

Meeting Report

DAG Meeting March 5, 2009

Topics:

Open Discussion

Presentation: District Planning Study and Transit Revitalization, presented by Jennifer Rodriguez, Director and Rose Gray, Director of Development, at APM-- Asociación de Puertorriqueños en Marcha, Inc.

Open Discussion:

Concern for the SS United States demo: are there no restoration plans?

Preservation Alliance state of the art survey of historical structures in Philadelphia: community input is encouraged. See the Preservation Alliance's web site to participate.

The proposed American Commerce Tower at 18th and Arch: developer is apparently is continuing work on leasing. No new design developments.

Advertisements in the public realm: where and when are they acceptable?

City is exploring proposals from private companies to provide street furniture and maintenance in exchange for advertising space. DiCicco's new bill may lessen the City's ability to obtain the most favorable proposals. DAG will develop a task force to review this and related signage issues.

East Market Street revitalization: Foxwoods is now interested in the former Strawbridge's building, which has historical designation for the exterior but not the interiors. Zoning and gaming license changes would be needed for this site. Findings from the Planning Commission's study of the Market East area, including traffic study, are presumably still relevant. At this point, there have been few comments from the Asian community or others.

Presentation: APM Transit Revitalization and District Planning Study

APM presented their plans to create a transit oriented development in North Philadelphia from Norris to Berks and between 9th and 10th Streets, taking advantage of existing transit which is currently underused by residents. Improvements will enhance the existing infrastructure, increase ridership, and attract new development.

The master plan includes all aspects of the neighborhood: green spaces, improved lighting, graphics, activities, community involvement. Study and recommendations are complete and ATM is eager to begin implementation. The plans were enthusiastically discussed by those present, who felt that this is the kind of project the city needs.

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Discussion included how zoning reform interfaces with the project; how a TOD zoning overlay might be implemented in Philadelphia, and how a project with a broad vision such as this can sustain incremental development.

Minutes prepared by Barbara Ruth