

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES PUBLIC STAFF CONFERENCE #1

April 25, 2024 5:30 – 8:30 PM

Participant: Communications committee chair for College Hill Forum, not speaking on behalf of the Forum but as a resident. Understands how challenging it is to have responsible communication and to reach people. Her concern is that the previous Connected Communities engagement events were not properly communicated as opportunities to inform legislation drafting. Feels that the 2023 meetings were intentionally misrepresented as only educational sessions. Those sessions were not communicated responsibly. Did not feel like the engagements were honest because of their conceptual nature. The sessions were small and happened over a short period of time. Feels that participants were hand-selected to skew feedback. Not opposed to the proposal, but it's happening too fast with short, quick, small engagement sessions.

Participant: Mt. Lookout. Hates every one of the ideas and vehemently opposed to them. Congestion and traffic is already bad, increasing density is just going to make it worse. The ideas about parking sound nice but will never work because people will still have cars and just park them somewhere else, probably in front of other people's houses. It's a ridiculous notion that people aren't going to have cars in Cincinnati. Ridiculous notion that any place in her neighborhood needs revitalization. The Minneapolis data isn't a completely accurate tale of what happened there: there was an increase in housing but it came primarily from 20+ unit buildings. In Chicago this caused price increases. There is no evidence this will help in Cincinnati. Only recently heard about this a month ago because people left something on her door.

Participant: Agrees with previous participants. This process has not been transparent and West Price Hill only got involved in the last couple months. A blanket change in zoning is going to impact the majority of East and West Price Hill. Against Connected Communities because in the past 20 years the housing stock has been continually subdivided. Lots of 2/3/4 families in Price Hill done by investors who have exploited the softness in their housing market. This is going to open the door for the exploitation that's already been going on. Majority of their community council opposes Connected Communities for this reason. By the time the city can react to the problems this will create, it will be too late. Want to see more thought going into the process.

Participant: Linwood, echoes everyone else. About the proposed T District: BRT has not been developed yet so it may be premature to add density or change zoning in that area until the lines are in place. It would be better to defer this proposal until then. Cincinnati homeownership rate is 40%, so while it is not mandatory for property owners to change their buildings, the majority of the city are not property owners and thus not able to make decisions about what changes are made to their buildings. They are beholden to the landlords. And the renter rate is so high, we don't need more rentals but instead more homeownership products. Need to look at vacancies of buildings and vacant lots. Need to consider investors buying up property. Would appreciate if the timeline is slowed down for residents to engage further.

Participant: Proposal is going to remove homes for families to build equity and grow into. Slumlords already exploit Cincinnati without regulation. Reduces opportunities for people to own land in the city and establish financial freedom through wealth building. Rent is going up because rent vouchers provide too much money for poor quality housing. Engagement was dishonest because it claimed to be learning about zoning, not providing feedback on legislation. Thought the engagement was just which picture do you like better versus what the impact to the neighborhood will be. The professional stakeholder group includes people who receive money from the city, which is a problem.

Participant: Mt Washington. Is this meeting recorded and will it be available? Regarding parking minimums: wants to review the 67% number [related to engagement feedback]. For modifying zoning code language: is that something that can be done by Council or does it need citizen votes?

- **Staff:** Yes the parking slides are available in the StoryMap and Engagement Report. Zoning language can be modified by City Council and City Planning Commission, and does not require a citizen vote.

Participant: North Avondale, VP of North Avondale Neighborhood Association (NANA). Doesn't like that all their input has been on post-its. People in her neighborhood have requested an impact report from the city and have not received one, which is concerning. Proposing policies without addressing how it will impact the city is unfair and the policy is tone deaf. It's easy to come up with arbitrary policies that could potentially benefit the neighborhood, but there are things it is not addressing, like how this proposal could impact neighborhoods culturally. If there is a large influx of low-income or Section 8 housing in our neighborhoods, how does the city plan on keeping residents safe from violence and getting robbed? Have-nots with haves. The city hasn't addressed this. Not a racial concern but an economic one. A low-income Section 8 building was put in near her home and there have been problems ever since. She has worked hard and made certain choices to get where she is today and now the city is trying to determine the type of neighborhood she's going to live in for her. Wants to be around other homeowners. Don't put low-income renters and Section 8 people in her neighborhood that don't have the same values as her. Doesn't like opponents of Connected Communities being painted as racists or NIMBYs. Doesn't believe anyone at the city has actually lived around low-income people and thus can't say "put them everywhere in the city."

Participant: Strongly opposed to the policy. Mt. Lookout 30yr homeowner. The congestion has continued to increase. City has lost a lot of traffic lanes along Linwood and Delta. He doesn't support anything to reduce parking minimums. The word vibrancy is used a lot in the Connected Communities promotional materials. Hyde Park, Mt. Lookout, Oakley are already vibrant and so lively it's almost hard to visit them. The City Planning Commission [Planning Department?] documents show that 79% of people use a vehicle to get to work, and it seems like the city is doing things to make it more difficult to use a car. But the car is going to be here for quite some time and he opposes anything that reduces parking requirements. There is a section [of the StoryMap] that says the current regulations have created an oversupply of parking, but in his experience, that is not the case.

Participant: Clifton and Mt. Washington previously, currently in Hyde Park. Agrees with others. Agrees with the post-its comment from the other participant. Went to the Price Hill meeting and it was full of activists and people who were in support of the policies. Mayor wasn't there which he didn't like. There were not opportunities to ask questions. Agrees with another participant that 2023 engagement was a game and not about providing feedback on legislation. The city has never been looking for feedback on this. Aftab vilifies homeownership. Feels that we need to expand homeownership, not more rentals. None of the community councils he spoke with want middle housing, they want single-family housing. Renters don't add anything except pollution, density, and crime. This policy doesn't address that. It doesn't address homeownership at all. It insults their intelligence to say these proposals won't overload infrastructure. Adding density eliminates land that could absorb rain and creates runoff. The city needs to listen to the residents, and this is the first meeting where the city is hearing the truth.

Participant: Mt. Lookout resident, owns property and a business in Linwood. VP of Linwood Community Council but not speaking for the council. She saw on the website that there would be a document to help the public understand the legislation, but where is that document? How can the public give feedback without the ability to understand the proposal? And how will the timing of the vote be adjusted to provide time to get this feedback? The city needs to listen to the residents and give more time.

- **Staff:** City will be releasing FAQ next week to address the legislation and questions.
- **Participant:** Yes, but residents need a document on the website to explain the legislation.
- **Staff:** The StoryMap explains the policy that was translated into the legislation document.

Participant: Hyde Park, not a member of a community council or a business owner, just a person who works and owns a home in the city. In favor of the Connected Communities proposal. Has looked at the studies, looked at the website, and it makes sense to her. Where she lives there are lots of duplexes, some quads. Most of the area is zoned single-family but many of the historic buildings were built before they became banned by changes in the zoning code. Obviously Hyde Park and Oakley are already vibrant, but these places saw increases in housing to go along with this. She read the report of which neighborhoods have added housing, and Oakley was one of the top net increases. She sees middle housing all around and yet the neighborhood is fine. It isn't the type of building that leads to the issues previously mentioned (crime etc.). The qualms about crime are valid, but it is completely separate from the type of building. Experiencing traffic is a normal expectation for living in the city, and if she wanted to totally avoid it she would live elsewhere. Traffic is what we have to tolerate in order to live in a car-centric city, and it is a symptom of a thriving area. Also, lots of people complain about housing affordability, but they don't want to take the steps to achieve that goal. If we are serious about increasing housing, there is no other way to do it except to build housing. Not saying a cart blanche approach or massive towers, but middle housing is fine, and she sees it everywhere on her street. Question: is this ordinance just to change zoning, not designate lots for low-income housing? For example, couldn't a three-family be a condo? It doesn't have to be rental.

- **Staff:** Yes correct.
- **Participant:** So what I'm hearing is people complaining about things that are unrelated.

Participant: Mt. Lookout. Primary concern is how this is going to impact parking. It could be very severe. He has been told that up to 10-unit buildings would require zero off-street parking, but also heard in this meeting that there is supposed to be 1 off-street parking space per unit. What is correct?

- **Staff:** 1 space/unit is a citywide policy (right now it ranges from 1-2 depending). In the Connected Communities areas, like the middle housing area, new buildings wouldn't have to provide parking for the first 10 units but would have to start providing it higher than that.
- **Participant:** If lots of units are going to be built without provisions for parking, that is a huge issue. There is no indication of how many of these things will be built. His understanding is that the city would like to see a lot of these built quickly, so if a lot of them show up on the same street for example, it could cause a localized parking shortage very quickly. In other cases, a parking shortage is not so evident until 3-4 years in, and then it's suddenly a lot and the business are struggling because people can't park within a quarter mile of the business district.

Participant: Mt. Lookout resident for several years. Echoes previous comments except one. Concerned with the lack of transparency and the speed at which this proposal is being rushed. There hasn't been sufficient engagement or promotion. Concerned that this meeting isn't being recorded but the pop-up events were very well documented, and also targeted to areas with support bases. Mt. Lookout is 50% homeowners. This would destroy the unique nature, feel, and safety of many neighborhoods. This will increase density and traffic and thus endanger pedestrians. It will be unsafe in high-traffic areas especially. Adding housing in Mt. Lookout and similar hillside neighborhoods will increase stress on the stormwater and sewage systems. Saw this a few weeks ago with the intense rain – the city doesn't have the stormwater infrastructure for this. Parking is a huge issue, especially in Mt. Lookout. When parking is stressed it is hurtful to businesses. Biking and taking the bus is not realistic. You can't ride the bus or take your bike to Mason. Project is moving too fast, information has come out too little and too late. The next Zoom meeting should be recorded.

Participant: Mt. Lookout, previously in Linwood, Pleasant Ridge, OTR, and Downtown. Lived and worked all over Cincinnati. Walks, bikes, motorcycles, and rode the bus. Kids are in Cincinnati Public Schools. Has lived in Mason and owns a business in Warren County. He has seen all sides. Change is scary for a lot of people. Echoes the infrastructure comments—change is scary but it can be good, as long as we have the infrastructure to support it. Has three cars in their family, have to park one on the street. On Fri/Sat/Sun parking is difficult to

find near their house because people park in front of it to visit the NBD. Parking is going to be an issue and the city will see that. Not addressing parking concerns is irresponsible, need to slow down on that part. Stormwater, the grid, etc. can become overwhelmed and that is serious. The ideas seem rosy but the city needs to listen to what people are saying. It's not going to end up the way you think if the city doesn't think about parking and sewage etc. It will cost more money in the long run.

Participant: West Price Hill, agrees with others that this is deadline driven. Mayor wants this completed before Council recess which isn't understandable. Futures Commission report came out and nodded to Connected Communities but it also said we need a new land use plan. We should have the land use plan before Connected Communities. The report also mentioned barriers to development but didn't mention parking requirements. Instead, it said that the city is incompetent when it comes to working with developers, who bypass the city because they can't deal with all the departments. This proposal is being tried in many different cities as "upzoning," which is never mentioned in Connected Communities. The result of upzoning is very mixed and that finding has been neglected in Connected Communities. Citizens feel like they're only getting one side of the story. Provide the results of experiences of all other cities. Buffer should be more fine-tuned—doesn't need to be a quarter mile around all the business districts. And it should be opt in, especially for the areas around BRT corridors.

Participant: West Price Hill, 58 yrs. It's not about rejecting diverse neighbors, her neighbors are already diverse. It's about the police and property management companies like VineBrook, who violate zoning variances [zoning regulations?]. The VineBrook property next door has had multiple citations and nothing has been done. If neighborhoods want to change then let them, but the majority do not. Do not need a blanket change for all neighborhoods. Garbage, blight, negligence of property. Has spoke with police, fire, and zoning about these issues. East and west side have been treated very differently with multifamily properties.

Participant: Clifton. Questions "one size fits all" approach. A lot of different communities have a lot of different issues. Issue uptown is that UC is expanding a lot, building \$100 mil complex to house 10% of students. Would support more homeownership via condos, duplexes, etc. They would take more pride than renters. This would make Cincinnati a better community. Cincinnati 6th in Ohio for highest percentage of renters, 9th nationwide. Ownership will make the city better with better communities. Question: Is there something to encourage homeownership vs. renters? There is a lot of concentration on 2/3/4 families, but this policy is also opening the door for much higher units. This is one size fits all. It should be a more granular approach. It needs to be more tailored to each community and neighborhood. Bringing more density will require more firefighters and police and they're already understaffed.

- **Staff:** The change would be incremental, so we would just have to watch the trends and adapt police and fire service as required.
- **Participant:** Is there still an opportunity for the legislation to be changed?
- **Staff:** We are in the legislative process now, so there is an opportunity for it to change but it is in the hands of elected officials.
- **Participant:** What is the rush?
- **Staff:** It's not a rush, it's just moving through the standard legislative process now.

Participant: Mt. Lookout homeowner for 11yrs, Cincinnati resident for 36 years. Are there any elected officials on the call? Agrees with everyone in opposition. On the misconception slides it says it still has to go through a zoning committee [unclear what this is referring to], but people are already circumventing the zoning right now. It's laughable to say "we'll approve this because it has to be reviewed through this other committee as well." These changes will make it easier to take advantage of this. The zoning committee is not preventing developments that are harmful to the communities. The infrastructure problems won't be caught and won't

protect our communities. The notion of relying on banks to enforce parking requirements is laughable. Notes on this meeting are probably not being taken well. City staff look like they're multitasking and not taking notes.

Participant: What metric or data measures are you using? And what can we reflect back on four or five years from now? Because trying to get city officials to give us any back-data won't happen. We don't know if what the city tells us is accurate or not. Other cities are not Cincinnati, which has 52 different types of neighborhoods. It took over 33 years to make the changes happen to approve the Avondale Town Center. None of this is going to happen overnight, and it is not going to happen without unintended consequences because the city doesn't know our neighborhood's needs. The Mayor is not educated on our needs, the council members don't know what the neighborhoods need. Don't just follow what a book or article says, do homework, talk to the community, and don't be afraid to say what you really learned, because what we're hearing right now is not accurate. There are over 50 people here and only one person in support, who doesn't seem to be knowledgeable about her own neighborhood. Reggie Harris doesn't go back 30 years in this city. Don't come with a half-concept and no one on the panel who can answer questions. No more post-its when the city hasn't even come to us for questions. No appreciation for the people who actually live here. What the city is saying is not fact-based.

Participant: Homeowner in Mt. Lookout for 37yrs, lived in Cincinnati almost 50yrs. Agrees with people who are disappointed that this meeting is not being recorded. People have expressed a lot of comments and with no elected officials here it feels like no one else will hear these concerns. Accurate notes not being taken. Has called and asked city service departments (MSD etc.) if they have been contacted about the impact this policy would have on their services and they all said no. Due diligence has not been done. Flooding is a major concern in Mt. Lookout. Cars are parked all the way up the street every weekend. She is upset by the thought of multifamily across the street from her. Cities grow organically and this is not organic. The city has more rentals than many other cities, so why would we need more? Studies show that renters are less likely to become involved in communities, less likely to vote, more transient. They are looking for short-term places to live. This will have a destabilizing effect on the city and there are no studies. Need more research and more impact studies. This is not ready for a vote. This feels like a workaround for developers to take advantage of the city after passing the tax abatement reforms. Reiterated that accurate notes are not being taken.

Participant (2nd time speaking): Disappointed this is not being recorded. Why is it not being recorded? Is that at the direction of public officials?

- **Staff:** This is standard practice for Public Staff Conferences so people can speak freely and not feel like something could be used against them.
- **Participant:** Is it being transcribed?
- **Staff:** It can be transcribed if a participant chooses to turn that on.
- **Participant:** She recommends that staff turn on transcriptions to help them listen. Previous participant said there is middle housing in Hyde Park and there isn't a problem; but there is a huge gap between the middle housing in Hyde Park and in East Price Hill. Middle housing is not a one size fits all strategy. There are maps that can be overlaid—has the city overlaid VineBrook property ownership? You won't see a lot of VineBrook in Hyde Park. They're being predatory in East Price Hill. Overlay predatory landlords and slumlords with city code violations, crime, police calls, etc. to identify where this middle housing works and where it might be detrimental. Condos vs. market-rate rentals would be good if we could see where condos will work to boost homeownership, and where market-rate rentals work. What's the rush? What happens if councilmembers Harris and Cramerding are not reelected? Where does that leave it if the people who pushed this through got voted out? Wants it to be put into the record how many people are against this.

Participant: North Avondale. Agrees with all except the comments in support. Moving way too fast, disingenuous community engagement. There were lots of concerns about the last density proposal. She has

the same concerns and more, and they're not being addressed. Neighborhoods are not having their voices heard. Big concern that there is no impact analysis on how this will affect the city. There is a disparate impact—look at the BRT routes and the neighborhood climate equity indicators, these are the areas that are already challenged. Nothing in the policy is strategic to help each neighborhood meet its needs. Some neighborhoods need market rate housing, some need income restricted housing. There is nothing strategic except BRT which is not completed yet. Moving too fast. Wants to see the impact per neighborhood like what was included in the density ordinance from 2022.

Participant: Has never been more disappointed by a process than this evening, specifically relating to the lack of documentation of this meeting. Appreciate that people speak more freely when they're not being recorded but feels that applies more to personal conversations, not government conversations. Has never been more proud that there are residents who were willing to stay on a long call, do research, and share thoughts succinctly and articulately.

Participant: When the last density proposal came in the staff conferences were recorded, but it seems like they have stopped being recorded. Wants to hear from Billy Weber and Marion Haynes why they were previously recorded and now they're not. For people who have already sent stuff to Planning, will that be sent to the Planning Commission, and do people need to resend comments they've already submitted to get it to the commissioners?

- **Staff:** We have been saving emails as we have been receiving them, and they will be attached to the staff report to go to City Planning Commission and City Council.
- **Participant:** Are you only saving stuff addressed to the City Planning Commission?
- **Staff:** Yes. About recording the meeting: the purpose of this is for staff to hear feedback, document it, and then provide it to the City Planning Commission in the staff report.

Participant: Mt. Lookout, on Community Council but speaking as a resident. Implores that residents be allowed to speak for as long as it goes on because this is a very important open dialogue. Implores the Planning Department to allow residents to have open dialogue and answer questions much earlier than at the end of a 2-year process. Many people are frustrated about not hearing about this sooner. Mt. Lookout has seen a lot of success with grassroots efforts to educate the neighborhood. Wants to encourage everyone on the call to talk to neighbors about this and encourage them to attend the meetings and public hearings. Reach out to her for templates for flyers. A previous participant asked a question about vacant lots—she wants city data about this.

- **Staff:** Zoning doesn't dictate if a lot is vacant. These policies don't mandate teardowns. What we've seen in research is that the way to keep housing costs at a reasonable rate is to do broad zoning and housing reforms.
- **Participant:** Her concern is about increasing supply through developing vacant lots rather than tearing down existing buildings to build more densely.

Participant (2nd time speaking): Recommends the city look into concept of rental equity like Renting Partnerships. She has talked to councilmembers about it but doesn't feel like they're being heard about integrating it into the overall plan. Has the city had any discussions about rental equity and if it can be implemented into Connected Communities?

- **Staff:** What we're talking about is a land-use proposal and rental equity is more related to economic development. It is not linked with land use.
- **Participant:** It should be connected because one affects the other. The materials say this will help with homeownership, but there is a disconnect in what that looks like. Wants another StoryMap about the journey from low-income housing to homeownership through this policy. Councilmember Harris said he would make this, where is it?

- **Staff:** You will have to ask Councilmember Harris about that.

Participant: Supportive, thinks this is a great progressive policy. Makes a lot of sense. More housing is not a bad thing. It's rare that you get such a progressive policy from a midsize city like Cincinnati and it could serve as a regional model for other cities.

Participant (2nd time speaking): The Planning Department has cited Minneapolis and Charlotte in Connected Communities, but Minneapolis is not building housing because the policy is stuck in litigation from environmentalists and Charlotte has put adding more single-family housing back on the table. Keep up with the research because it's changing. The middle housing policy is supposed to assuage fears about big apartment buildings but that is not what is really happening.

Participant (2nd time speaking): Will the notes be provided, and will the next meeting be recorded?

- **Staff:** We can provide notes and we can talk to the leadership about transcriptions.

Participant (2nd time speaking): Someone asked about previous correspondence being added to the review packet [City Planning Commission] and the answer was "we weren't adding it before but we are now." What prompted starting to save written correspondence? Was this at the direction of the elected officials or an influx of negative emails?

- **Staff:** The "notice" mentioned previously is an official meeting notice, not something being noticed. About starting to save emails: this has been talked about for a long time, so there has been lots of communication. Not every piece of communication from the very beginning has been saved, but once the legislative process started the correspondence started to be saved.
- **Participant:** When was that?
- **Staff:** About a month before the CPC meeting; April 11 via mail and email.

Participant: With Cincinnati Adult Christian Ministry center in Avondale. All talk about buildings, parking, density, but haven't mentioned children, parks, or public restrooms.

Participant: Opposed. Mt Lookout, 40yr homeowner, on community council but not speaking on their behalf. Doesn't want her community to change. Doesn't see the need for it. Looked at the census and their population has not increased by more than 1% in the last 10 years, so she doesn't understand this. Doesn't want a four-family or two-family next to her. It's called "Connected Communities" – no one is going to be interested in going to a meeting about that. Should have been more clear that it was about changing zoning in the neighborhood. 90% of people she talks to have never heard about this. The city is speaking to an echo chamber and not that majority of people. When doing engagement, is the city taking account for who owns or rents? Homeowners actually care. Worried about what will happen when a new rental development in her neighborhood opens.

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES PUBLIC STAFF CONFERENCE #2

April 30, 2024 12:00 – 4:15 PM

These notes are not a direct or exact transcription of comments given during the meeting. These notes are a summary of the main comments from each speaker, with names removed for privacy.

Participant: Homeowner in Hyde Park. Strongly supports Connected Communities. City desperately needs to add more housing. Cost of housing is shooting up faster than inflation because we're not building enough. The way to bring down costs is to build new housing. People say "I'm ok with more new housing, but not in my neighborhood." Every neighborhood has to pitch in. She wants a neighborhood that is mixed income. Wants teachers and firefighters in her neighborhood. City needs them and they need a place to live. This is America and people should be permitted to do what they want with their property. This is not Monaco, it is the Midwest. Lived in San Francisco and things went horribly wrong there because everyone said to build housing elsewhere and wanted to freeze their neighborhoods in time. It made the city so unpleasant that they moved back to Cincinnati. Feels refreshing to see city staff put in the work to get this policy right. Make housing abundant and affordable in Cincinnati. City should not give undue weight to people who do not do the work and want to repeat the mistakes of San Francisco.

Participant: College Hill, communications committee chair of College Hill Forum but not here on behalf of the community council. Appreciates all the work that has went into this. Grateful to see the closed captions this meeting. Wants to trust city manager and experts on these policies, but there have been far too many changes since the engagement. This isn't the way to do a major policy initiative. Agrees that we need housing reform, but there is too much evidence that this policy needs more time. About past engagements: there were a lot of sessions held for Round 2 community engagement, with more focus on quantity instead of quality. Want measures were put into place to understand the quality of these sessions?

- **Staff:** Staff worked hard to make sure the events were quality. Collected demographic data, made sure to have a more open format with the open house-style so people could take their time, dozens of city staff there to answer questions and hear what people had to say. 2023 had engagements that were quantitative and surveys. Staff tried to have a variety of different engagements to gather feedback.
- **Participant:** Her question is more about the impact of the engagement on the changes from the first draft.
- **Staff:** Last page of the Engagement Report shows how we took the feedback into account. Not changing setback, focused on human-scale development, focusing on landscaping and building design, etc.

Participant: Hyde Park, homeowner 36yrs. Grew up in Manhattan, knows the advantages to a great commuter system where you don't need a car. He's also a walker and doesn't always use his car. But there are changes that need to be taken into consideration. At community council meetings developers often come in and sell the community a false story. All the developments in last 20yrs in Hyde Park were dishonest about prices. With every development, housing prices go up. Developers are not building affordable housing. It is critical that tax abatements be reined in. Stats show how Hyde Park and Mt. Lookout have swallowed up many of them. A piece of infrastructure that hasn't been talked about is sewage. Developers do things on their property to contain sewage management, but with each development sewage backups are increasing. Developments that bring more people to the sewage system need to be addressed. That should be a requirement, that's where this plan should be focused. Also congestion; Madison Rd in Hyde Park, Mt. Lookout, out to Madisonville. The streets cannot handle more. Edwards Rd, Erie or Madison at 3pm, or Mt. Lookout square, you'll see we don't have the capacity. One parking space per unit is terribly unrealistic. The goal is to have the ability to use mass transit, but he's concerned about the interim. Grew up in Queens, they increased density and completely destroyed the neighborhood. Can't go anywhere because there are too many people and too many vehicles. Lots of no-

outlet streets in Hyde Park. Development in Madisonville, now low-income residents there don't have a place to live. Have to hold developers accountable.

Participant: Linwood resident, grew up in Oakley. Good: Perth Australia increased density with more transit, but understood the suburbs will still necessitate a car. Bad: Lived in Oregon and saw single-family removed and replaced with rentals. New construction was always luxury and unaffordable to the young professionals it was marketed to. City leaders use the word "holistic" a lot. Large scale change like this shouldn't be rushed through approval, especially if other related initiatives haven't started yet. City has exceptionally low homeownership rate. Despite what was said, there is nothing in Connected Communities that increases homeownership. This creates a constant state of trying to bring new people in instead of trying to grow holistically by growing generationally. No major business is going to want to put roots in an unstable population base. City says Connected Communities will bring business, but Sharonville, Montgomery, Butler County are winning all the businesses. City is telling manufacturing we don't want them or their jobs. In Linwood he sees a lot of replacement of old industrial with large-scale apartments. We should be trying to bring manufacturing back. Middle housing was only recently added to Connected Communities language and is not realistic. Developers are not interested in that, they are interested in large-scale apartment buildings. Nothing in the policy to entice families, only creating stuff to attract rentals and hospitality.

Participant: Student at Bowling Green University but lives in College Hill when not in school. When looking at the history of Cincinnati, the infrastructure was built to house 503,000. Roads, services, etc. mostly come from the 1940 metropolitan plan which anticipated continuing to have 500k, but the city only has 300k now. In order for the city to move forward, need to find a way to hole-up housing stock and grow the neighborhoods that need to grow. In 1940s Westwood only had 6k residents. Until recently most people lived in the basin. The annexed areas further than that are below their 1950s population peaks. Cincinnati just experienced the first population increase in decades, so we're at a fork in the road. Will we continue only increasing 1-2%? Cincinnati currently has a low labor force compared to peer cities. The city was built on corridors of Reading, Glenway. Going into this natural pattern along the corridors, looking at underutilized land and business districts that have been dying for years, it's a good idea as a target for development. We can continue on this path with very low construction, which leads to trickle-down higher costs for everyone because we're not meeting demand, or build more houses for the people who need to come in. Cincinnati is built for 500,000 people. The current zoning code is rooted in the 1960s, which was geared to suburbanize the city.

Participant: Mt. Lookout. Staff said zoning is not the appropriate avenue to address transportation and overcrowded streets in areas like Hyde Park, Mt. Lookout etc. How close is the city working with DOTE etc. to coordinate that? How close are these timelines? She loves the idea of having more diverse incomes and people in each neighborhood.

- **Staff:** Staff has been working with other departments. CSR process, talked with all of them. Also, the changes aren't going to happen overnight. These will take a long time to implement.
- **Participant:** Will there be community engagement? It sounds like this will be reactionary and not proactive.

Participant: Homeowner in Evanston near Montgomery Rd, inside a lot of the affected zones. Supports Connected Communities. Echoes previous participant in support. Everyone talks about how housing in Cincinnati is getting more expensive, but no one wants to provide any concrete proposals to address it. A lot of people say they don't like the plan but don't provide an alternative. Doesn't see what providing more time will accomplish, it's already been a two-year process. Cincinnati is not the only city doing this. Lots of evidence and research that indicates this will work. People complain that all new development is luxury, but whenever a developer proposes affordable units, it faces opposition because communities don't want that either. Hoffman School example. We can draw from other cities. There are solutions happening. Wanted to provide his

perspective as someone who will be very affected by this; A lot of vacant lots around him, near a major bus line. He welcomes development there. Wants this to happen before things get worse.

Participant: Pleasant Ridge, along transit corridor. Recently bought his home and it was not a fun experience because there's so much demand for homes near transit. His situation, which every young buyer in Cincinnati has right now, was you see a house, set your showing, and you don't know if it will still be available when you see it because they're going so quick, because so many people want to live in Cincinnati. There is not enough housing stock to accommodate demand. If there are not enough homes for all the demand, the only people able to get a home are the wealthy who can outbid everyone else. He overpaid for his house but they were able to accommodate that to get a home. This pushes people less fortunate out. He's also a daily transit rider. He's hearing lots of concerns about congestion. Unlike car travel, the main benefit of public transit is that it gets better the more people ride it. Deregulating what developers can do along the improved Metro routes is a great idea to help that. This isn't the end-all, but it is a step in the right direction. We still need low-income housing. But we also still need this policy because we need housing production on all fronts. Connected Communities is a great way to increase density and lower housing prices and he strongly supports it.

Participant: Homeowner in OTR, also works across the city renovating and developing property. Supports this plan wholeheartedly. Wants to applaud staff for all the tremendous effort. We need to continue to grow the city. Grow it responsibly and grow it in a healthy way, to make sure our city and all its benefits are around for us and for future generations. And that goes for owners and renters—they're all citizens and residents regardless. His favorite part is that it's building on the assets we already have. Cincinnati was originally built on transit corridors and business districts and that is what's going to bring it back. There are precedents for all of this as well. There are 4-unit apartments in every neighborhood and they are a positive part of the city. This is providing more opportunities for that. And BRT. Using the assets we already have, and have seen the results in other cities. This is a good plan and can't let it die in committee. Need to move quickly and with purpose. The more time we dither, the bigger the problem is going to get.

Participant: Mt. Lookout. Lives near the boundary of blue-lighted area. Appreciates the presentation. Background in land development, acquainted with the zoning code. This will be one of the most impactful changes to the zoning code since he moved to the city in 1982. But he wants the city to slow down. Knows there has been a 2yr process, but if he was trying to rezone one parcel in any of these areas, he would have to tell people it takes 4-6 months, send a certified mailer, meet with community council sometimes twice, so it's disingenuous for the city to push this in a matter of weeks. Don't be hypocritical. The legislation was just put out a couple weeks ago, so people are reacting now because now it's real. Each elected official should work toward meeting with each community council. Each council member could take 6 communities to hit them all. The opposition is growing because people are becoming focused on this, which is good, and debate should happen, but elected officials need to come out and meet with councils. Also, looking at panel K6 [on the legislation map], the boundary is not easy to read. The lines aren't perfect in terms of matching the panels. In the K6 panel, there is already a variety of multifamily zoning districts. His concern is that the legislation is being put forth with certain assumptions, like the 76% single-family zoning. Mt. Lookout did a survey and it's 45% multifamily and 65% single-family. The idea that higher density equals affordable housing is not true.

Participant: Mt. Lookout, stay at home mom, used to be a teacher. Previously in Hyde Park. Years of issues with Hyde Park home has caused concerns about this. Agrees that it needs to be slowed down. She has experienced the detrimental effects of the lack of infrastructure, especially in the East End but across the city. She suffered personal losses from capacity issues in these neighborhoods. Paid a lot of money and lost a lot to deal with MSD, GCWW. Development has been nonstop. The response is that these departments are on board and connected with this plan, but it's very vague. Feels like everything being done is reactionary. It needs to be done first before density, parking, etc. are pushed forward. April 2nd storms, many neighborhoods suffered because lack of capacity with sewers and stormwater. The city, Hamilton country, waterworks, sewer: fingers

are always pointed the opposite direction and there needs to be accountability. They're putting pumping systems in houses and they are not solving the issue. Communities cannot handle it. Concern with owners, developers, landlords, etc. and their accountability when these structures are built—we have issues enforcing accountability with them. Have councilmembers come into communities and look at them and not look at a blanket approach. Agrees with affordable housing—costs are skyrocketing and taxes are skyrocketing.

Participant: Westwood 25yrs, on infrastructure and zoning committee. They're undergoing a lot of changes that she hoped this plan would solve, but she has doubts now. Likes that this plan will make the city more diverse in all neighborhoods. Mayor said one of the biggest reasons for this is to deconcentrate poverty, which she supports. Cincinnati has a reputation of segregation. Westside has been undergoing changes as a result of displacement from gentrification elsewhere. The houses that are affordable or accept vouchers are in horrible condition. Investors and slumlords buy all the homes and don't take care of the property. Westwood already had low ownership, probably even lower now. The influx of low-income families into poor quality housing is unsafe—dated electricity, too many people in too small spaces, inadequate heat so having lots of space heaters, etc. Fire dept. can't keep up, calls have massively increased. Increases in crime causing businesses to leave. East Westwood is a food desert. In 2020 when this legislation was first proposed and voted down [referring to density ordinance], one of the major issues was how discriminatory it was. She had hopes for this, because including every business district means everyone is being treated equally. But then she talked to someone at the housing summit about how a poor person still isn't going to be able to move into Oakley. Price disparities between Oakley and the west side, every neighborhood has its challenges. West side needs more market-rate and homeownership. Slow down the process and look at each one's needs.

Participant: April 2, 2024 slide about how social capital and social cohesion can be built through homeownership. Wants to let people know that their comments are being summarized and they should email written comments to planning to have their feedback put directly into the packet. Encouraged people to come to City Council to speak if it passes Planning Commission. The HUD voucher for a single unit is \$1,100, but because the market rate is about \$700, slumlords are taking advantage. This is part of why rent prices have increased. The economics of increasing supply and reducing costs will not apply here. Housing will not be brought online overnight, so how will this make an impact? There is a lot of support for Connected Communities from people who live in areas that are displacing people. The lack of supply is not because of zoning, it's because of bad services and bad process that the city has failed to address. The city has also failed to create a community engagement policy which is also slowing development, not restrictive zoning. The previous engagements were leading and the most desirable options for neighborhoods were unable to be communicated. There hasn't been an open two-way conversation. Map boundaries [legislation map?] do not always follow the buffer distances accurately. She wants an answer for the intentional decision to not engage with community councils. Why is the city afraid of using data in analytical way? She deserves and has the right to peace, habitability, and equity in her home and this has not been addressed for her or her west side neighbors.

Participant: Homeowner in Linwood. In opposition. Echoes infrastructure concerns. Flooding and landslides. Traffic, congestion, and road conditions are getting poor. The city should prioritize this before allowing more density. Also, would love to see homeownership opportunities.

Participant: Mt. Adams community council. Mt. Adams submitted a letter in opposition. They are sympathetic to the proposals but opposed because of the process. Will these letters be included in the record?

- **Staff:** Yes those letters will be included.
- **Participant:** The charter puts this to the Planning Commission, but there haven't been signs of the Planning Commission being involved. There is a 4-step process, and one of them says there is a presentation to the community councils [unclear what this is referring to]. Staff is diverging from this.

Staff is being dishonest by not following this. The community is entitled to what is published as the process rather than diverging for a preordained policy proposal being pushed through.

Participant: CUF. Concerned about the problems increased density will cause in neighborhoods. This will increase litter. Houses near the university hold 5+ students. No driveways and each student has a car. There is a lot of illegal parking. Lots of concern for reducing parking. CUF needs more ownership, but landlords buy property as soon as it's on the market. How does Connected Communities address student housing?

Participant: East Price Hill. The Connected Communities ordinance is not the medicine that Cincinnati needs to fix its problems. The ordinance is addressing creating adequate units to bring down prices. This is not assured and has been proven [that it isn't assured] in other cities. The reality in Cincinnati is that the market forces are driving the current systems and prices, and Connected Communities is going to put all that freewheeling into overdrive. There are affordable houses on the west side but people don't want to live there. This policy will not address this issue and zoning is the tool to address quality of life issues. The city cannot be trusted to keep up with additional infrastructure needs. Need to create more homeownership. Process is rushed. The argument that there isn't enough housing isn't borne out in all communities. What research, analysis, and data were used to create the policies, and how can residents access that?

- **Staff:** It's on our website.
- **Participant:** What is the vacancy rate?
- **Staff:** We don't have that on hand.

Participant: Mt. Lookout, 20yrs. Lots of concerns about the proposal. Every area is different, and within that each street is different. Concerned about the sewer system, can't handle more development. Invites councilmembers to see the system when it rains. Parking concern. Mt. Lookout square is horrendous. People park everywhere and it's very congested. Small businesses are being flooded. Schools flooding. Sustainable communities protect residents, business, and schools. Research is not the same applied to every single area. This is being rushed through. This is a great idea if it works, but the current system doesn't even work. We're not connected now. Can't build a connected community on a problematic system.

Participant: Madisonville. Agrees with some other people's concerns. It looks great, well-formulated, but he's concerned as it gets implemented. Need to be adaptable and flexible. If we realize it's incentivizing bad landlords etc. there should be mechanisms to clamp down on that without going through a 5yr process to address it as it's arising. Learn from past errors. There are lots of private parking lots. All parking should be a public resource available to all users as needed. More efficient that way. Anything in the plan about encouraging shared parking?

- **Staff:** This focuses on parking requirements. There is no provision for better parking management as part of the package.

Participant: Madisonville. This is long overdue. Should have been done 10-20yrs ago to help the crisis we're currently in. Increased pressure in more neighborhoods on the east side as a result of lack of building in Hyde Park and Oakley. Pleasant Ridge didn't used to be desirable, Oakley used to be referred to as "near Hyde Park." Ripple effect of "If I can't live in Hyde Park/Mt. Lookout, I'll just live nearby." When he was trying to buy a house, couldn't afford Pleasant Ridge but found a place in Madisonville. Conventional wisdom is that this seems to work, lots of research and case studies supporting this. Hopes the city continues to invest in traffic calming and increasing capacity in B&I to crackdown on bad landlords. Wants more resources dedicated to transit. Appreciates all the work in this initiative.

Participant: Paddock Hills. 98% of the neighborhood is within Tier 1 corridor. It's a tiny community, 1k residents. The issues is single-family wants to stay single-family. People buy there for a reason. If she had known it was going to change, she wouldn't have lived there. Multi-units in Paddock Hills are old and poorly

maintained by bad landlords. They would welcome new builds, a better business district, and being walkable. Feels that the city didn't give them enough time and didn't communicate with community councils. No city representative has come to the community council. Went to two pop-up events and didn't hear anything about changing the zoning at them [could be referring to Engagement Policy pop-ups]. Asking to slow it down so there can be more communication and the plan can be tailored around residents and community councils.

Participant: Mt. Washington, on community council. No one has come there to discuss this with them. The name Connected Communities doesn't say "we're changing zoning." She previously thought it was about transportation. She owns and lives in a two-family and rents out the 1 bedroom on the first floor for \$650. Same 1 bedroom with fewer amenities nearby owned by out of town landlords and is charging \$900+. Doesn't have faith that this will translate into affordable housing. Wants it slowed down so that in the ordinance it can say somehow that there needs to be a cap on the profit that developers make from renting units. If they want tax abatements, that has to be tied into it, provide affordable housing. In Mt. Washington they spent years developing a free parking lot for businesses. Connected Communities says you can count public assets, which means it is going to become a parking lot to hold cars for residents. If you are going to have zero waste by 2030, need to make sure there is enough room on properties for trash, recycling, and food waste for all units. Make sure this plan aligns with the Green Cincinnati plan and consider MSD. Need to analyze neighborhood by neighborhood and in some instances street by street to see how much density can be absorbed.

Participant: Lives in OTR, homeowner 20yrs. Previously in Northside, originally from Kansas City. On board at Peasley Neighborhood Center. Top of mind for him is equity. Appreciates the goal to make Cincinnati more accessible and diverse. Founded local chapter of Citizens Climate lobby. Been a priority for him for 20yrs to help Cincinnati reduce dependence on cars. He has heard lots of comments from homeowners about parking issues, a desire to see an increase in mass transit, and concern about sewer systems. Housing is a big part of that. The climate is getting warmer, we're seeing more severe rain events. The city has 100yr old pipes that were built for a different atmosphere. If you're worried about pipes, look at your driveway and say "why am I still relying on my car." He understands the reality that it's difficult to live without a car even in OTR, but the only way to increase transit use is to make it easier than using a car. Increase frequency, but that takes money. We need way more buses traveling down. If the bus will be there every 7 minutes, you don't worry. Issue 7 helped but we need a lot more than what's been done, and in order for that to happen housing has to increase, so he appreciates this work. Would love to hear more about Minneapolis' success with a citywide application and better transit put in place. This is a piece of the solution. People are saying it's too big, but it's too small. The city needs this and a revenue source for affordable housing. He's building a 5-unit apartment in his back lot and it is very expensive. The only way you get developers, big or small, to build affordable housing is to give them money. The climate doesn't negotiate. We have to cut emissions by a certain amount by a certain time. For everyone who wants to wait on BRT or whatever else, that's 2027. We can't wait. We have to increase walkability through the built environment. Building more multifamily creates a better life.

Participant: East Hyde Park. Mayor said 60% of the city is renters and the proposed solution to that is Connected Communities, which promotes more renters and not ownership. Everyone is saying we need more homeowners, particularly on the west side. The proposal is singular for all 52 communities. One size fits all doesn't work. Don't tear down what's working in places like Oakley, Hyde Park, Mt. Lookout. Raise up neighborhoods that need the help. Subsidizing mortgages and loans for more SF. There are more ideas. 20+ community councils have asked to slow down. Renters are transient, don't put down roots, don't invest in community. Homeowners do and help reduce crime. Parking, police and fire needs will increase. Sewer system—losing single-family yards which absorb runoff and rain, while multifamilies create runoff. SMU came to community council and said there were no impact studies. Running with a program and not thinking about how to implement it. This is the same proposal as 2020 [density ordinance] but more green and socialism added.

Participant: North Avondale. Have heard a lot of people from Hyde Park and OTR excited about Connected Communities which is why it should be an opt in system. Hyde Park can be a great place to start with low-income and affordable housing if that's what they want. The people that want it can have it. Look where this type of legislation hasn't worked, Charlotte NC for example. It caused developers to come to Charlotte and now the market is oversaturated and apartments are vacant, and now they're turning into low-income Section 8 housing. This is what happens when it's not thought through and you allow predatory developers to come in. Charlotte, Houston, and Atlanta are all examples of where this hasn't worked. Want it to be presented as a detailed plan instead of bullet points of what it's going to do. Opposed to legislation. We need to understand the root causes and how to bring about a better outcome. Agrees with innovation and change, saw the housing crisis in California. Embraces growing city to make it more attractive. This is just checking a box. Want to see the community's recommendations for the plan included in the presentation. Rental equity, increasing homeownership. Impact analysis. How will their input impact final decision?

- **Staff:** Input will be summarized and included in a staff report to the Planning Commission.
- **Participant:** How will the city modernize the 311 complaint system to enhance its response and address police officer shortage?

Participant: North Avondale. This change eliminates zoning from Reading Rd to Victory Parkway. The neighborhoods are at risk, the historic homes could be changed, lots of things can be changed. Agrees with all the statements about moving slower on this. Just change the zoning on street-facing properties on Tier 1 corridors and see the benefit generated from that before this radical change. We're not in exceptional growth—San Francisco grew by 10% from 2000-2010, Cincinnati shrunk by 10% in that time. So we're not bursting at the seams. There is other information that 1,112 units were built in 2023. This building surely keeps pace with the growth. Studies show reducing zoning regulations increase housing, but only for high earners. Someone could knock down a historic home. Analyze data about vacant properties and increase enforcement analysis of available assets. People won't live on Reading Rd. There is a lot of cart before the horse with this. There are active lawsuits for passing these types of zoning changes. Would refer to Connected Communities as "developers delight." Why isn't Montgomery Rd or Madison included?

Participant: College Hill 17yrs. Opposed. Any time he sees any type of increase in regulations or centralized planning he's going to be against it. A medium to large city like ours is unable to be managed by a group of employees and public officials. Voluntary interaction with each other is the best way to manage a city. There is a certain worldview that is pushing these policies. Anytime you can have less regulation is optimal interaction. He has been a landlord, did a rehab, and they're not super wealthy people. The regulations make it untenable for small owners like him to own property and rent to their neighbors. Any time you add regulation, the people that benefit most are people who have lawyers on retainer, large owners, corporations, etc. and small owners like him will suffer. He ultimately had to leave the industry. More regulation just allows out of town investors into the market and leaves small landlords out. Barcelona has embraced new urbanism, removed entire streets designed for cars and turned those into green spaces. But it became untenable for people with kids or people who worked in the suburbs—so people left. Tax base left. Crime went up, public urination, graffiti. Wants a more free-market approach, like in Argentina where they removed zoning and rents have dropped significantly.

Participant: Mt. Lookout. No one has thought about how this proposal will have major impact on mental health. This is creating a very real and tangible threat to neighborhoods. They call Mt. Lookout BNE, "best neighborhood ever." Don't want it to be a bunch of renters. His high real estate taxes are subsidizing the neighborhood for abatements. He is losing sleep, doesn't know what to expect here.

Participant: Director of real estate development OTR Community Housing. In favor of Connected Communities. The work OTRCH does every day is made more difficult by restrictive zoning regulations. The code is incapable of addressing the challenges of building any housing in the city, and especially the specific challenges of developing affordable housing. The city has a tremendous number of variances every year. This

is a start at fixing the broken system, and he appreciates the bonuses for affordable housing. But it needs more, including robust funding to the Affordable Housing Trust Funds. Renters at OTRCH are valuable members of their community, involved in community councils, etc.

Participant: Mt. Lookout. Opposed. Has been very involved in zoning issues, echoes concerns of developers not being held accountable. If this legislation passes neighbors will have no recourse. Variances serve a purpose—they let neighbors weigh in. This is being pushed too fast and people don't have the information. Delivered flyers to a number of residences, which were actually 4-family houses. They have a quality-of-life in Mt. Lookout with trees. Talk about mental health; greenspaces are important. Neighborhoods are unique and we don't need a blanket zoning change. Things need to be tailored to each neighborhood and neighborhoods need to know what's going on. The long-term consequences of this legislation are dire. Not just infrastructure, but trust in our government. There is a high interest in this. Hopes that it doesn't pass.

Participant (2nd time speaking): If city council approves Connected Communities and streamlines the zoning variance review process, how many jobs in city planning and zoning will be eliminated?

- **Staff:** No job removals are proposed as part of this legislation.

Participant: Hyde Park, approves of Connected Communities, has come to a number of events. Wishes people who are just now getting engaged in opposition got involved earlier and understood the policies better. A lot of confusion leading to these ideas, and people misunderstanding data. Instead of using cost as proxy for demand, they're using unrelated measures. In Austin they have seen a decrease in housing prices because of building more housing. This hurts out of town landlords and is good for local people who want to find more affordable housing. More people equals more tax dollars. We will be able to share the cost of infrastructure more effectively. Cincinnati is a great place to live, and he wants more people to live here. Looking forward to incremental change and improvements to public transit.

Participant (2nd time speaking): Learned recently that she lives in a form-based zone. What is the current process for developers to purchase land bank properties and turn them into affordable housing? Are they still being impacted by zoning? Will the changes allow them to more easily use the land bank properties?

- **Staff:** The land bank is managed by the Port.

Participant: Mt. Washington, 37yr homeowner, involved with community council. Why is this not being recorded? Can she get a transcript? How will council members know what people are saying? This has not been vetted in regard to infrastructure. Their input is not truly wanted. This meeting is just checking a box. Upset about ADUs passing, Councilmember Jeffreys lied. Off Beechmont the noise is incredible. Virtually intolerable to live here. She maintains the Mt. Washington cemetery. Doesn't trust the city. Why wasn't this in the property tax bill? Should be put to the voters.

Participant (2nd time speaking): How is this helping small landlords and not large landlords? Where is the study?

- **Staff:** More supply increases competition between landlords.

Participant (2nd time speaking): Wants to readdress the issue with infrastructure and sewage. An inch rainfall is nothing in terms of the 100yr rain events that we have been seeing. It may feel like it's being shoved down people's throats but people need to be aware of the reality of climate change.

Participant (2nd time speaking): How many cities actually benchmarked would be relevant in Cincinnati?

Participant (2nd time speaking): How can participants connect with each other?

Participant: Mt. Lookout, president of community council. There is a lot in this policy that is admirable but there are also lots of concerns. They had someone from stormwater come out to the community and they said developers can't make it worse. But the current situation is already terrible. The previous storm did a lot of damage. This is a lot to get through in a short amount of time for the legislation. Clarification: height and setback in single-family zones are protected, but it appears that a 4-unit in a SF zone that is affordable can still get the height bonus. Is this correct?

- **Staff:** Yes, but the affordable bonus only applies to LIHTC projects and those are not typically on small developments like that—usually on large buildings.

Participant (2nd time speaking): We already can't handle the current amount of sewage now, and this does nothing except add to that problem. Confusion about overlays.

Participant: Mt. Lookout homeowner 11yrs. Glad to see so many people engaged. She's opposed to this as it stands on the current timeline. Some of the reasons are stresses on infrastructure, parking, sewage and traffic. Need true and honest community engagement and each individual community should be able to opt in. Each community should be able to speak for themselves.