

Community Gathering  
June 19, 2006  
Center for Great Neighborhoods

Introduction from Jeff

Building new relationships creates new ideas

Deepening a relationship – helps create new ideas

Building a buzz

Get you to know each other better

Leave with tension- negotiating a result

Consensus building model – nothing done- challenges patience

Must take ownership of policing our own streets

Sense of accountability- inspiring plan to participate – get more of your neighbors- this is the big process that people can step into

Citizen ownership- City Citizen ownership

1. Share who you are and why you care about the future of Covington.  
Scale 1-7 engaged or not – present – check out and daydream-  
New residents- studio- very high arts – many arts stakeholder people here today

Jeff- discussion group gets narrowed down via Stewards – lots of room to play with scope- make Covington more unique – details on the scope – creating model districts- development strategically – arts district – having arts be a focus on creating the overall strategic plan- arts throughout the city- not just in the Art Districts- (talk in small groups)

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? (people want more arts info in the scope)

Stuff that is on the board is good, but important piece missing- needs the art and historical place in there- arts of various sorts- architecture- those things need to be addressed or implied- if the arts issues are not addressed- would break her heart- do not destroy the village in order to save it- depending on interpretation of the stuff on the board-

Arts and cultural and education should be included – schools not involved in scope- school is not the leading cause of rebuilding Covington's future- Schools can be imbedded in future – schools will probably be a part of the questions- schools and education is important –

Created a #7- add arts and cultural as part of the scope- let the community can shift this scope- objective is to gain information – and be partner in implementing this – City owns Behringer and Crawford- need more funds

Crossroads- city does recognize the importance of these crossroads- not seeing the arts district – concentration in the arts- work into focal points- add arts- changing the focal point- inside this framework- don't feel limited to participating- shift the focal point

Find arts inside the other one- debating this issue- one more idea add the arts information- education, cultural and arts- we will have unlabeled groups at the retreats –

New business owner- challenge – traffic of homeless people and people from the shelters- concern- location of shelters- City is shooting themselves in the foot – keeping the shelters in the same place, transient places- customer may be scared to come to Covington- people who are drunk- wants city to move the homeless shelters it will deter people from shopping and making a change – getting people here- sees the new businesses opening- needs city change

City has to see some urgency into creating this plan and people need to feel comfortable being here- safety issue- need more people here- need a sense of urgency- change the way of the city quickly

Unintended consequences- arts district is being planted into an active drug district – where will that move- if you move out the social service agencies, where will they move to within the city- it could be worse

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

Descent- healthy- stay at the table- gift to the group- this doesn't work for me- I want to keep talking about it- what can I do to shift this and make the process grander- I appreciate this – goal to expand this framework- get excited and see the framework

Rick Hoffman- get the arts district started- getting people completed – art people don't mesh well with others- we can start our own- paraphrased

Not being referred to as city wide- arts a cultural are important to have representation-

Need to have all people involved- Marvin Smith- other African-American citizens (People above were talking before getting into small groups for #3)

Lists are not completed- very concerned about how it is going to be connected- two ideas- hold the elected official accountable- one of the commissioners should be accountable- two- government needs to have funding for the proposal and should have

money there- city help citizen groups sign and request for money- Jay wants a report card so people are held accountable for their actions- report card- you will get to dictate as to what you want measured- hold yourselves accountable

Youth not being here- have children here and get them involved- ownership- kids can come- teenagers- bring them- may have a separate youth meeting-

People have heard some of these things before- who hasn't heard these things before- lack of programs and follow up and implementation- 4 will not due- need more people involved- cart before the horse- we have to get the horse in front of the cart- we have to get the city involved in this planning and they need to be participating and to let them know they need to be there- - want the directors to be at these meetings- want the city staff to be here- don't get a sense of it – we need the stewards in the room- the world is run by people who show up- leadership of the community not showing up- officials have not been coming- ward system making people less accountable- it is separating the city and this is providing problems- need to get rid of the ward system because then no one will be accountable- the commissioners will not be accountable- we have to make sure this isn't just talk- community has to make this happen- commission has to appear neutral- presented to the commissioners- must have the commissioners tell them to come- participation in this process that there are more support- need to have the commissioners here and participating- who has a general sense of frustration? Who doesn't? response- top person and we do what they say and do what they tell us to do- people at the bottom need to take it and claim it – process has be driven by the stewards- who chose the stewards? Why isn't there more representation of the arts district-?

Jeff- look at your assets and fill the community structure – make sure we look at each other and remember that we are assets- everyone supports everyone- you don't have to come -

#### 4. What “gift” has someone given to you tonight?

Meeting new people that live in the city- the honesty- I love it- a lot of these people were not so sure if they should come- get more people here-

Get the community talking about this- turn complaints into a request- get people involved- doesn't worry about this- get people talking honestly- get people involved- keep coming back to the meetings

*And from the facilitator...*

We hosted a frisky bunch of arts-community stakeholders yesterday at the Center for Great Neighborhoods. Reacting strongly to the absence of an “arts and culture” topic card in the stewards’ commitment statement, many people expressed reservations about participating in a process that didn’t explicitly acknowledge the importance of the arts to the ongoing development of Covington’s physical and human infrastructure. And while it was suggested that arts and culture could be applied to many of the stated goals, most folks felt strongly that the process needs to call forth the unique power of the arts to transform community.

Much frustration was also expressed at the limited progress on the arts district, though several people are committed to seeing that process through. Moreover, the absence of any commissioners and administration department heads concerned many in the room, with several asking if the “powers that be” have truly bought into this process. A consensus was reached that these traditional leaders needed to be better engaged, and the stakeholder group was asked to turn this complaint into a powerful, personal request by directly contacting the commissioners and City administration.

And for the second straight meeting, folks expressed a desire for the city to work more closely with the school district to raise the educational standards of the community. While stakeholders seem ready to rally around educational and cultural priorities developed through this process, they should consider how these general topics might intersect with the stewards’ commitments. In other words, over the next few weeks, stakeholders should imagine what is possible if arts and education are integrated into this broader community conversation.

And remember, use this introductory time to rally fellow citizens and stakeholders to attend these meetings, start thinking about the urban living experience they want to create in the city, and begin thinking about what you can personally contribute to this City-citizen partnership.

Jeffrey L. Stec, Esq.