

Have You Seen Mt. Airy Commons?



When speaking to someone from outside our neighborhood with a familiarity of Mt. Airy, it's usually due to them driving through on Colerain Ave. or North Bend Rd. on their way to some other destination. If asked about our business district, the typical response is something like "That's the neighborhood at the top of the hill with the big castle" followed by adjectives such as "drab", "dilapidated" or "uninteresting". If asked if they have seen the mural and gardens at Mt. Airy Commons, very few say they even notice it as they drive by. For anyone who has seen it, the negative perceptions of our community are eased and you may hear words such as "gorgeous", "vibrant" or even "wow!". We at Mt. Airy Cure are seeking to build upon this positive progress in many ways including improving both the visibility and functionality of the Commons. (Read More)

Mt. Airy Commons lies in the heart of the business district at 5536 Colerain Ave between Little Brother Friends of the Elderly and Authentic Cutz. In addition to the area that is a public parking lot with an adjacent garden and a mural on the Little Brothers building, there is also a large undeveloped

area directly behind it that is ripe for expansion. The garden has a meandering gravel path leading to this area. The Commons started in 2015 when the City of Cincinnati approved redevelopment of the property following the demolition of the old Klosterman Dry Cleaners building. A 23 space parking lot and lighting were added using funds obtained through community fundraising and governmental grants. Big steps were taken thereafter when LaSalle High School Art teacher Michael Knueven and some of his students generously took the lead in creating a fabulous mural that depicts Mt. Airy as a lovely, tree-filled community. Eagle Scout Ethan Miller made it his service project to plant trees, shrubs and flowers alongside the mural to further advance the beautification of the area. Expansion of the garden has taken place since and continued maintenance has occurred led by a dedicated group of Ohio Master Gardeners and the Mt. Airy CURE beautification committee.

While these tremendous efforts by so many have been successful in creating a wonderful space that can serve as an inspiration for positive community development, the fulfillment of making this a true commons has not yet been achieved. A commons is considered to be "a piece of land that belongs to everyone in a community that serves as a place for public gatherings." Nearby spaces such as Patrick's Park in College Hill and the Westwood Town Hall area include such features as lawns, picnic tables, attractive fencing, playgrounds and bandstands that we could seek to include in future plans. They frequently hold events such as concerts, food fairs and art shows.

Mt. Airy Cure would love to hear ideas from residents about possible improvements to Mt. Airy Commons. We will continue to seek grants to enhance this property and would love for members of the community to pitch in either financially or through volunteer efforts. Look for email updates and future newsletter articles inviting you to participate.