

PLANNING CHAIRMAN STEPS DOWN

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Tim Theissen, an Edgewood lawyer who has served on the Kenton County Planning Commission for 14 years, is stepping down from the commission and its chairmanship to focus on other civic activities.

These, 46, a partner with Strauss & Troy in Covington, has been the elected chairman of the commission since 1995 and chaired the Joint Task Force for Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 1995-96 and 2000-1.

The former Fort Wright councilman said that he is leaving the post because other civic opportunities will be taking his time.

"For me the Planning Commission has been my community service. Many people do not know that it is a volunteer position."

"I have recently started back teaching at the University of Cincinnati, and have accepted a position on the board of a non-profit organization, Kids Helping Kids," Theissen said Friday.

"There are simply not enough hours to do them all."

Theissen said the Planning Commission would vote on a new chairman at its next meeting May 6. Until then vice-chairman Joe Price will serve as acting chair.

"I would not have stepped down at this time unless I felt confident that the Commission had strong leadership to carry on what has been created there," Theissen said.

He cited a good mix of experienced commissioners, like Alex Weldon of Covington, and Paul Swanson of Erlanger and Vice Chair, Joe Price of Crestview Hills, in addition some of the newer appointees. The last 14 years of Kenton County's history have seen some of the most explosive growth in residential and commercial development.

Theissen said the biggest accomplishments of the planning commission during his time there have been the significant modernization of the subdivision regulations in Kenton County and an increase in congeniality in the commission's activities.

Theissen said his one hope for the future of the planning commission is that the broader community and the business community could have their voices heard in planning and zoning decisions as much as the often small vocal groups whose properties are immediately impacted by decisions.

And, he hopes other, less-heard voices can gain a platform.

"My only regret is that minorities and women are under-represented on the commission, and I would encourage our mayors to look for individuals to appoint such as to create a better cross-section of the community on the commission."

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GETTING HELP

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Here are some places to get help:

NorthKey Community Care offers adolescent substance abuse screening to underage DUI referrals. Parents and guardians must attend if youth is under age 18. Call (859) 283-0952.

Catholic Social Services offers assessments, individual and family counseling and school-based substance abuse counseling for parochial schools. Call (859) 581-8974.

Family Services of Northern Kentucky, Covington, offers an eight-week educational group series for youth 14 to 17, individual family counseling. Call (513) 345-8555 or visit the Web site www.familyservicecincy.org.

St. Luke West Intensive Outpatient Adolescent Chemical Dependence Program offers teen and family care and follow-up. Call (859) 962-5384.

Kids Helping Kids, offers a five-phrase long-term day treatment. Call (513) 575-7300 or visit the Web site www.kidshelpingkids.com.

Summit Behavioral Health Group offers substance abuse assessment and individual and family therapy. Call (859) 341-9888.

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