

## Miscellaneous/Other

### **July 12, 2004 – Terwilliger Lodge, Dulle Park**

- As long as we are talking about the greening of the square, I'd like to know how much it will cost and where we are going to get the money. We in the city have purchased a pig in a poke before (and we call those stadiums). And we didn't get what we were thinking we were getting. If 3CDC is showing us designs for the square, then they owe us a cost estimate for how much this will cost. Oftentimes when the process is done and the plans are done and then we approve the design, then we have oh, whoops, here's what it will cost.

### **July 13, 2004 – Aronoff Center for the Arts**

- **[Bob Stevie comments]**
- I'm a retired businessman. Has anyone made a study on the return of investment on this? What return can we expect from all this re-shuffling on Fountain Square?
- I am on the fringes of downtown. I wonder if you have taken into consideration what good space really is. WCET had a program on warm spaces (produced out of Boston). The warm space they came up as ideal was Fountain Square. The worst was the plaza in front of 666 Park Avenue in NY, which was done by Philip Johnson. Have any of you seen that program, because it is strictly related to what we're doing? Because it states very clearly what is good about the Fountain. If someone took a look at that, we might avoid throwing out the baby with the bathwater.
- Are we looking at changes to the North Garage, which is in the Westin? Any difference between planning for Govt Square and Fountain Square?
- I'm an architect. Seems like too little, too later. My question is whether this is the primary reason for this development--to make downtown more attractive for people to come to it. As it has been suggested, others (DCI, etc.) have looked at downtown retail and other types of retail. My feeling is that changing the Square will not solve the downtown vitality problem. Now, about the Square itself. There are reasons for why things have happened the way they are. For ex., it was put where it is because we can see it from Fifth Street when we come into the city. Also, the stage. The thing that prompted the stage was that the Recreation Commission would have to bring in temporary stages, etc. and produce activities. So someone decided that if that's desirable, let's make it permanent. I think the stage is important. I would question the solution to this proposal to what I perceive is a basic problem downtown. This will not get them down here at night.
- Four years ago, there were bike lockers downtown and it made it convenient for people. I would like them to be restored.
- If we cut back on some of the elements here, such as kept the fountain where it is, and we took down some of the trees and put up some sort of netting up that will provide shade, you can cut some of these costs and divert the money to schools, to police and fire for safety, or to small businesses to improve small business development. So changing things around just enough will draw people in, but you cut back on those plans and save money.
- What's the timeline to complete this? Less than five years or over five years?

### **July 14, 2004 – Cintas Center, Xavier University**

- At the working committee for downtown design in 1964, there was a comprehensive group. Every week and a half the consultants were brought in and presented options. And the leaders gave input and made decisions and then they went away and worked on it some more. I am concerned that the public input will be taken into consideration when the experts in their venue will consider it and then make their own decisions. It strikes me that they will go ahead and make those decisions. When we did a walking tour, the consultant looked at Mt. Adams and said that would be a great place for a funicular/incline system. And San Francisco at the time was making decisions about its cable cars, and you know what happened to that.
- Would be interesting to put in streetscaping with interesting street sculpture, but don't clutter it up too much.
- We didn't mention having more police control down on the Square. More police on the Square would help too.
- The idea of the skywalk and the movement of the fountain were carefully thought out during the original planning back in the 60's. I attended the planning meetings and they were very carefully thought out. Very carefully thought out. For example, there was one decision made about how to handle the traffic. One of the problems with the skywalk now is that it doesn't go far enough. And because it was cut up it doesn't work as well as it could have.

### **July 19, 2004 – Hyatt Regency Cincinnati**

- I've been involved with city, county and veterans groups for the past eight years trying to convince people to create a better memorial park for the city and as of tonight into Fountain Square. . . As I travel to different cities, I notice that there are prominent veterans' memorials in those cities. Next month, VFW convention will be here for their convention. Estimated impact is \$17 million. It is good business to recognize the impact of the veterans. Would want to do something that is [see his **comment card**]
- TV-12 representative: We have an investment in this Square with "Good Morning, Cincinnati," which broadcasts from the Square, and we consider one of our roles to promote downtown and the Square. As a station, we reach 66 million people every week. Our interest is the Square, the window of the tri-state, and we don't want it to be limited. We want it to be exciting.
- I think we should change the name to Fountain Square modification, not transformation. Mr. Barrett talked about transformation. Moving retail out from under the skywalk would be a good thing. Consider closing Fifth Street so that you have a chance for our highest, most important living room to act like a living room. If we are going to move the Fountain, I think we should transform the Square. This needs to be something as dramatic as the Contemporary Arts Center, and I think it's not there.
- I totally agree with what you are saying. We need a transformation, not just change. I realize there is a multi-step process, and I look forward to seeing a comprehensive retail and marketing plan as we go along. As we have been talking about this, it is revitalizing. I think that what we've seen so far is an aesthetic re-tinkering. I would like to see what else we integrate into this plan so that we truly can generate vibrant retail, not just an aesthetic plan.

- Retailer with 23 years downtown. The atrium at the Westin was supposed to be a living room for the Fountain. But it never happened, and it still sits empty. Aside from Fountain Square but related to it, my other real concern is the state of the Westin atrium. I have a suggestion that 3CDC work also to maintain the viability of the Westin atrium and make it vital for the next 25 years.
- I spent 21 years working downtown, but live in Anderson. I want to make an investment in the future of center city Cincinnati. My current interest is what is going to transpire at the ground level to attract people downtown. If we build it, they won't necessarily come. I worked at Faneuil Hall in Boston in the late 70s. An enormous misuse of resources in downtown Boston. I don't object to having the Fountain moved. I know they have been very diligent in taking people's feedback, they have taken a first cut and this represents six or eight of the core issues brought up in that meeting. This is bold and it has a lot of what needs to be done. I congratulate Steve. It is not perfect.
- Re the Veterans Park—what a great idea; I am always for doing something for veterans. Why not do something in that empty parking lot out there. That would be really great for our city.

**August 11, 2004 – St. Williams Church, Cincinnati**

- You have the Contemporary Arts Center just over yonder. With the stage, etc., is there any way that part of this Square can be assimilated into some sort of arts display as well? Maybe some public art?
- I'd like to take a step back. Why this project, why Fountain Square? One of the things that we talked about is why is this the project that makes the most sense for the center city right now? Why is this the easiest win first?
- Obviously we don't have an unlimited amount of funds here. Don't want this to be our only focus.
- What kind of guarantee do we have that it would not be put on a tax levy down the road?
- What would you need to do to make the project work and to pare it down?
- Why is this new concept better than what we have now? Because what we have now doesn't work.
- What about trying some simple changes first? Hoffman Park in Northside was renovated about the same time this was. They put up a barrier wall to protect it from traffic. They took down the wall and now it is packed all the time. Now they have Farmer's Market days and all kinds of activities. And people can see it when they drive by. We've already tried some simple changes and they worked.
- Instead of doing this right away, why don't you see if programming will make a difference? Strong programming might make the difference. So if you had more events, more afternoon events, more in the evening itself, it would bring people downtown, and they will influence what retail goes in. And the market itself will re-retail itself. So why not focus on aggressively programming the Square for one year and see what a difference it can make?
- I do programming for my park—I do nine programs a year—and I see the budgets. I know that they keep cutting. We have one of the top park systems and Recreation

Departments in the country, but when they go to do cutting, they go after the Recreation Commission.

- Is the lack of safety just a reality or a perception?
- I'm curious whether anyone has revisited any of the original ideas for the Fountain? I am curious as to what the logical behind those things were in the first place. And perhaps these designs would compromise some of those original ideas? And with some of the problems we're having with the Square now, why aren't things going on now? For example, why not have a marketing program for the Square now? Why wait? I mean this question more broadly—for example, in terms of the retail. How did it happen that we have this retail problem? And why haven't we done something about it?
- Cincinnatians tend to badmouth Cincinnati. Can you name a comparable city in the US with a better Square?

**August 12, 2004 – Southbank Partners Office, Newport, KY**

- I have some comments as a developer who has worked in various parts throughout the City. First and foremost, I live downtown and I am in this vicinity on a daily basis. What is obvious is the really sad housekeeping and tawdry, tacky environment in a place that, maximizing its assets, could be a very charming place.
- My question goes to the issue of the emerging residential opportunities that are starting to develop in and around this very public place. This has the potential of becoming the front yard for people who are living downtown. Could be a potential conflict between the commercial uses and the people living downtown and using it as their backyard. There's the question of whether the people who live downtown want a more private space.
- It seems to be that we end up with these goals based on all these different theories. You mention that it is part of the larger area, but what are we trying to achieve? What is it as part of the larger plan?
- Could you write a mission statement for the Square on the flip chart? [referred to feedback form] I haven't heard about any of that at all. I haven't heard anything about the Visitors Center. I haven't heard anything about the business people. I don't think the mission is clear to me.
- I am concerned that we will go through all this and if things aren't being started now, The Fountain isn't going to happen, the concert that you're talking about isn't going to happen. I hope that the groundwork is being laid now so that these things happen. With all the rules and regulations that we have, we need to make sure that everybody is on the same page and are part of it.
- What kind of disruption is this work going to have on the Square itself, and what impact will it have on the businesses in the area?
- I heard you talk about the residents as the audience that you have, and I think about Central Park and that's a green space and that's great. Then people who work downtown are being considered, and that's great too. Then the Visitors Center is there too. And I haven't heard you mention that. What is the dream for the Visitors Center? What do you intend to do about that? Seems like an immense opportunity that is being overlooked.

- Do you want to draw people downtown, or do you want to support the residential? I'm not sure that you can do both. I don't think that you can do everything that you think you can achieve with this space. It means different things to different people.
- From Kentucky's point of view, we want to see that thing be very successful. Many of us don't go downtown. . . . We want it to attract visitors. We have a direct interest in what you do there.
- Why we don't try some things out before we turn around 180 degrees with this space. Why don't we start doing some things now? Why don't we try to make the most of some of the assets that we already have on the square?
- So there's no central authority? There are 4 or 5 city departments involved? Is this going to be public ownership property? Will the City of Cincinnati continue to be the public property owner?
- What about turning over the management of the square to a private company? Maybe they lease the Square from the city and take it from there.
- We're really glad you're working on it.