

Development Activities Meeting Report (Version: 01/24/2024)

This report created by the Neighborhood Planner and included with staff reports to City Boards and/or Commissions.

| Logistics | Stakeholders |
|--|---|
| Project Name/Address: Proposed installation of electric vehicle charging stations | Groups Represented (e.g., specific organizations, residents, employees, etc. where this is evident): Hill District Consensus Group Hill District Collaborative Hill Community Development Corp Applicants: 3 DCP Staff: 3 |
| Parcel Number(s): 10-N-230, 11-D-195 | |
| ZDR Application Number: -- | |
| Meeting Location: Zoom | |
| Date: 8/19/2025 | |
| Meeting Start Time: 6:00pm | |
| Applicant: City of Pittsburgh | Approx. Number of Attendees: 27 |
| Boards and/or Commissions Request(s): Public Art & Civic Design Commission | |

How did the meeting inform the community about the development project?

Ex: Community engagement to-date, location and history of the site, demolition needs, building footprint and overall square footage, uses and activities (particularly on the ground floor), transportation needs and parking proposed, building materials, design, and other aesthetic elements of the project, community uses, amenities and programs.

Registered Community Organizations

Hill District Consensus Group: The RCO is aware of the City's plans for EV charging stations in the Hill District. However, the City did not meet with us to obtain approval of this project. Therefore, we cannot approve this project at this time. We encourage the City to submit the proposed plan for consideration.

Hill District Collaborative: Did not state whether the RCO approves or disapproves this plan.

Hill District CDC: While recognizing the need for electric vehicle charging stations, the Hill CDC does not support this project at this time as it has not gone through their Development Review Panel process.

Uptown Partners: Uptown Partners yields to the other Hill District RCOs' decisions on this project.

Applicant

The City of Pittsburgh (DOMI & DCP[S+R]) and Duquesne Light have partnered on the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations throughout the city. The City applied for the federal Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Grant and was awarded the grant in early 2025. This grant will be used for the installation of EV charging stations, for various safety reasons and to align with the EV Charging Strategic plans created in 2021. The city aims to install a total of 100 charging ports across 21 stations throughout the city. These charging stations will include level 2 chargers (10 to 30 miles of range per hour) and include two plugs at each station.

Duquesne Light partnered with the city on the grant, some funds from which would be used for Duquesne Light projects. Most of the infrastructure for these chargers will be underground, and some photo examples of chargers were shown. However, the exact model of EV charger has yet to be determined.

The choice for location of the EV chargers was in part due to equity, and the grant required that at least 40% of the funds be used in Justice 40 neighborhoods. The first location in the Hill District is at approximately 1835 Centre

Avenue, directly across from the former Salim’s Market. Two dual port charging stations will be installed at this location across 4 parking spots.

The second location is at approximately 480 Oak Hill Drive within the Oak Hill Apartment complex. This location would also include two dual port charging stations to be installed across 4 parking spaces and within the grass median.

Input and Responses

| Questions and Comments from Attendees | Responses from Applicants |
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| What would the benefit be for the community? | <p>The benefit is that with the higher adoption rate of EVs, it will likely become the standard vehicle choice as the price of EVs continues to go down. So, this will benefit those who live or work in the neighborhood and drive EVs now or in the future. We see this to be a beneficial long-term project.</p> <p>It also makes for convenience, as someone could charge their EV while at the shops along Centre Avenue.</p> <p>(MB) Mentioned that these are federal dollars that the City has won. This will help with developing citing requirements and defines what role the city has in developing this beyond what the private market might provide. 2nd Meeting the Justice 40 required to receive the CFI grant. 3rd Opens up micro-mobility expansion as well and creates avenues for healthy and active living options for the community. 4th The city and DLC are providing the installation, so it saves residents the costs of installation. The equipment can also be used for future amenities once it is installed.</p> |
| Are they aware we no longer have a grocery store? which may be a potential location in the rear parking lot for their station | (MB) Supportive of community charging that assists people who can’t charge at home. So, it’s not so much that the Salem’s Market was a draw, but the centralized location for the community is a benefit to the Centre Ave location. |
| Is Centre Avenue still under consideration since Salem’s is not currently operating or is there another place that would hit those targets | See refer to the comment above. |
| Have you surveyed how many EV vehicles are in the Hill District or West Oakland? Asked specifically by zip code (asked by two people) | We don’t have the numbers for EV ownership in the Hill District, specifically, but there are 15,000 registered electric vehicles within Allegheny County. |
| Was our councilman or state rep made aware of this project? Have you spoken with the businesses nearby who would be losing parking spaces for this? | The councilmembers were notified of this project, and they must sign-off on projects before we apply to any grant. |

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| | You're correct, we need to hear from Hill District residents, and this is just the first public meeting regarding this project. Public parking and safety are always a concern for DOMI projects. |
| Is Centre Avenue still under consideration since Salem's is not currently operating or is there another place that would hit those targets. | We can change the location of the EV charging stations designated for this location to another site that supports community/publicly accessible charging within the boundaries designated in the grant application. |
| Comment that the Hill District does not even have a grocery store, so no one is thinking about EV charging as a priority. | While this may not be an issue today, we are thinking of future years, when there may be higher adoption of EV vehicles. We do want to hear as much feedback as possible from Hill District residents. |
| Centre Avenue is envisioned as the Hill District's main street and activity corridor. Has the City considered whether dedicating curb frontage here to EV-only charging best supports that vision? Could EV chargers be located on a side street or less active frontage, while keeping Centre Ave focused on retail, community, and pedestrian activity? | (MB) The area outlined in yellow is where the installations can go. They considered the width of the streetscape and ADA accessibility to identify these preliminary locations. Safety and ADA accessibility is a priority for DOMI. |
| Have they discussed this project with the facility owners of Hill House and Kaufmann Center? | Not yet, but if anyone has recommendations for who we should speak with, please share that with us. We also look forward to speaking to the Hill CDCs Department Review Panel. |
| (Hill CDC) We have the contact information for the Hill House and the Kaufmann Center that we can share, and we look forward to meeting with you. | Response is the same as above. |
| In the example you showed cords hanging out windows, coming across driveways, etc. I'm not sure this plan would address those issues. The resident who puts a stake in the ground for charging is not going to go to the "local" public charging stations. So, can you tell me how this will help those specific residents? | (MB) Shares that the good thing about has regulated, publicly accessible cables help to reduce the need for people to run or plug their EVs to power sources that may not be safe for this type of charging. It can be a tripping hazard, it can cause fires, etc. |
| Is there a site plan showing the exact proposed charger locations relative to curb cut, pedestrian walkways, and existing parking/loading zones for Centre Ave? | No exact locations have been identified, but they do have the proposed location. For the Center Ave, they are considering a swap with the proposed EV chargers and the POGO bikes/installation. Anywhere within the yellow outlined area can be an option for installation. |
| What is the projected cost to each use and is there a plan to reinvest a portion of the revenue back into the Hill District (i.e. a fund)? | (MB) They haven't determined an exact price but will try to set the price equitably. |
| The Hill CDC isn't the only RCO you should be talking to. | We want to hear from as many people and organizations as possible. |

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| What is the projected cost to each use and is there a plan to reinvest a portion of the revenue back into the Hill District (i.e. fund). | The question was answered above. While we have not determined an exact cost yet, our plan is to use the revenue from use, to maintain and operate the EV charging stations. |
| <p>We went through the whole LEAP process, and it doesn't seem like anything from that plan is included here. There also doesn't seem to be any talk about accessibility for those with disabilities – what can be done to help those who need to charge their wheelchairs.</p> <p>What is going to be done to prevent gentrification because of this project? This project seems to be tone deaf to the current needs of the community.</p> | <p>All public projects will comply with federal ADA standards and be fully accessible for drivers with disabilities. However, please note that this particular charging port is electric vehicle use only and cannot be used to charge wheelchairs.</p> <p>We are incorporating an EV infrastructure that lays the groundwork for future projects aimed at enhancing accessibility and benefiting both residents and visitors of the Hill District.</p> <p>You're correct that we were deaf, but that's why we want to hear from as many people as possible.</p> |
| Suggestion/Request to plan a meeting with the Business Owners to discuss how the City can research the placement of chargers that will not displace parking, reduce accessibility, or further burden a neighborhood already facing infrastructure inequities. | |
| Have you looked at the LEAP plan at all? We don't see elements of the LEAP plan reflected in the proposed installations. | (MB) No, they haven't looked at the Hill District's LEAP plan specifically. |
| Let's plan a meeting with the business owners to discuss how the city can research | DOMI is willing to meet with all RCO's in the Greater Hill District to discuss the City' proposed plan for placing EV Charging stations in safe, and accessible locations. |
| <p>It sounds like there are many more conversations that could be had with various groups to better inform this project. It's frustrating to hear that these conversations with the community have not occurred, but I hope you can go back and consider what benefits you can offer the community, as not many Hill residents have EVs.</p> <p>You should have had conversations with the community before deciding on these locations. We can use federal dollars but not for EV chargers.</p> | <p>The grant fund was allotted with the expectation that there will be more adoption of EVs in years to come. We don't just want to install chargers in areas that currently have EVs, we want to take advantage of having this federal money and increase equity by installing chargers in neighborhoods that don't have high EV adoption.</p> <p>The councilmembers and the mayor all signed off on this before we submitted the grant application over two years ago.</p> |
| You should rethink that statement, as that is insulting. Those people are not the community. | I apologize that was not my intention. At the time we submitted the grant, we had only two weeks to write the grant and conducted as much research as possible within that limited timeframe. As we move forward, it is essential that we engage with all stakeholders over the next year. We have a valuable opportunity to collaborate and refine the plan to ensure the best possible outcomes. |

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| <p>I just want to know what kind of equity report are you following? I don't know how many people in the Hill have electric cars. People typically drive through the Hill, but all the dollars go up the Hill. A lot of things are not fitting who we are. I know EVs are coming, but they aren't for us currently. Were you thinking about this being for the community, or for the future people that will be living here?</p> <p>We did a whole LEAP project for almost two years, and Duquesne Light was included on that project. We talked about EV chargers and funneling some of the revenue back into the community. Equity and all of that are just buzz words.</p> | <p>I hear your concern. The benefit is the partnership with Duquesne Light will allow them to update the electric system on this corridor.</p> <p>I hear you, thank you.</p> |
| <p>What demographic data are you using that determines the future use of the EV chargers?</p> | <p>(MB) Currently using census data that is still accessible. They originally used Justice 40/equity-based data that was available during the previous federal administration. Currently during the current federal administration that original data is no longer available.</p> |
| <p>So, based on the data you do have, you are expecting an increase in EV drivers.</p> | <p>To be clear, the numbers on EV ownership came from the County. They have the numbers on EV ownership for Allegheny County, but they don't have neighborhood level data. We use those numbers and trends to help us estimate where need to be for the EV chargers. The cost of buying an EV now can be cheaper than buying a gas-powered vehicle.</p> |
| <p>How set in stone is the proposal? Are you ready to adjust and if so, to what level?</p> | <p>Right now, nothing has been finalized. The location we shared reflects the proposed site included in our funding application to secure support for the project. The chargers can ultimately be installed anywhere within the flexible area surrounding the former grocery store, as shown within the boundary lines on the map.</p> <p>(Duquesne Light) We hear what you're saying and recognize that there could be more conversations around this project, and my takeaway is that we need to be flexible in these situations and where exactly we install these chargers. Our next steps could be to have more of these initial conversations.</p> |
| <p>The EJ Screen data is still available online. It would be minimal initial research to access and read this and the LEAP plan before moving forward with this. It very well may be that the Hill decides we don't want this if it's not for our people.</p> | <p>Thank you for that insight.</p> |
| <p>Can you list the criteria used to determine Centre Avenue is viable for grant? What were the "measurements ". You said earlier that Centre Avenue checked many boxes</p> | |

Other Notes

DOMI is willing to meet with all RCO's in the Greater Hill District to discuss the City' proposed plan for placing EV Charging stations in safe, and accessible locations. DOMI will also be doing another round of community engagement regarding this project.

Planner completing report: AJ Herzog, Benita Johnson