to be PPTF's accomplishments over the last 12 months (current fiscal year 2015), and what members think the PPTF should learn about or explore in the coming 12 months (next fiscal year 2016).

Accomplishments PPTF members are most proud of include:

- Information sharing among members
- Synergy of group and its role in DVRPC's recertification process
- Sharing new ideas
- Diversity of membership
- Opportunity to embrace regionalism and learn about other communities
- The PPTF is considered a best practice among DVRPC's MPO peers

Activities PPTF members most enjoyed in the last 12 months include:

- Unique speakers
- Tour of SEPTA's operations center
- Breaking Ground 2015 conference

Activities or topics PPTF members are interested in learning more about in the next fiscal year include:

- DVRPC's overall public participation and evaluation of public engagement activities
- DVRPC and PPTF members tabling at select local or county events together
- More info-sharing around grant opportunities, national conferences relevant to public participation or regional commissions, trainings
- More regular invitations to participate in other DVRPC committees and/or local studies/projects
- Skill-development:
 - o How to talk to elected officials
 - o How to talk about DVRPC and planning
 - o How to be or represent "community voice"
 - o Diversity and inclusion

PPTF members also discussed:

- More promotion (or sharing) of information posted on the PPTF webpage
- Possibly webcasting PPTF meetings (or recording as webinars for future viewers)
- Hosting meetings in different locations

One Minute Reports from PPTF Members

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

Public Comments and Questions

There were no formal public comments.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, July 8th at 6pm

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