

TRIB TALKS FORUMS – COMMUNITY COMMONS
NOVEMBER 15, 2016
Summary of Notes Taken

BUILDING BRIDGES

Themes

- There are already bridges we just need to cross them.
- There are no intersections but no intersectionality. The intersections are blocked with barriers built on both, or on all sides, of intersection.
- There appears to be interest in building bridges but no plan people can use to build them.
- Bridges/relationships are often built in certain structured situations, e.g. military, sports, school, work
- External events can bring people together, like 9-11/ But need to be aware of negative effects, like Islamophobia, or Japanese internment during WWII.

Actions/Suggestions

- Jim and Kenny's project that came out of discussion at first Trib Talk – the Tribune is going to provide more coverage of people and events in the black community using student reporters.
- After an initial difficult exchange with a reader, Jim and the reader continued communicating and developed a civil and respectful relationship.
- Diversity breakfast brings people together. But after little happens – people go back to their respective enclaves, which most are already in during breakfast.
 - Suggestion is to mix people up, create some diversity at event.
- International fair to showcase diversity in Columbia
- Intentional gatherings of diverse people – block parties, dinner parties.
- Move Art in the Park, or create a new one that's downtown and invite more culturally diverse artists.
- Take Trib Talk to other places, e.g. St. Luke's Church, Chamber of Commerce, neighborhood meeting areas, Battle High School.
- Look to other communities who are building bridges as well.

Comments

- Interest in building bridges but not pulling in same direction.
- Lack of intersectionality – blind intersections.
- Neighborhoods are separated – stereotyping – lack of interaction.
- Building bridges not easy to do – when people are thrown together they generally get along-military, work, difficult even in neighborhoods.
- People drawn together after external impact/threat. How to do it without a threat? Stronger after building bridges.
- Term "building bridges" – bridges go over things. City is one culture with many subcultures. Subcultures build barriers as well as barriers created by other subcultures. Rental properties bring down other values.
- Tribune as one vehicle – lack of reporting on black business – promotions, etc. Paper does not show the diversity of the community.
- Segregated community in many aspects- use proximity to create relationship – lack of encounters – mechanism so people can get together and get to know each other.
- Bridges are there – we just need to walk on them.

- Following up on that – bridges of communication with reader.
- Also need for someone to walk across.
- How do we make bridges happen?
- Have ideas of knowledge – how do we use it?
- Nothing happens, only talk.
- Election. Want to understand. Why did it happen?
- What if – back porch party: invite people from other groups, what's keeping us from doing it?
- Block party – same people come, some neighborhoods no diversity.
- Community events – Roots N Blues. Something that brings together a large section of the community.
- Diversity breakfast gets criticized – get together and people go back to their enclaves
- Tables however are enclaves – never leave them. Mix up – random seating.
- No breakfast, just interactions.
- International fair.
- Art in Park – bring in more diverse artists.
- No diversity.
- External events to bring people together – election was an external event. Those with common interests like protecting voting rights will be drawn together to protect values.
- Be careful, external events – 9/11 – may be because of opposition to others – terrorism against Muslims.
- Oklahoma City
- How to create a collective we?
- 100 mile garage sale – Chatanooga
- Are there communities that get it right?
- Attempt to build bridge. Reporting on joint project. Trib will have articles from minority students and have a community mentor. Received push-back from black community. Lack of trust.
- Take this group to St. Luke's as a way to build bridges.
- Posters in hotels – people don't look like minorities
[*Last round – what was most meaningful?*]
- To be together it has to be more than just talk.
- That talk is happening is most meaning – challenge is to stay engaged
- Listening to each other is key
- Creativity in developing connections where it didn't seem possible – back to joint project
- Felt good to be here tonight and hear some optimism of bridging divides caused by elections (friends won't believe her)
- Focus on positive change instead of negative that can't be changed
- Use group – take dialogue to other parts of town – get people together to energize them
- Location of Trib was intentional -how to go forward – follow up on suggestion to take it to Chamber of Commerce

CITIZEN CENTERED PLANNING

Ideas

- Citizens should be consulted early in any process that is going to impact them directly
- Technology has developed to handle the data, so we need to utilize that technology to keep citizens informed. Lots of technology not being used.
- Having City Council members talk first on an issue would help.
- Have a tv channel with 20 minute summary reports that tell people what is going on.
- City Council provide annual report on growth metrics as requested in 2008 Vision Report
- All leaders can model civil disagreement when discussion difficult points of view.
- Ask, "what are the unintended consequences of the "yes" decision? What are the unintended consequences of the "no" decision?"

Questions

- How might we be more proactive in collection of user based feedback when constructing solutions in city government, planning?
- How might we integrate the engineering and the human element so that the impact that engineering has on the lives of people may be reduced?
- Is transparency of government a good thing or does it bog down the work our leaders were elected and entrusted to do?
- What circumstances should allow for reopening of decisions?
- What is fair? How balance engineering and human element?
- Is there a process to capture user feedback and take that into account in improving process?
- What process does the city council use to find solutions?
- Why is the public not participating more?
- What is missed by the lack of public participation in the current process? When is public participation nonproductive?
- Interested in why you might want to have "less transparency on the human level."
- What happens when values of entertainment industry permeate our political process?

Quotes and Themes

- Facts seem to be more and more elusive in the political arena
- Local control seems to be less and less. We need to engage more in order to ensure the people are aware and involved.
- "Feels like the car is being driven by someone other than us."
- Opinions must be voiced in order for true discourse to begin highlighting the need for transparency.
- Accountability
- Follow-through
- Vision
- Unity/transparency/timing
- Dashboards
- "If you want to fix the process then you need to more than fix the people who operate within the process."
- System is not working – unclear process for bringing about important projects.
- "Often politicians become entrenched in their role as community leaders and forget what it means to be a citizen."
- "Not doing some of the things that matter in a very structured way."

- Having unity is important. When get to the point of making decisions, people are so polarized.
- Not enough people get news from legitimate news sources.
- "Our politicians are just politicians."
- Need more proactive v. reactive
- Einstein: "Politicians have a harder job to do than scientists." Politics is harder than physics.
- Growth in COMO is inevitable. Forethought in that process is critical.
- Growth is inevitable: need a system where everyone's voice is heard.
- Changing from feeling like a small town to a large city is a rough transition for anywhere.
- Important to plan before it becomes an issue.
- Something about a small community model that is very attractive, authentic. Everybody plugged into everything all the time.
- Everything is more and more corporately controlled. Less of local voice we need to have.
- Planning requires understanding the salient facts with where we are.
- A new participant came because he felt his views were unfairly represented in the posts and discussions generated in past community commons forums.
- Blog posts on transmission line "marshalled evidence." Didn't represent all pieces.
- Answers aren't always engineering but sometimes they are.
- "Geographic democracy" (see article). Need to dive deeper into those that are impacted.
- Amusing ourselves to death. Difference between reflective and reactive thinking.
- "Everyone is selective about what facts they choose."
- "Social loafing" – someone else will do it, so I don't need to.
- "Not the kind of discussion I'm used to, used to more back and forth."
- Being a liberal democrat is not inconsistent with business.
- Brave New World, 1984. Digital communication as an electronic screen.
- Transparency is good bc need to see all facets.
- Transparency of process is key.
- Lot to be said about transparency from the factual level. Might be less value for social/cultural interactions. Like to see science on the front end, and awareness of "science involving people" on the back end." Then a framework that is clear for making decisions.

Other Comments

- Fascinated by idea can have a civil conversation on a difficult topic.
 - Learned. Broadened view. What I came for.
 - Admire anyone who steps up and out to have a conversation with someone who disagrees.
 - Topic of transmission lines has been at forefront of the community commons discussions.
 - Sometimes there are human factors that must be recognized because humans are known to be wrong.
 - Part of the issue with the transmission lines has been a failure to communicate where the poles were going to go. When they finally found out they were *outraged*.
 - Why not go down to city hall? Level of intimidation (not want to "look stupid"), not able to go, fear of retribution – would lose business.
- [Final Round]*
- "20 minute source" - Newspaper is!! And is archived – can go back and look at past articles.
 - Print journalism is different.
 - Generational differences – 5 sentences and need to be entertaining.
 - Far reaching.
 - If it's made by the city it's biased. Need to have different perspectives.

- Seeing political process. Shows like "The Office" – highlight city government from citizen perspective and use humor.
- Technology outstripped our ability to use it appropriately.
- Concept of digital citizenship is nearer.
- How not to dumb down issues?
- "Bias" in system is to keep people in their slumber.
- Not just about entertainment – it's real.
- How improve process – have City Council talk first.