

# Cynthia A Barnes\_Iron Sharpens Iron\_ Season 2\_ Episode 1

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

community, cynthia, people, tioga, playground, meeting, residents, neighborhood, agreement, community benefits agreement, community organizers, north, projects, iron sharpens, long, call, area, organization, building, street

## SPEAKERS

De'Wayne Drummond, Leon Robinson, Cynthia Barnes



Leon Robinson 00:10

Hi, my name is Leon Robinson.



De'Wayne Drummond 00:11

And this is De'Wayne Drummond. Thanks for tuning into the second season of Iron Sharpens Iron.



Leon Robinson 00:19

We'll be talking to Philadelphia community organizers about what's happening in their communities, what they are doing to make a difference, and what they learned in the process.



De'Wayne Drummond 00:29

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Leon Robinson 00:42

And leave us a review to let us know what topics we should cover and introduce us to community organizers from your neighborhood who you think we should have on our podcast.



De'Wayne Drummond 00:52

Today we are talking to Cynthia Barnes of Nicetown-Tioga about community engagement, community benefits agreements, and what she's learned over her 30 years as a community leader.



Leon Robinson 01:08

As Chair of the Nicetown-Tioga Improvement Team (NTIT), Cynthia has ensured that development projects are responsive to community needs. She also convenes monthly meetings essential to neighborhood planning and building social capital among residents, businesses, and community organizations. Among other achievements, Cynthia helped transform a vacant half-block property into the 11th street playground and spearheaded partnerships to create vibrant green spaces in Nicetown-Tioga. And last but not least, Cynthia works for the Mayor's Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Service and received PACDC's 2021 Community Leader Award.



De'Wayne Drummond 01:57

Welcome to Iron Sharpens Iron.



Cynthia Barnes 02:00

Thank you for having me.



De'Wayne Drummond 02:01

How did you get involved in the community?



Cynthia Barnes 02:04

Okay, um, I've been living actually I used to live on 15th and Erie grew up in a neighborhood. So we lived around here since 1969. And as an adult, I moved back into the neighborhood. Um, we moved that when I was 17 to Mount Airy and as an adult, I met my

husband, who was from what we say this side of Broad Street. We say the east side of Broad Street. I met my husband, and we have five children. And we, um, they they all were in headstart, and headstart required the parents to volunteer 20 hours a week. And I'm trying to like, I think it was a mandate. To me, it was a mandate that you put in 20 hours a week. And because I was at that time, what they will call a housewife, really didn't have anything else to do besides clean the house. And then I will go down to the school, which was like a block away. And I really did my husband used to crack up because I would clean the house and then run down to the school and find out what the kids are doing. See what I can do to help. Um, I had one child who was having difficulties in preschool, and we actually wound up having to hold him back because he wasn't ready. He wasn't very, like social. So um, that was the beginning of me being more involved in it, and through my final son in preschool, um, Deon. New Beginnings actually went to 18th and Tioga, which is now, I think it's called Holy Souls and they got some kind of city rec center there. And it was 19th and Tioga if I'm not mistaken. So I started volunteering there, and then I got introduced to Policy Council. And we met monthly at various at all head starts throughout the city and got to learn a lot of things and started getting involved in how the budget was actually made up and started learning things that the parents actually had funding in the budget where a lot of it wasn't known that they had like a. I have to tell this part of that story because it is like really much the reason why, you know, got to be where I am. They said they had a \$50,000 parent budget that could be used for parent training. So, one of the girl's name was Pat Anderson, and she found that Tom Joyner was having a parent conference in Disney World. So the first year, they paid for us to go. Then the second year come around, they said we had to match the funds. So we started selling candy. We sold so much candy, that we were able to send 13 families to Disney World... lie to you not, 13 families. So I had a family of four. My oldest son he was too old to really be involved. But so four children, we all stayed in one room, we got to go to three parks. They gave us a food allowance. So it was a really, really expensive trip. And but the thing is, the parents took ownership of going because they actually sold enough candy to go, and it had enough volunteer hours. So you sell the candy, and you had to have volunteer hours. So it was a good incentive to volunteer. And then the government took over the headstart program, and they went to the city, I think, I think that's how it went. And so the program dissolved. Um, and so I basically was just sitting home and someone, I went to a community meeting in place of one of the teachers. And the lady asked me did I want a job. And I was like, I got a job. You know, I'm, I'm working at home, I'm volunteering and I, I, I said I'll find you somebody. And then she come back to me maybe a week later. And then she said, No, this is a job we want you to do. And I was like, I'm wondering why. And she told me what it was. I went to a meeting. And it was all agencies, city agencies, the school, all service providers, not one resident. And I said that. I said, I'm the only resident in sitting in this meeting. How will you know what we need if you don't have a resident in your group? So the doctor, her name is Dr. Foster Drain. She's from to our chosen future.

Well, she knew the mayor's wife, which was Naomi Post, and told me that they had a community organizing job. I was like, okay, whatever. So at that time, my daughter was going to Mastermann and I went to the home and school meetings. And I didn't know I had seen her there. But I didn't know what her name was. I know her name was Naomi post. I didn't know her last name was Street. Anyway, we, we come in there. I do an interview. She sees me and says, I know you. You on the home and school? And I was like, yeah. So she basically, I think I got the job right there. So it was organizing and for the Nicetown area. And that was in 1999. I'm still with the city now. I'm working with the city organizing, and I kind of became like, full circle. Because I did other things. I was doing special projects. That's why I know the pre K. We kind of like formed that program with the city like, um, you know, as the city agency, we did the programming for pre K. So then now I'm doing um, is, oh, I'm God, I just got this title. And I can't think of the name. Oh, Community Education Coordinator. And it's still but it's I have two jobs. Like I'm on vacation right now from my paying job. And my community job. I'm still working. So that's why I say I'll probably be working. Leon, you are not retired, so you can forget that.



Leon Robinson 08:57

You know it Cynthia.



Cynthia Barnes 08:59

You can get pulled back into it. So I know that was a long answer. But that's my story.



Leon Robinson 09:04

Cynthia. Alright, great. So you're in the Nicetown-Tioga area. What's should people know about Nicetown that area? And what are the boundaries for that area? In terms of the city? What are the boundaries?



Cynthia Barnes 09:17

Okay, so the boundaries for and, it's honestly, we took on the name Nicetown because of the library. But actually, it's Tioga. You know, the, the library says Nicetown, so some of our members thought this where we lived at, and it actually is not so, and we never changed the name. But the boundaries are from Hunting Park, to Allegheny actually Clearfield if you going from north to south, from Seventh Street, east to west from Seventh Street to 16th Street, okay.

**L** Leon Robinson 09:56  
Hey, I'm in that area.

**C** Cynthia Barnes 09:58  
So what happens is we wind up, like making it a little, it used to be the 22nd. But because Tioga United was actually in that area, we didn't feel the need to, like duplicate the same thing. But we all share. So it's a RCO issue. And it's at 17th Street, and some of our members, like, you know, our, like residents of that RCO issue, we will then take on that meeting along with Tioga United, whatever RCO is listed on that ZBA.

**D** De'Wayne Drummond 10:34  
Ms. Cynthia, I just want to follow up cuz you threw out two acronyms out there. You said ZBA. And then you also said RCO? What does that mean?

**C** Cynthia Barnes 10:46  
RCO. It came about about six years ago, either five or six years ago, and it's the registered community organization. And what it actually does is it gives the community the power to say, a little bit of power, let me just say that. You know, you might think you got power, and you really don't, um, it actually gives to the community input in development in the neighborhood. But like when it goes to the zoning board, I forgot what the A stands for, when it goes to the zoning board

**D** De'Wayne Drummond 11:24  
Zoning Board of Adjustment.

**C** Cynthia Barnes 11:26  
There you go! Thank you, Zoning Board of Adjustment. They will, if the community doesn't want something, they will weigh heavily on the community side. But I've had incidents where we didn't want something, and it still was approved. So I don't know. Should I be saying that?

**D** De'Wayne Drummond 11:46  
No, no, that's that's fine. Ms. Cynthia, among the many hats, you have been the chair of

Nicetown Tioga Improvement Team for over 20 years. How did COVID-19 affect your community engagement? Has it been difficult getting community members who participate?

C

Cynthia Barnes 12:10

Actually COVID? Because if I don't know if, you know, um, well, you all do know because y'all are involved. The majority of the people that attend attend community meetings, usually run from the age of 40 and over. So it was good for them to not to have to come out and face that. And basically, we what we did was we kind of trained them on the spot on how to get on the computer. You know, we did like a in and you know, and we had like something like I remember this lady, and I'm just gonna call her Miss Mary. She was on her phone, but somebody was there to help her because she wanted to have her say, so she had somebody at the house to actually help her get on to the conversation. And she voted in everything. So we kind of like just rolled with the flow, you know, went on and we still help. We didn't miss a beat. Really?

L

Leon Robinson 13:10

Oh, great. Great. Hey, Cynthia, when it comes to community organizing, there's some my experience, there's been some sort of disconnect between renters, homeowners and property owners who do not live in the area. What has been your experience? And how have you How have you gone about that? Great, great. What are some of the tools that you use to get residents involved in what you're doing?

C

Cynthia Barnes 15:11

Well, most of the times you can get them involved because it's something that directly affects them. You know, um, so just just keeping them informed on what's going on. For instance, when there is a store that's open, and this whole block came in to the meeting, and because they are illegally open and illegally selling drugs, you know, so we got good participation, but it's kind of hard to shut a store down. Like L&I has to find cause and actually have to catch them doing it, you know, and, and it's a whole process. But the owner also came to the meeting, and was oblivious to what was going on. But the community, we actually voted against it. And we haven't heard anything yet from the Zoning Board of adjustment. So well, that case, the community actually won that one, I'm sorry. They actually won, they're going to shut it down.

L

Leon Robinson 16:22

In 2003, you helped organize and transform a half block a property into a playground at North 11th Street and West Vengango Street. Tell us about that process.

C

Cynthia Barnes 16:33

Okay, um, I didn't tell you about the organization that I'm in. It's the Nicetown Tioga Improvement Team, which has been together for 22 years. And we started organizing the old fashioned way, block by block and house by house. And there was a lot of people at that time that was interested, and some of them are still around in improving it. And what happened is I went to council at that time, he was Councilman Darrell Clarke, and told him that we want to playground here. And he told me to go get petition, go get a petition, and get the people to sign it. I had a stack of petitions, I think I still have it. And I remember it was raining, and I was out there getting these things signed and I gave them to him all like in a pile like this. And after that, he introduced me to recreation. Vic Richards was the commissioner and Carlton Williams who is now the Streets Commissioner. They drew up a plan and said, you know, said do you like it. And a couple years later, you know, the playground was, you know, put on here, but it wasn't like it is now where it was just a swing, a sliding board and some tables. But it was better than what it was. Because literally, it was a black like if you put tear a building down, and then you black tar it. That's all it was. So, it was a lot of glass and it was people driving across. And the kids were playing out there. I think the bottom line and the last straw for us was somebody left a boat on the playground. A fishing boat with a motor. That was it. And then you know just imagine, you know, kids get into refrigerators and stuff like that. Suppose one of them would've ran into it and hit their head or something like that? I mean, it just could have been disastrous. So um, the councilman said that he was going to get it refurbished, but they had to get the title from the school district. And that took quite a while. It took a while it was depressing how long it took. But you know what, when you waiting, it seems forever, and then when it happens, it's just quickly, you know, so.

L

Leon Robinson 18:56

So when it happened, just tell us about the joy when it happened.

C

Cynthia Barnes 19:00

I watched out my window as they started putting it up. But then, it took longer than it was supposed to. So I started getting frustrated with you know, what do you call it? My my employer. So um, because, you know, sometimes you just can't make people move as fast as you want to. And the kids were ready to play, but it was joyous. And the fact that we were able to name it after the family, unfortunately that were killed. I think it was seven

years ago on Germantown and Allegheny. ,



Leon Robinson 19:43

Yeah, yeah. They ran into that. They were selling them vegetables.



Cynthia Barnes 19:47

They were selling the vegetables to get a playground. Yeah, it wasn't this one. It was they wanted, you know, a playground in their area. And this was the closest one to it. And so the lawyer came around and asked, you know, what could they do to get their names memorialized? And we all agreed to. Let's name it after them. And it's the Williams Moore Reed Memorial Park.



De'Wayne Drummond 20:13

Yeah. Also Ms. Cynthia. We also wanted to talk to you today because you're one of the few community organizers who has successfully negotiated a community benefit agreement. Before we begin, what is a community benefit agreement, aka, a CBA. For some of our listeners who might not be familiar with this term. Ooo, y'all third one? Okay. God bless y'all. God bless y'all. You tell us the story. You can tell about the one from the past



Cynthia Barnes 20:42

We're on our third one. No! They all just started like, um, our first one, that was actually it's all signed, and everything was with the Lenfest, the North 10. They they're building, I think it's a 41 room apartment, low-income apartments on the hotel, the hooker hotel, I don't know what you want me to call it. I mean, I don't know what you want to call it. The dirty hotel, it was been an eyesore for 40 years. So that was the first one. That one was pretty easy. But we had two lawyers who helped us to formalize the whole agreement. So it was a little like, it was hard at first, because to know exactly what to ask for, and what to negotiate, and what to give up. You know what I'm saying in any negotiation, sometimes you have to give up the main thing. But with North 10th, to be all in all honesty, it wasn't that bad. We wanted to make sure that their general contractors hired from the community and not just cleaning up. We wanted them to have, so what we did was we formed workforce development. And we, we are training people on union jobs. And we ask the general contractor to help the folk that we train get into the union. So it's a percentage of that, a percentage of residents to work on the job, and then permanent jobs inside. So that was the first one. That was North 10. And our second one is with Shift Capital, and it's with the



Brewery Residences, and that's at Broad and Butler. And that's where the old checkers was it. Now that one took, because of the COVID, now, we can blame this on COVID. On March 16, the city was shut down. That's the day we were supposed to meet about the CBA. So that one was on hold for like a year. So we finalized that CBA, um, maybe a month ago. So they have agreed to a workforce development. And this one is slightly different. Because we're asking them for incentives for people that work to like, make sure that we have a budget to get them transpasses, and things like that. And to help home owners remain in they home. When you think it's going to be gentrified, we will make sure that we'll get them resources, like say somebody's 65, a lot of people don't know that you can get your, um, your revenue, your taxes frozen, at whatever they are at 65 years old, as long as you in that, you know, income bracket, just providing things that for them like maybe the to fix the facade on the outside, so they can just keep up with the rest of how everything is looking. And we're like in phases of how to spend the money, the oversight of it, and the cleanliness of the neighborhood. So that that had a lot to do with that one. And the third one is going to be with the hotel. So we're just starting out.

D

De'Wayne Drummond 24:25

So So Ms. Cynthia, right. If you can define, what is a community benefit agreement, and like one or two sentences, how would you define it?

C

Cynthia Barnes 24:39

I want to say and like, what they say? You will always go by what come up first. It's a way that a community can get something out of a development that they wouldn't have no other way. Like all these buildings are going up in certain neighborhoods. Without a community benefits agreement, it means people aren't getting anything. You know, they're not getting trained or nothing, they not worrying about the way the sidewalks looked as long as their areas [is okay]. So, it is a legal document to ensure that the developers own up to being a part of the community.

D

De'Wayne Drummond 25:20


Cool, cool.


L


Leon Robinson 25:21


Yeah, the only thing they getting is displaced. That's the benefit. That, you know, when you don't have a community agreement, you know, these developers come in, and it's moving out somebody out of the neighborhood. You know, matter of a fact at Broad and


Clearfield, I don't know. I'm going, I don't know for sure. But they did, um, two buildings that I've seen.


 Cynthia Barnes 25:45  
I've seen it, I've seen it.











 Leon Robinson 25:46  
Okay. I don't know, no organization, no developers that came to the community and asked about that, too, you know, any RCOs or whatever.

 Cynthia Barnes 25:56  
Um, that one is, it should have been Sheila Howard's group. Oh, they got a long name. I can't even think of the name of it. It's her and her daughter, um, they should have been involved in it, but I think it was too late. Like it was put through ZBA because it was already an apartment, I'm sorry, Zoning Board of Adjustments. If there's no zoning variance, a lot of times, it'll go past the community groups because you don't have to go to the zoning board. So if it's by right, so if it was an apartment, a three story apartment, and they putting a three story apartment back in it, there's little or nothing that a community can do. And that's, you know, so

 De'Wayne Drummond 26:47  
So, so Ms.Cynthia, like you, you You said you said something that was very, very familiar to me, you said a term "by right" and you just defined it. With a Broad and Germantown Erie collaborative. Um, in that agreement, was it any like rezoning or overlays that took place in an agreement?

 Cynthia Barnes 27:15  
In what?

 De'Wayne Drummond 27:16  
In the Broad-Germantown-Erie Collaborative?

-  Cynthia Barnes 27:21  
That's an organization.
-  De'Wayne Drummond 27:23  
Okay.
-  Cynthia Barnes 27:24  
That's the six groups that
-  De'Wayne Drummond 27:25  
Oh, that's one of them?
-  Cynthia Barnes 27:27  
No, it's called Broad-Germantown-Erie Collaborative, and I'm a member of that group.  
We're the ones who signed the CB community benefits agreement.
-  De'Wayne Drummond 27:37  
Okay. So in a agreement, was there any like, right, zoning changes, or anything of that nature? Because I know that that building looked like it was a industrial building.
-  Leon Robinson 27:49  
The Beury Building? Do you mean the Beury Building?
-  Cynthia Barnes 27:50  
Which one?
-  De'Wayne Drummond 27:53  
Yeah, I believe so.
-  Cynthia Barnes 27:56

We haven't gotten to whether there's a variance on that one yet.

**D** De'Wayne Drummond 27:59  
Okay.

**C** Cynthia Barnes 28:00  
Okay. Okay. That that's the only one. The other one was a Checkers. So it was already, like zoned for, I think the only thing they needed was community support. Okay. Okay. Oh, okay. And also, it's an historical building. So it's certain things they can't change.

**D** De'Wayne Drummond 28:21  
Yeah, right. True. True. True. How did the coalition decide where you were willing to make compromise throughout all of these negotiations? Tell us about some ups and downs

**C** Cynthia Barnes 28:35  
With North 10th, it was the like percentage of people that I mean, there's was really, really simple and easy. We didn't have up and down with that. With shift, we just had to kind of like coax them into agreeing with the way we did the North 10th. It's almost like a template. We created a template for community benefits agreement, and we wanted them to do the same as the first one. So it was just coaxing them into this will be beneficial to you, and it will be beneficial for us.

**D** De'Wayne Drummond 29:08  
Cool, cool. So also, I know with a community benefit agreement, usually you have to it's about collaboration. Yes. It's about community organization. Yes, it's about residents, but it's also about the private sector, whoever the developer is, what type of input did you get from your councilmatic person or your, your, your state rep or your senator? What type of like input and feedback or support did you get for any of these individuals?

**C** Cynthia Barnes 29:43  
They supported all projects. And again, with the North 10 project, everybody was involved in that. From the councilman to the state rep. At that time, it was um, might have been Curtis Thomas. I think now is um, Danilo Burgos, I think it is. And um, I want to say that Senator Street, we met with Street several times, and definitely, he backed us if we weren't

in agreement and supported us with anything that was under his realm. So we got support from all politicians.

L

Leon Robinson 30:23

Great. Cynthia, the BGEC is a collaborative of six community organizations, what has it been like to work in a collaboration and partnership with these groups? Go ahead.

C

Cynthia Barnes 30:43

It will test your patience. Because if you think about it, you're dealing with six egos who run their own organizations. So you got to get all six of these people to agree. And get them to meet more than an hour, because you just can't finish everything in an hour. So finally, we have come to change the time of the meeting. And it's a negotiation though it is, we were meeting from five to six, and it was like always a rush. And virtual, I'm going to, I don't know what when they hear this, they probably laugh. But what, when you're a virtual call, you can quickly say I gotta get to another call and leave. But when you in person, it's easy to hold people's attention. So now that we are in person, I definitely go in person because if we're there in person, and people are virtual, rarely do they hang up. Rarely do we hear that there's another meeting that they got to go to. We just, um, get people to focus on this one thing, and then if we finish it, we don't have to worry about this, no more, we can just move on. Because we all are in, in every aspect wanting the best for this community. And to make sure that the community get the resources that they deserve, and not be overlooked. And just like in the background, like we have seen in some neighborhoods. So it's been trying, um, cuz we all don't agree. Or you can get some people don't just sit there and just go with the group, instead of, I would rather use argue your point, then just say, Alright, whatever everybody else say, you know, because we're not going to go anywhere. And one thing about a collaborative, we all have to agree. So you need to convince people to, you know, to change their mind, or then you need to bend into the way they would the way they are, you know, but I'm learning but and I did want to say that being involved in politics, and in organizing and advocacy, you learn that you will meet these people again. You will see them again. So you I mean, it's best to be cordial. And try try to get along.

D

De'Wayne Drummond 33:14

So Ms. Cynthia, just a follow up with this community benefit agreements. I see you got three on the table, how long would they last? What's the years on it?

C

Cynthia Barnes 33:28

10. One is, one is 30. Lenfest is 30. I think it's 10 for the Beury residents. And the hotel is going to be longer because it's two phases to it. It's like you know, you invest in property develop it, then it'll probably be sold. So we're trying to get that CBA to last as long as the hotel last for the next group of advocates, you know.

D

De'Wayne Drummond 34:00

All right. What are some of the upcoming projects? I know you talked about a few. It seemed like you got a lot on the table, but it looks like you go some more. It look like you ain't done yet. So what are some of the upcoming projects that you are looking forward to?

C

Cynthia Barnes 34:20

To finishing out the Williams Moore Reed Memorial Playground because the basketball courts were aren't finished. It's going to be partially funded by Philadelphia Water Department with water runoff, so they want the ground to be porous so that it would help stop the flooding. So they're going to put new gates up, um, trees and grass and they're going to put brand new courts up and bleachers. So that's one project and um we are having Oktoberfest Thursday, October, we started Oktoberfest. I don't know how many, it's actually on our website, we started years ago because a lot of kids, we didn't want them out in the street trick or treating. And a lot of kids are different religions and didn't believe in, you know, Halloween. So we started getting the residents to donate candy or art supplies, so that we could hand out to the kids. So it would be whenever Halloween was. If it fell on a Saturday, we would do it that Friday, but it was around Bethune Elementary. So we had the fire department come out, they were able to get on the firetruck had all kinds of face painting. My husband barbecued hotdogs, and we gave away food and things like that, and coloring books, and we just make a big day out of it instead of concentrating on something scary and, you know, evil or whatever. So the harvest fest, we're look for donations, and things like that, for that. And, um, this Thursday is Movie Night. Which I think we got some donations for like book bags, we're giving away book bags and things like that. But we're constantly doing things. And we're looking forward to going back to our meetings, and we start our meetings back again in September. Virtually because I think Zion has closed again, that's where we have our meetings at Zion Baptist Church. So we are going to do it virtually, we usually get about 20 people. Um, and we just want to make sure that people, our goal is to try to get people vaccinated. That's, that's weighing heavy on us, you know, especially in our community trying, I'm not pushing anybody, but encouraging them, um, talk about their rights as home owners, the things that's available to them, and that they do have a right to say no

to some development, you know, because we know that this is not these three projects is not the last. So we just have to prepare ourselves for it.



Leon Robinson 37:09

Okay, Cynthia Proverbs 27 inspired Iron Sharpens Iron. And that says, "As one iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." Tell us who has sharpened you.



Cynthia Barnes 37:24

Wow, it's funny that, believe it or not, I think I started this whole thing watching my dad. He was a giver throughout the whole family, you know, every time somebody needed some money he would give it. And I think one of the things that I remember the most is my father picking up a lady off at the bus stop. It was really late at night, and I'm in the car with him. And he just gave her a ride. I'm like, What are you doing? You don't... you know what I mean? You don't know this lady, but that's how he was. So that is what motivated me to do good. And knowing that in my heart, that our whole purpose in life is to help people that can't help themselves and I'm serving my purpose. So that is and then another thing I think that it's like gradually you listen to things that happen to you in life like my son, he's 28 and he said I told him I was having a problem with a phone company and and this is funny and I wasn't getting anywhere and I told him that I you know I probably cursed on the phone and he said something to me so poignant that it just stays in my head. He said anger is not met with understanding. And I keep that in my mind. I cannot get angry. I mean I do get angry replay



Leon Robinson 38:48

Repeat that one more time. Somebody needs to hear that.



Cynthia Barnes 38:52

Anger is not met with understanding. Okay, so in order to do this organizing, we have to stay calm.



Leon Robinson 39:01

Yes, yes. Yes, we do. Okay, that way Miss

D

De'Wayne Drummond 39:05

Ms. Cynthia, I gotta piggyback one more time off of what Leon said, can you say that one more time because I think the listeners need to hear that because you over here really really, you know sharpening some irons, and sometimes you know iron gets dull, and we need each other to sharpen the iron.

C

Cynthia Barnes 39:25

And don't give up. Don't give up the fight. Don't give up the fight no matter what it is. Anger is not met with understanding. So we can be in these meetings and things aren't going our way. But if we stay calm, people will listen to you when you come. They don't listen to you when you yelling and screaming. You know? Like, for instance, we got a RCO, a registered community organization issue about parking on 10th and Luzerne. The guy is afraid to come to the meeting because he think that people are going to be mad at him. No, they just want to talk to you. And normally people that want something from you will not scream and holler at you. So we have to go in, if we're asking for something, treat people how we would want to be treated, we need something. We cannot go in there because things are not going our way and yelling and screaming because you're not gonna get nothing like that, because I will shut down if you start hollering at me, I'm not giving you nothing, you know, so just feel as though those developers are, you know, are human beings. And let's treat them like that, you know, and we need to help each other like, anytime you can do something for somebody else that they wouldn't have been able to do for they self.

D

De'Wayne Drummond 40:45

Yeah, that sounds like something my mentor, she told me. She's like De'Wayne, use tack and diplomacy. And she said you could get catch a fly with honey, honey and Vinegar Vinegar. So Ms. Cynthia, how can people find out more information about you and your work in Nicetown-Tioga.

C

Cynthia Barnes 41:13

[www.nicetowntioga.org](http://www.nicetowntioga.org). All one word, and it will tell you everything we did and what we're doing. It's a nice little web page. That was my, my partner's daughter, partner meaning my coworker, co-advocate who doesn't even live in this area have been working with us for 20 something years. Her daughter was two years old. Yes, it's actually two of them is Charmaine Sutsutler Milligan and Kim dmls. Kim is here. She has two um gardens that she got funding for. The healing garden, the Unity garden, you'll see them all on there. And we still keeping them up. That's another project. I'm sorry, I forgot to say. So we got like where



the playground is across the street from that is a garden where we have three of our members who have passed, we actually put some on memorial stone there for them, and then once we got bricks with all the community advocates names as you walk down, and it's a chair where you sit in and just be peaceful. And we have another one on Old York Road and Venango and that's Yeah, and that's being taken care of. You guys got to come by and see it. It has mosaic tiles on it. You know, the community put the tiles. I got one up there, you know, I'm not good at art. But anyway, I got one up there but we are like, making sure that anything that goes up in this neighborhood is actually done by the people that live here. You know, we want we want the people to contribute, you know how people will sit and they when they step in and watch you clean up the box. We were looking for folks who really care enough to get out there and do it too

D

De'Wayne Drummond 43:02

Yup yup. Partnership and collaboration and some muscle. Iron Sharpens Iron is produced by the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations with support from the Philadelphia Division of Housing and Community Development. But guest and host opinions are our own.