

Community Gathering

July 19, 2006

Howard Hall

Introduction from Jeff

CBC, CNC and City of Covington are the hosts.

Too many times we have been blaming the City. This is a different process. This is not totally about the City preparing the strategic planning. The City wants the community to plan the strategic plan. We cannot expect the politicians to do everything. We must help and do the work and create the plan. The citizens have to be held accountable to make the plan work. We need more people to get involved. The city should not be responsible to make everything better. The citizens need to get together and help make the plan. Need to build relationships with everyone. Wants everyone to come together to plan the strategic plan. This is a different process. This is to get people talking and building relationships. Must have a commitment with the community. (Retreat dates are August 19 and September 23)

1. Share who you are and why you care about the future of Covington.
Scale 1-7 engaged or not – present or check out and daydream

Many folks are not listened to. I have participated in many plans and nothing ever happened. People are tired because no one listens. People are tired of not being listened too. Don't feel like the powers that be are involved in this. We should hear that the Commissioners are on board with this. The community cannot make the commissioners do anything. The commissioners pick whomever they want to work on things. It is all about who you know. They are divided on how everything. They don't agree to get anything accomplished. They do not work well together. We need the Commissioners support in order for this process to work. Where are they? Why aren't they here? They should be attending these meetings and listening to the ideas. If they are not listening then this will not work.

2. What crossroads do you personally face when it comes to your participation in a citizen-city planning partnership under the scope of review as set by the Covington stewards?

Being inclusive as opposed to being exclusive. This must work for everyone, not just certain groups or certain classes. There has always been a theme of us vs. them. I already do a lot of community involvement. What else are we supposed to be doing? So many people are here that care, but they are tired. There are so many people left behind. There are so many people that are being put out. Jacob price is an issue. There is nothing here where people can go. The people cannot afford the housing. This is compelling option for me. I do not have an option without getting upset about these issues. There are no affordable houses here. I am very concerned about the schools, racism, injustice and other issues here. Kids need a good education to get out of the same issue that they are growing up in. If they want kids in there Catholic schools, the parents should be able to make the choice. No body wants the transients, drug addicts, and homeless people around them. The city council does not want these people here or in their neighborhood, even if the treatment is helpful.

I am hopeful that things will change. It must be inclusive. This is what we have, the good, the bad and the ugly... how do we deal with this and move forward... we want this community to be safe. We must move forward. Everyone must move forward.

Only certain groups are picked – certain people must pay for everyone else. I have worked since I was 16 and am 75 years old and my children are not on welfare. Everyone should be treated right and not as a poor story. Everyone has a sad story, but everyone (the people that take advantage of the system) should move forward. We cannot stay stuck in the past.

Commitment from Commissioners- everyone wants the commissioners to sign something saying that they are on board with this process. They do not feel that the Commissioners are involved at all. Nothing is going to happen.

3. What doubts and reservations do you have about this process?

See above.

4. What gifts do you have to offer? What can you contribute to this process? What can you do to help this process?

I see a lot of people and I will try and encourage people to come. It was a lot more positive. Had to do with how we can change things and what is not going to happen.

People should treat everyone the same and more things would get done. There should be more of a community. No one should be left out of the process. Bring gifts to the community. This was a lot more solution oriented, because we are all here for a reason and want to contribute.

What difference does it make? I have tried to give the gift and it is horrible. I feel like a piece is missing here. What do people value here? People rally around values. I think this was missing out of this whole thing.

5. Why do you value community work? Why are you here today?

Looking at how one community can direct another – flip side it doesn't have to be city wide. There are strong neighborhoods that can direct on how things go. Ongoing dialog needs to be going forward.

One of the values is the diversity. We have a diverse community and there are gifts that each different community has to offer. We must learn how to respect each other. Learning how to respect everyone and have unity in the diversity. There is another process going on to get funds for certain projects. We must coordinate all of Covington into this plan. This plan is bringing different neighborhoods together. The Center for Great Neighborhoods is bringing funds here through the United Way. Talk doesn't make things move forward, action does. However we must build relationships in order to move forward. That kind of talk builds relationships to help move the process along.