



BOOK CITY ★Roanoke

Notes for

Dar Williams'

What I Found in a Thousand Towns

POSITIVE PROXIMITY: Living in close quarters doesn't have to mean conflict and loss of privacy. A community can use proximity to its advantage to integrate the talents and skills of residents. We have it in Roanoke and can strengthen it.

"First: there are **SPACES**, indoors and out, that naturally maximize the number of good interactions in a town. Generally these spaces have some individual character while still being open enough to accommodate the desires and interests of good citizens."

CHAPTER ONE: Created Spaces

- ★ *Social capital*—the community coffers of goodwill, filled with the acts of people contributing to the common good. (p. 2); Businesses contributions (p. 26)
- ★ Spaces can facilitate and organize these contributions; spaces for mixing and matching (p. 19)
- ★ Beacon, NY—Dia:Beacon & David Ross; Beacon Sloop Club & Pete Seeger
- ★ Chthonic (Thän-ik) Clash Café—two-roomer, toy corner, friendly staff, space that reflects the community (p. 10)
- ★ Dogwood Bar—George Mansfield, artist as council member; social sculpture of the community (p. 16)
- ★ Rabbi Brent Spodek's Sukkot (sukkōt)—after high holidays, stripping away the narratives to be open to the experience of now, vulnerable to the present, the antihouse (p. 20)
- ★ Mayor Randy Casale on change—"It's inevitable... Why wouldn't we accept it in everything we do?"
- ★ Rabbi Brent's *Accelerated Serendipity*, resistance of a false unity, Covenant for Communications, disagreement while acknowledging multiple truths (p.22)
- ★ Internal vs. External contributions; gentrification and housing cost
- ★ *Achievable collective acts* require organization, trust, and inherent understanding of what a town is capable of accomplishing

"Second, there are **PROJECTS** that build a town's **IDENTITY**—socially, culturally, and /or historically—helping them become...themselves. These projects bring out the advantages of proximity by attracting the passions and skill sets of people who are like-minded in some ways but very different in others, cross-pollinating abilities and personalities. Citizens tend to see past their partisanship and biases when they're trying to accomplish something they can't do alone..."

"Third...**TRANSLATION** is all of the acts of communication that open up a town to itself and the world...the ability of a place to incorporate every willing citizen's contributions, and in so doing, find ways to make life more interesting, welcome the outside world, and provide stability for those who need support."

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NEXT Session: Chapter 3 at The Green Goat

Waterfront and Revitalization in Wasena

Monday, October 16 – 6:30 gather, 7 PM conversation

