



Ramona Dallum – Comments

Community Foundation of Louisville Press Conference – June 15, 2022

Thank you Ron. I agree with you that this is a historic day for Smoketown current and historic residents. I'm so happy to see so many Smoketown Old Timers in the audience. You have witnessed this neighborhood change in so many ways and I'm honored to be in your presence when this property finally comes under the stewardship of those who truly care about the future of Smoketown. This is a step in Smoketown residents becoming the architects of part of the neighborhood's future.

In 2017, I began working with the Community Foundation of Louisville, carrying on the work of Ebony O'Rea who came before me. Ebony and I both did our best to listen to Smoketown to transform this property into a community asset. We, along with members of the Foundation team, hosted meetings, served ice cream and attended Smoketown Get Downs. We heard from you. In our attempts to respond to your voices we made some mistakes and learned from them. Ultimately we learned three important things from you:

1. Smoketown current and historic residents have to be decision makers in the future of this neighborhood.
2. Share wealth and power with those who have been denied it by racist systems.
3. Provide the things that everyone wants to see in their neighborhoods – healthy food, affordable shelter, good paying jobs & safe spaces.

We attempted to turn this space into a community center and a green space, but when those efforts failed we came back to you with new ideas. You challenged those ideas and we began to think even more intentionally about decision making, power, and your needs. We asked how can we use this land as the launching pad to realize more of your dreams. We understand it is nice to have beautiful parks and community centers in a neighborhood, but a community's daily survival is dependent on access to healthy food and affordable housing. When food and shelter are missing it's hard to think about relaxing in the park.

When we learned of LACE's need for land to develop the Louisville Community Grocery and REBOUND's efforts to facilitate a Community Land Trust, we realized we had an opportunity to help repair some of our city's broken systems. We could use the land to support initiatives that leaders in and around Smoketown had been working on for years to become a reality. Even more, our decision to give the land to LACE and REBOUND



for their respective initiatives, might inspire other's to show their support by giving their money, time, talent, energy, and even more land.

Some people may not agree with this decision because neither LACE or REBOUND have experience building a grocery store or starting a Community Land Trust. For me that is the greatest advantage of this decision, we are allowing space for these two organizations to prove what is possible when community leaders are fully resourced to imagine, collaborate, and try. Some people didn't support the ideas of LACE/LCG because they had no land for a site. Some people didn't support the Community Land Trust for the same reason. That obstacle is now eliminated. The only thing needed now is the full support of our entire city to do something bold to promote new ways of being healthy, whole, and complete humans.

I now want to invite LACE and REBOUND to share more about their initiatives, starting with LACE. I introduce to you Tiffany Michelle Brown and Joseph O. A. Bowens, Co-Executive Directors of LACE. They will be followed by Kevin Dunlap, Executive Director of REBOUND.

HEAR FROM LACE AND REBOUND LEADERS

Tiffany, Joseph and Kevin thank you for allowing us to be your partner in realizing your visions. Tiffany and Joseph I know you intend to break ground for the grocery store by the end of 2023 and Kevin, you are currently working with community partners to establish a resident-led Board of Directors for the Community Land Trust. Land is just one piece of the puzzle to bring your visions to reality. The Community Foundation is committed to continue our support through additional cash grants that will be renewable for the next five years. LACE has received in addition to their land an additional cash grant to help them obtain member/owners living in 40203, 40210, 40211 and 40212 neighborhoods. The Community Land Trust, once established, will receive a cash grant to support its operations.

The other missing puzzle piece is people. It will take dedicated and committed people who care deeply about the future of Smoketown to transform these dreams into reality. Mrs. Ruby Hyde is one example of that type person and there are many others in this neighborhood. As a longtime advocate for Smoketown and a Smoketown Old Timer, I'd like to invite Mrs. Ruby to come and share her thoughts about today's announcement.

HEAR FROM MRS. RUBY HYDE.



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CLOSE WITH QUESTIONS & ANSWERS.