The meeting started with everyone introducing themselves and reviewing the minutes of the last meeting. No changes are additions were suggested.

Agency Presentations

Vision 2015 – The top three issues for Kenton Co are 1) Quality workforce – to have a dynamic economy the area has to have a well-qualified workforce. 2) Poverty – a recent study with Agenda 360 found 25% of area was under an income level of 200 times the poverty rate. People in poverty usually do not have the skills needed to fulfill the needs of local businesses; vision 2015 emphasis education, especially early childhood education, and urban revitalization to combat this issue. 3) Fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in order to build local industries and businesses (Notes from Vision 2015 are attached.)

TANK – Local operating revenue stream is fixed and need to be raised or have the ability to be raised. The state has capped the current rates so they cannot increase, however costs of operation continue to increase. Rising fuel costs increase ridership but also increases TANK’s operating cost thus causing a rise in fares. Increasing fares does not cover the rising costs. Suburban to Suburban service is very difficult to provide given the dispersed nature of the built environment. The TANK Network study calls for a hub and spoke system with four hubs. One has been built and one is in the works. This system will provide better service through connectivity between hubs that are not located in the urban core.

Kenton Conservancy – Its mission is to preserve lands that are in some way significant to Kenton County and the area. The Conservancy finds it easier to protect land before it is threatened. The cost of repairing degraded natural areas is very high. Education on the importance of preserving natural areas is critical in fulfilling the mission of the Conservancy.
The natural environment will help attract and retain young people. People love to live near natural areas. (Notes from Kenton Conservancy are attached.)

Housing Authority of Covington – Transportation is a key element in the lives of people living in public housing. The expense of owning a car is high and public transportation is inadequate. Child care is another key element, finding good child care and paying for it is a constant issue with residents. Currently the Housing Authority is running a program called GLASS, Get Learning And Start Succeeding, to help residents get their GED and get a job.

The task force discussed in more detail the following issues mentioned at last month’s meeting:

Plan for all modes of transportation – The cost of owning and operating an automobile is getting more expensive and will probably continue to increase in the future. From a health perspective it provides better access to food, schools, daycare, etc. It also provides people with the opportunity to incorporate exercise into their daily life. Congestion on the road system can be reduced. Providing too much parking encourages driving, thus increasing congestion, and forces businesses to be farther away from each other further increasing the need to drive. Sidewalks and bike lanes need to be planned strategically because of the cost, terrain, and the need for destinations so people will use them. Louisville has a plan for a big city wide multiuse pathway called the Louisville Loop. The city plans to improve and build new communities along this pathway. This regional approach (multi-county) should be considered.

Keeping development close to population centers – The closer things are to where people live the more cost effective it is to provide goods and services. It is better to build commercial close to where people already live. Urban markets have a catch-22 situation; people want to live close to commercial development but commercial uses need people close-by in order to be built. Bellevue is a good example of a successful redeveloped urban area. Redevelopment standards are the same as new development standards. A new development has to provide stormwater management on site. This can mean a new development in an urban area may have to use a significant portion of the site for a stormwater retention pond.

Need for mixed use development – Movement back into urban core shows the desire for mixed use developments. Zoning can make it very difficult to build mix use development. Different areas call for different types of mixed use. In an urban area walkable means safety; in suburbia it means amenities such as sidewalks.
Vision 2015 Handout

NKAPC

Direction 2030 Technical Taskforce
March 14, 2012

Vision 2015 Top Three Areas of Focus
Vision 2015 is currently working on more than 25 initiatives in the six strategic focus areas of the 10-year plan: Education, Livable Communities, Effective Governance, Regional Stewardship, Urban Renaissance and Economic Competitiveness. Each of these six directions of the plan are interconnected and dependent on one another to make our region a strong, vibrant place that is able to retain and attract jobs, talent and prosperity. However, since we were asked to identify three primary areas of concern, Vision 2015 has identified qualified workforce, poverty (specifically with early childhood education and urban revitalization being critical components) and fostering our culture of innovation and entrepreneurship as three vital areas of concern.

Qualified Workforce
Having a trained workforce is essential to business retention, business attraction and starting new businesses throughout our region, all of which contribute to a healthy and vibrant economy. There is work ongoing through the Partners for a Competitive Workforce, the Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati USA Chambers, NKU, Gateway, the Vision 2015 Economic Competitiveness Working Group and others. We need to make sure that both current residents receive the training and educational attainment that is needed. We also must be attractive to talent from elsewhere; meaning that we need aspects of quality of life that can attract knowledge and creative workers to our communities.

Poverty
Once again, in order to retain, attract and grow the business base of our region, we must respond to the quarter of our population in the Greater Cincinnati region living below 200% of poverty means that these individuals do not have spending power to support the local economy, are at risk for lower educational outcomes, and often do not have the skills identified above under qualified workforce that support the needs of local businesses. This is inherently something we need to address for the needs of these individuals and families, but also something that impacts the health of our communities and our economy. Two specific areas of concern are:

1.) Education and specifically early childhood education essential to getting started right in school, higher educational outcomes relate directly to better economic outcomes and financial security for individuals and families, while also growing a talented workforce for our community.

2.) Urban revitalization is critical to making the core of the region strong – in terms of economic development for local governments, providing economic opportunity for local residents and attracting a demographic that enjoys the amenities found in a vibrant, urban area.

Innovation and Entrepreneurship
Our culture of innovation is critical; again, to ensuring we have an economically competitive region. Fostering an entrepreneurial spirit will positively impact existing companies as well as spurring start-ups – creating a more dynamic pool of talent. In order to create that culture of innovation, we must connect in with our education system, and also attract entrepreneurs from outside the region. That attraction piece is most tied to the comprehensive plan and land use, because it again circles back to the needs of our community to be attractive to top tier talent – through greenspace, efficient transportation networks, compelling amenities and urban core.
Kenton Conservancy Handout

The Kenton Conservancy
Gary R. Wolnitzek – Board Member

Mission Statement;
“Is committed to preserve lands of natural, cultural, recreational, and historical significance for the people of Kenton County”.

The Conservancy is an independent non-profit entity that can hold title to conservation lands.

It is often easier to protect or set aside sensitive lands before they are threatened or degraded or in conjunction with other efforts such as development or other projects.

We would advocate the ability to add/ enhance stream management and storm water management. Our streams are a fabulous assets that we as a community may not fully realize both in what is still in a natural state and high quality and what has been highly degraded by the development of our communities. Our community may not fully understand the costs associated with repairing or restoring degraded streams or land. It is much less expensive in the long run to properly accommodate our natural features than to manipulate, degrade and pass the costs down.

People love to live near natural areas and streams, this natural structure of our communities is its back bone and is the structure that the Conservancy is interested in.

Education is another area where we can support, in how people view and appreciate natural areas, having them understand their importance to our communities, and how they are impacted by what we do.

Attracting and retaining our young people. We have great beauty here, we need to learn to respect the land and water. How to change that mindset is important.

We would also like emphasize the partnership opportunities with park land, green infrastructure and other environmental efforts to work together for common goals. Our goals of preserving sensitive lands can also benefit clean water efforts of SD1 for example.