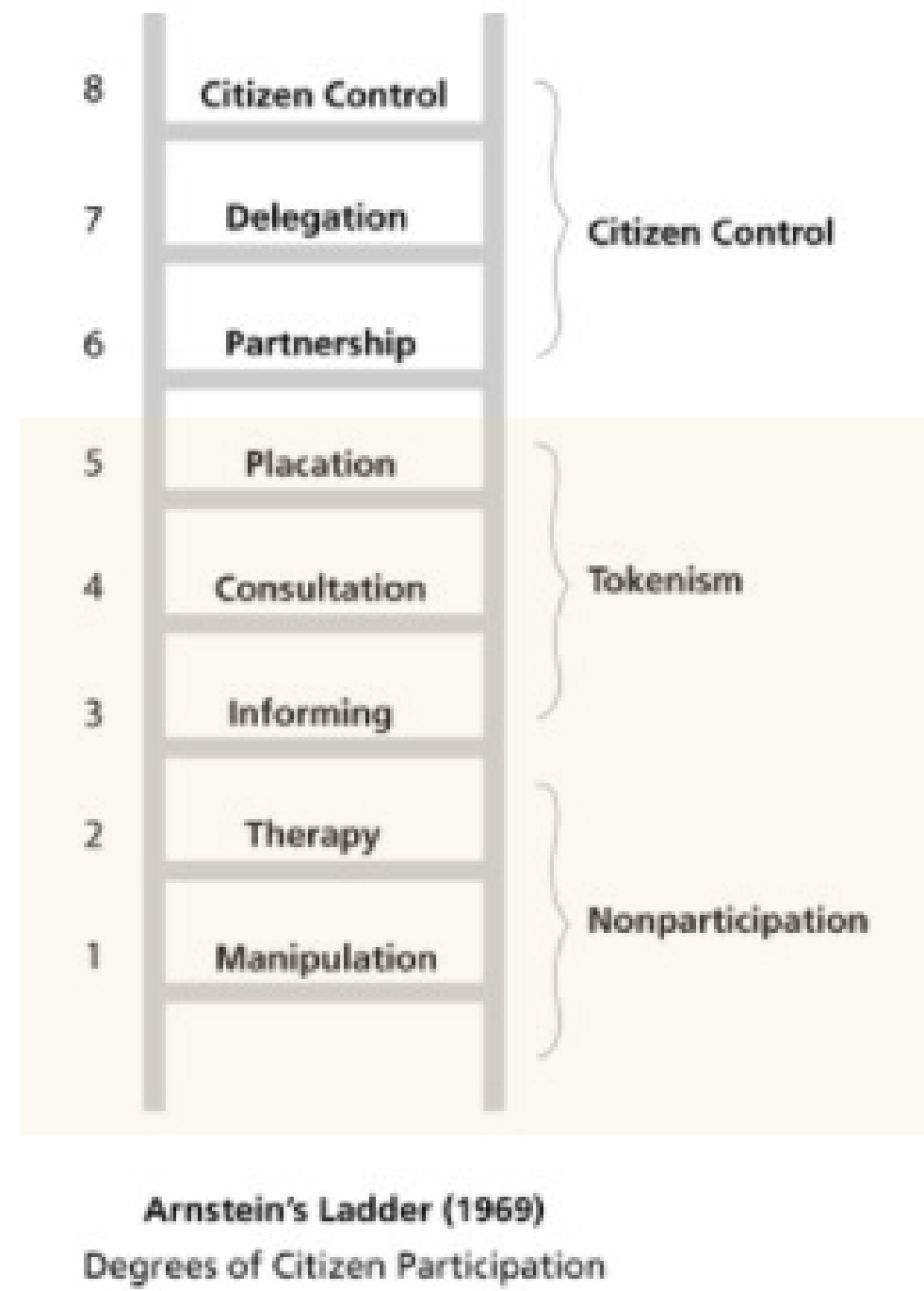


A PEOPLE'S GUIDE TO PLANNING - BOWLING GREEN, KY

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Citizen Participation in Planning

Most planning processes focus on the bottom half of Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation which involves no true citizen control.



In Practice

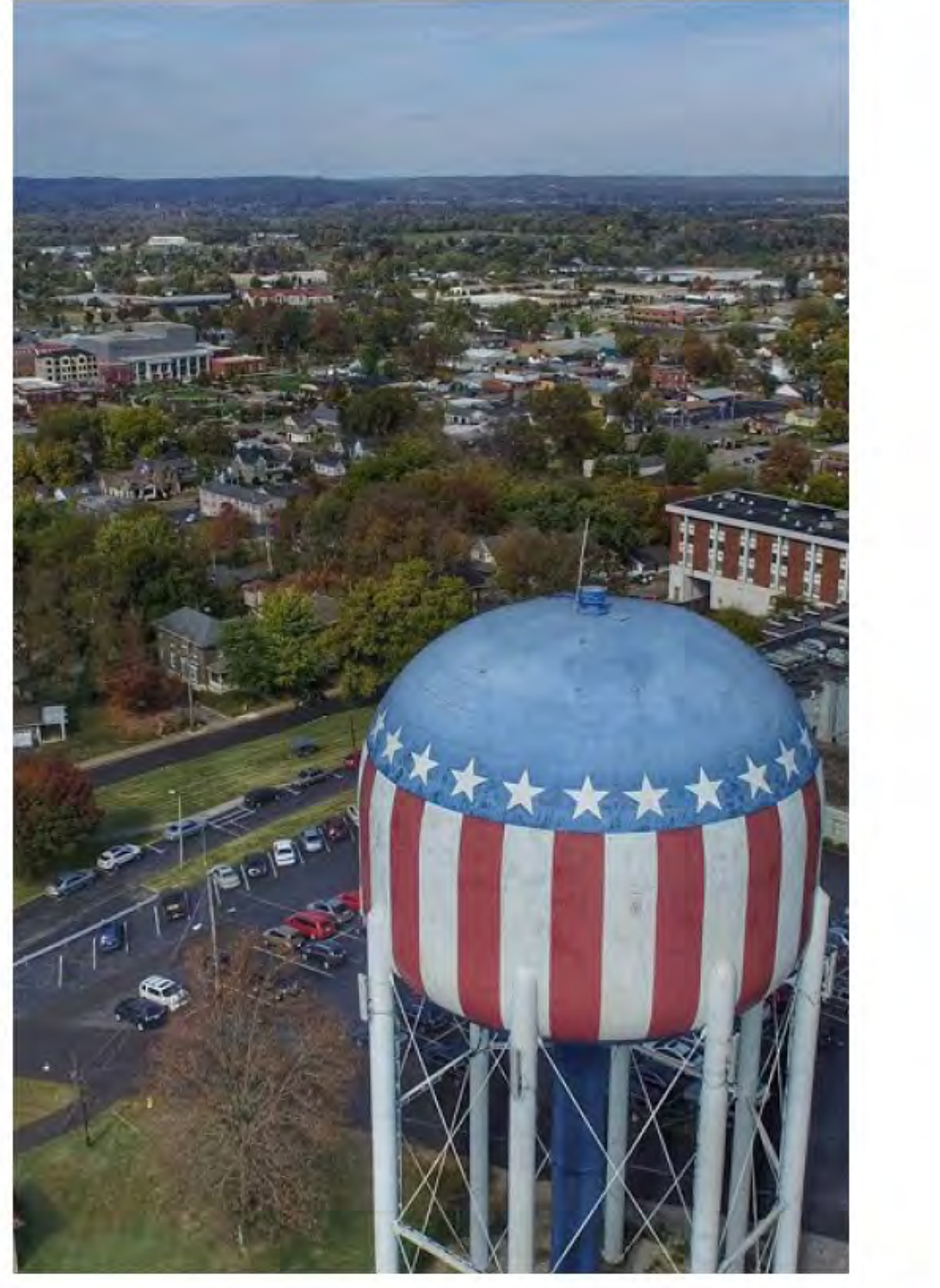


In 2019, seven residential properties in a historically Black neighborhood in Bowling Green, Kentucky were rezoned to commercial use. The owner planned to displace residents, demolish the homes, and build contractor garages in their places. Several residents spoke in opposition to the rezoning at the planning commission hearing but the project was recommended for approval regardless. The comments from the public at the planning commission hearing were left off the record. The city has a history of facilitating the demolition of historically Black neighborhoods for the expansion of the local university. Lawyers and residents filed suit against the rezoning claiming a violation of due process and claiming the zoning change was not compatible with the county's comprehensive plan and ultimately won the case. The properties now have a new owner who plans to rehabilitate most of the homes and build thirteen additional apartment units. Residents are happy that the neighborhood will remain residential. In addition to resident participation in the formal planning process, this outcome required mobilization of residents and availability of legal counsel to those residents after the rezoning was already approved by the local legislative body.




Project Goals:
Provide an established grassroots community organization with a locally scaled planning guide as a base from which community organizers can build community empowerment around planning issues.
Clarify the existing planning process and environment in Bowling Green, KY so Kentuckians For The Commonwealth can decide when and how to engage in the formal process as well as when an informal approach may be more effective.

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Participatory planning processes assume...

-  ...there is a balance of power between participants.
-  ...all residents are knowledgeable of planning and its processes.
-  ...the formal planning process is the most effective way residents can have a say in their communities.

Methods to increase citizen participation:

- Educate residents on planning and the planning process.
- Engage and empower community organizations.
- Utilize and acknowledge informal approaches to planning and community engagement.

Outcomes



Kentuckians for the Commonwealth and the local NAACP chapter have been added to the stakeholder list for the comprehensive plan which historically only included home builders and realtors.

Kentuckians For The Commonwealth is using the guide to canvas and engage in a community visioning process to create a peoples vision for Bowling Green that they can bring into the stakeholder meetings for the comprehensive plan update next year.

https://issuu.com/kftc/docs/a_people_s_guide_to_planning