

Pittsburgh to reconsider Save-A-Lot as Hill District grocery

Friday, November 20, 2009

By Mark Belko, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The city plans to meet with St. Louis-based Save-A-Lot to gauge its interest in building a store in the Hill District, now that Kuhn's Market has pulled out.

City Councilwoman Tonya Payne, who represents the Hill, said today she, the Ravenstahl administration, and officials with the city Urban Redevelopment Authority and the Hill House Association are expected to meet with Save-A-Lot representatives shortly after Thanksgiving.

The URA picked Kuhn's over Save-A-Lot last year based on the sentiments of Hill residents, who wanted a full-service grocer. Save-A-Lot was offering a 16,000-square-foot store with limited service, meaning it might not have amenities such as a pharmacy and full bakery.

Yarone Zober, chief of staff to Mayor Luke Ravenstahl and URA board chairman, said the city has a "real shot" at landing Save-A-Lot in the Hill if residents are willing to give the grocer a chance.

Also today, the URA board unanimously approved a \$350,000 contract with CHPlanning Ltd. of Philadelphia to help in the development of a master plan for the Hill District. The hiring was delayed last month by Ms. Payne, a URA board member who wanted more time to review the qualifications of the firm and two other finalists for the work. Based on that review, she said she was comfortable with CHPlanning's hiring.

"I think [the firm] will do a wonderful job," she said.

The master plan is expected to look at the entire Hill neighborhood as well as 28 acres of land to be developed by the Penguins along Centre Avenue where Mellon Arena now sits.