

March 16, 1967

Mayor Ivan Allen, Jr.
City of Atlanta
City Hall
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Ivan:

You very kindly agreed to talk with the Board of the Commerce Club at their next meeting about the Community Council and its role in the life of the city. You asked me to brief you. Here goes.

The letter attached gives you my general feelings as to past accomplishments and future purpose of the Council. At a meeting of leading foundations yesterday and the Council's own Board of Directors today, the position taken in this letter was reaffirmed with one exception. Both groups felt the Council on its own initiative should not be an implementing body in the future. I very much agree. The implementing role of the Council was one assumed in the past because there was no other place to lodge certain ideas for action.

The principal implementing forces in our community should be local governments and the Community Chest. The War on Poverty belongs to the local community, not to the Federal Government. It has been working and should continue to work through local groups.

Officials of the Community Chest, the War on Poverty and some local governments have spoken out strongly about the need for a professional fact finding and social planning resource for the greater Atlanta area, one that is adequately staffed to do the job and independent enough to call a spade a spade. This sort of council not only can help get more federal and state money for the city but also by good planning can assume that money spent on programs goes as far as possible.

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Mayor Ivan Allen, Jr.
March 16, 1967
Page Two

To keep planning within the control of the local community, basic operating funds for the Community Council should come from local rather than federal sources. Officials of the Community Chest in general are in agreement with their responsibility for increasing Chest support and for sharing the Council's basic operating budget with local governments. Local governments, which two years ago gave no unrestricted funds for the support of the Council, this year are contributing \$27,500. This base must be expanded to include other counties and cities in the metropolitan Atlanta area.

A service you could do the community and the Council is to affirm the need for a strong professional planning council and the responsibility of public and private bodies for seeing that the Council is adequately financed to do its basic job. After the base budget is funded, the Council rapidly will get in a better position to contract with the city, counties, foundations and other local groups to do special programming and other work.

Since I shall be out of town the next couple of weeks, Duane Beck can furnish you other data which you may want before the meeting of the Commerce Club Board.

Cordially,

James P. Furniss

JPF/as

Attachment

P. S. Some of the places where the city of Atlanta and Community Council have worked most closely together are listed on the attached sheet.

J. P. F.

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