

Skywalk to Grade

July 12, 2004 – Terwilliger Lodge, Dulle Park

- Are we going to have steps? I was recently in San Francisco and they had steps and there was a public performance and it was very congenial.
- Right now does the skywalk end on the other side of the plaza? Would this be a break in the skywalk, or are you just changing the end point? Does it continue from 5/3 over to the East?

July 13, 2004 – Aronoff Center for the Arts

- Is the site going to be graded up near Rock Bottom? I don't understand what you are saying about grading.
- Two comments: About the grade change: I have been noticing around UC campus that there has been dark marble installed and I have seen several people fall because steps aren't as visible. It's important to keep contrast high enough when you build it the first time, in order to not re-do it later. The option of the skywalk is really nice. It should stay. If there are things offered there, they will see the Fountain and come down there. If you take it down, the easy access when it's cold, wet, and rainy is gone.
- You are talking about retail. And when you tear down the skywalks, that all goes away. You talk about safety. Tear down the skywalks and you get people getting run over in the street.

July 14, 2004 – Cintas Center, Xavier University

- I think the elimination of the skywalk is a cavalier and shortsighted and stupid maneuver. That skywalk goes far beyond Fountain Square; it did and should again go all the way to the convention center. And it does go all the way to Government Square east of Fountain Square. It should go down to the stadium and the ballpark. And it should have gone both to the library and to other downtown activities. And you are not only eliminating it across the Fifth Third Bank building, but also eliminating the bridge across Fifth Street, which doesn't go as far as it should anyway. The trees all over midtown are kind of a suburban attitude toward the center of our city. Those trees have root balls and the ceiling of the garage will be infringing on the roots of the trees. The perfect solution to these problems--if these out of town experts would even recognize it--is to raise the Fountain Square to the level of the Skywalk and the Fifth Third banking areas and the mezzanine levels to the hotels. Then put the bus terminal under Fountain Square on Fifth Street and not where it is now—like a giant pinball machine. I don't think anyone is thinking big enough about the Square and pedestrian circulation. Atlanta built a city above the trains, and they didn't think twice about it. Minneapolis heard about the skywalk in Cincinnati and went back and did it big time. If you mentioned to them about talking down their skywalk, I think you would hear the screams all the way back to Ohio.
- I agree about the skywalks. I worked at 525 Vine for years and did Bank deliveries. I used the skywalk all the time. It was faster and more efficient.

- My car has been broken into downtown. I feel that I am safer on the skywalk. I do volunteer work at the Aronoff, and walking from Sak's to the Aronoff, at least 2 or 3 panhandlers approach me. I don't have that on the skywalk. We need more police in that area.
- We moved here from Minneapolis, and the skywalk works there mostly because of the severe winters. We need to think about the purpose of this project. We don't want people on the skywalks--we want them on the streets. If you are on a skywalk, you are using it to get somewhere. It is a convenience mainly because of the weather. You are not interacting with the city.
- One other advantage of raising Fountain Square to the Skywalk level would be creating another entire level throughout FS for parking. That would be a significant number of parking spaces. Will also bring more people up to the skywalk level and will enable them to circulate better on the skywalk. And since we have such a major investment in the skywalk, that may be one way to revitalize it.
- Actually, you need to tear the skywalk down. Your idea will obliterate the store frontage and eliminate all the retail. It will be like Wacker Drive. The problem with the skywalk is that it is efficient—people don't window shop and they will just move through the barren skywalk wasteland. The skywalk is a mistake.
- If you break the skywalk system continuity, how do you access it? Steps? Elevator? You're breaking the link. Then you're right back to what you are going to do there. That is part of a unified system and it has a function.
- Having come from Minneapolis, to compare the skywalk in Cincinnati to Minneapolis is a joke. I think it is something like 60-plus city blocks connected by a vibrant skywalk system. Cincinnati is nothing. In the years we were living in Minneapolis, a building would be torn down for construction or whatever, you would have to do a little detour, and it wasn't a problem. Remember, they aren't talking about taking it down entirely. You are talking about taking down one piece of one block.
- The skywalk is the most futuristic thing that Cinti has ever done, but it isn't working because people aren't coming downtown. The idea is to double the traffic and carry more people, but it isn't working. Not intended for cold weather. Because it works in Palm Beach, Florida, for example. The idea is that two levels doubles the retail potential and alleviates the congestion, For example, Tri County Mall, Kenwood Mall.
- I think the sky mall should not be there. It takes away from retail and takes people off the street. Sky mall should be removed.
- I think leveling out the Square is a good idea, but I don't think that it's practical.

July 19, 2004 – Hyatt Regency Cincinnati

- I will confine comments to the skywalk system. The skywalk system affects Cincinnati far beyond Fountain Square. In the original concept, which was my own, I also extended the skywalk to the public library. I think it could still be done and sometime in the future it should be considered. But the investment in the skywalk, which is substantial, would be almost destroyed by the elimination of the skywalk by the Fountain. I don't even understand why the Fifth Third Bank, which is at the skywalk level, would even agree to this. There is a great opportunity to go back to the

original concept, which was to raise Fountain Square to skywalk level and have an entire additional level of parking, and also give the opportunity to bridge the Square across Fifth Street to the mezzanine of the hotel. Then using the mezzanine for the atrium area of the hotel for restaurants. Plus restaurants on the Square are both under the skywalk and above on that atrium. This is a way to preserve the continuity of the skywalk, upon which its success depends. And to have a better location for the Fountain and a better use for the hotels, which are centrally based and which would be perfectly aligned at the mezzanine level with Fountain Square.

- I own a business on the skywalk and it has been there for 15 years, I don't want to move my business when you guys decide to do this. The people who use the skywalk are the downtown workers. They use it to shop. They go from one side of town to the other on the skywalk. I think the skywalk can be incorporated into this plan. It does not interfere with the success of downtown. It adds to it.
- Skywalks—I don't know what the design criteria were, but it doesn't go anywhere. It stops. Now in Minneapolis, you know they have a skywalk because it is too cold to walk outside. It gets people off the ground, but we want to get people on the ground so that they can shop at some of these businesses.
- I work downtown. I use the skywalk on a regular basis. And I think the skywalk makes more sense to connect hotels to a convention center.
- I manage an office bldg—Atrium II. We are every much connected with the skywalk system and our tenants are connected to the skywalk system. If we talk to the tenants—have a get-together and get their input—that would be ideal. They are the people who use the skywalk day in and day out. They depend on it. I think the idea of building retail out under the skywalk system is a great idea. We get to use the transportation mode of the skywalk system and get more retail too.
- The skywalk is shoved up to the building. Remove the skywalk; it is in the way where it sits right now.
- I have a business here downtown. Several of us business owners are here. The skywalk should go. People need to pass the stores. Need visibility. Hilton Hotel passes people through skywalk rather than past us.
- The skywalk provides significant competitive advantage to the convention industry. Don't tear it down.

August 11, 2004 – St. Williams Church

- One thing that concerns me is eliminating the skywalk to add more retail and then eliminating the retail exposure because of adding more trees.