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Meeting focuses on future Steel Valley developments

By MICHAEL DIVITTORIO, Daily News Staff Writer
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Steel Valley residents and others had an opportunity to speak with a panel of experts about possible future developments in Homestead and West Homestead.

Carnegie Library of Homestead hosted the public meeting Wednesday night. The event was part of a workshop titled "The Avenues: Beyond the Waterfront."

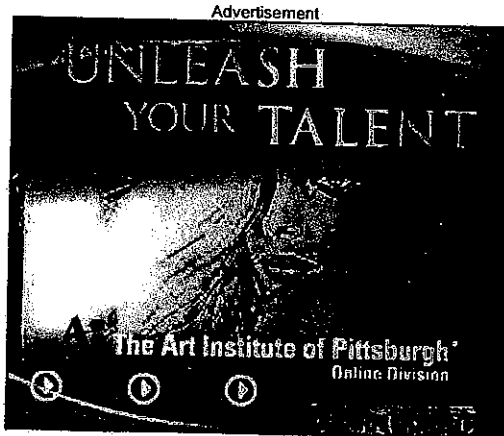
In 2007, Homestead and West Homestead council presidents Drew Borcik and Dave Weir, respectively, began working with the Western Pennsylvania Brownfields Center at Carnegie Mellon University, sponsor and facilitator of the workshop. The Avenues Planning Committee was formed from those efforts. It is comprised of community, county-level and regional leaders and redevelopment professionals from the Brownfields Center.

After nine months of brainstorming sessions and meeting with property owners, the committee identified two areas with the potential to serve as conduits between the Waterfront and future development. Those areas are Sixth and Seventh avenues between McClure and Neel streets and the WHEMCO and ASKO properties along W. Seventh Avenue.

Brownfields Center Executive Director Deborah Lange moderated Wednesday evening's activity.

The redevelopment experts at the meeting were Deohn Ferris, president of Sustainable Community Development Group Inc. in Washington, D.C.; Susan Hannegan, assistant director of Centre County Planning and former assistant Bellefonte borough manager; Sheila Jackson, director of the Clean and Safe program at Jefferson East Business Association in Detroit; Robert Richardson, University of Indiana architect and former city architect for Cincinnati; Terri Smith, redevelopment coordinator for Environmental Liabilities Management Inc. in Princeton, N.J.; and Marshall Williams, former CSX Railroad director of environmental real estate transactions.

The panel toured some of the major sites in the Steel Valley earlier



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Wednesday, met with property owners and planning committee members from the surrounding boroughs, and received a variety of input from homeowners who want to see historic preservation.

"You all have done a lot of visioning yourself here," Ferris said. "There are a lot of good plans that have been put on paper. We think some of those plans are pretty darn good. We really value that work."

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