

WESTSIDE COMMUNITY COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Westside Community Comprehensive Economic Development Plan presented its first workshop on 'The Community's Role in Economic Development' at the Moulin Rouge Hotel on Friday, Saturday and Sunday May 13-15. It included the following topics of discussion:

MOTIVATION

You call an important meeting. A mere handful of people show up. You look at the empty seats and wonder what happened. You ask yourself, are those empty seats symbolic of the people's contentment? You blame yourself for failing to motivate them sufficiently.

This workshop was most challenging because it deals with the biggest problem of Economic social and political development -- APATHY. Its changless nature has crushed the spirit of many leaders and has driven many impatient individuals to desparate means.

Apathy seems to defy the theory that 'nothing remains the same.' Many communities remain paralyzed with apathy. What keeps the people turned off? Can their will be kindled by motivation? Are there any advantages in being apathetic? What does it take to be apathetic? What does it take to be sufficiently motivated? Are you apathetic? Motivated? These are some of the questions this workshop explored.

This workshop operated on the assumption that the more we understand about apathy and motivation, the more successful we will be in getting more people active.

PRIORITIES

Our communities are infested with problems and issues. Whether they involve education, health, housing, economics, welfare, recreation, crime, etc., they greatly affect people's lives. Many of these problems are clearly survival problems, while others relate to qualities or styles of survival. With mass apathy and wide spread political confusion, people's resources and energies are dissipated, ending in superficial struggles or surface recognition of these problems. Political is used in the context of group self interest. Nothing is resolved. The problems continue to corrode life.

We go on reacting to as many problems as we can, trying to plug up holes, fill in cracks, and wondering how long it will last.

**LAS VEGAS KNOWS
THE VOICE
BECAUSE LAS VEGAS
READ THE VOICE**

Not having a system or method for establishing the importance and seriousness of problems, in terms of survival, is a problem in itself.

This workshop will stimulate thinking that lead to developing a methodology for establishing priorities in communities. Prioritizing problems and struggles, in our opinion, is the only way community people can get the most from their resources and energies. Moreover, this affords them more control over their destinies.

COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP

People have either been looking a long time for the messiah or have been hung up on THE LEADER concept. This makes for real problems in grasping the importance of collective leadership.

It was determined that it is time for us to start realizing that strong leader or the messiah concept has some serious drawbacks. History reminds us of that fact. People tend not to develop politically under the strong leader. They are inclined to shrink their individual responsibilities and their need to grow, despite raised clenched fists and 'Right On' to the strong leader. THE Leader is probably too busy representing everybody in initiated to program to develop other leaders to take over. The organization of movement is too vulnerable when the leadership is in the hand of one individual.

Rather than the cult of the individual, collective leadership and team-building offer more advantages as leadership is spread to more people. Sharing the responsibilities of leadership with others isn't only building people, but it is activating more human resources.

LEVEL OF AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING

This workshop illustrate what direction Leadership Development must take. One of its purposes is to create an atmosphere for personal growth by understanding our own level of growth and that of others we must work with. This understanding is greatly enriched when we are made aware that many different levels exist, with direct and indirect bearing on our self-interest and well-being. This workshop subject educates us in positive ways:

This workshop also demonstrated that growth and political development is a basic need in communities and that collective leadership can orient itself to this need. Historically, the strong leader has failed in this task.

1. It taught us to measure our own personal growth.
2. It taught us to evaluate our level of growth
3. It taught us the distinction and value of group self-interest, based on our level of growth.
4. It prepared us to deal with the other subjects in the Leadership Development package to come to our community.

This workshop dealt with levels of awareness and understanding among staff, and between staffers and community people.

ANALYSIS

This workshop was designed to meet the need for interpreting relationship, action, ideology, program, etc., based on their political aspects. ('Political' is used in the context of group self interest.) There is a serious need for this skill among community leaders and supporters, and the community in general. It is impossible to give accurate and meaningful evaluation without the skill of political analysis. Success or failure cannot be correctly reasoned without analysis. Shallow thinking and faulty conclusion are certain to be the results.

How many times have we heard individuals say, 'What have we got to show for our efforts?' or, 'We haven't made any progress.' Ignorance, pessimism and frustration are born out of the inability to analyze. It interferes with growth and progress. This problem clings to our grass roots communities like bark to a tree.

The workshop started with 25 people registered and of the 25 registered, 19 of them went to the conclusion of the workshop. This afforded us the great opportunity to not only work with a small group, but also have a very personal relationship. We think this workshop was a success and on going activities will take place in the immediate future.

We give sincere thanks and praise to Ms. Marion Henley, Deputy Director; Rosie Simpson, Director, Community Services and Mr. Edward Henderson, Program Director of the Illinois Commission on Human Relations on performing such an excellent and objective job; and for coming into town and sliding right into the grooves.

The next community meeting will take place June 6, 1977 at 7:00 p.m. at the Westside Library, 'D' and Jackson Streets. For more information, please contact Ms. Katherine Joseph, Community Liaison at 642-1671.