

My name is Elisa Nelson. I live and own the property at 155 Austin Drive. My husband and I have lived there for over 28 years. I served for 16 years on the steering committee of the Ward 5 NPA.

The back side of our house looks right over the field between Rhino Foods and Edlund, across the parking lot and into the doors of the southern Burton building. When we first moved to our house, Rhino and Burton were also just moving in. As the businesses grew, the noise grew.

Although the DRB has often placed restrictions on hours of operation on businesses, and required noise mitigation measures on new equipment, it frequently falls to the residents to be the policing group having to push and remind businesses to honor their permits and to respect the neighbors. Once a permit is issued by the DRB, there is no entity that seems willing to require adherence to the permit details. Only continuous publicly calling to task has resulted in the creation of a reasonable sound level for most of the neighbors. For this reason, any conditions designed to limit noise and other harmful features of the Higher Ground project should be structural and not dependent on the day to day operation of the business.

With that background information, I have several questions and concerns regarding the Burton Higher Ground project.

1) Traffic. I will let others argue the very significant details of the issues of traffic concerns on Home Avenue and Queen City Park Rd one lane bridge. I would like to bring up the point that the entire neighborhood of Austin Drive, Dunder Road, South Cove Road, and most of the Ledgewood Condos uses the Home Avenue railroad crossing, or Queen City Parkway, to enter or exit the neighborhood. Any backup at the railroad crossing will create a significant safety issue for police fire and ambulance, as well as simple access to and from our homes. This is a minor road with multiple large condominium complexes that serves as a vital link to the major roads of Pine Street and Shelburne Rd.

I do not believe the traffic study included the rail traffic that frequents that crossing. There are many trains in a 24 hour period, specifically one that passes between 10:30pm and 11pm. This would be a significant traffic blockage as Higher Ground patrons are leaving the site and will cause traffic delays that are not accounted for in the traffic study. This needs to be addressed.

2) Police. Over the last 20 years at Ward 5 NPA meetings, the Burlington Police Department has frequently told the NPA that there are very few Officers available south of Maple Street. At bar closing time there are usually no Officers available in the area at all. With the recent budget decision reducing the Police budget by 30%, any letters from BPD should be required to address the new conditions anticipated under the reduced budget. We do not have good police coverage as it stands. Adding in this high alcohol venue demands the availability of police at any point in time.

4) Noise . As I stated at the beginning of my presentation, the neighbors have worked for years with businesses to create a livable neighborhood. The addition of heavy traffic, car alarms, horns honking as cars are locked and unlocked, loud voices, and revving engines, negates all of the work that has been done over the past 28 years. We simply want the ability to get a decent

night's sleep, from 10pm to 7am. Rhino, Green Mountain Transit, and Edlund are relatively quiet during those hours. The venue at Higher Ground specifically creates the potential for unreasonable conditions until midnight or even 2am. That leaves us with much less than 5 hours of sleep potential per night. That is completely unacceptable for the hundreds of neighbors on Austin Dr., Queen City Park, Home Avenue, Arthur Court, and South Crest Drive at a minimum. Please put a limit on the hours of operation of this venue so we can simply get a reasonable amount of sleep in our own homes.

I have many more concerns about this project, but these are the most important points that I feel need to be made. Please consider the taxpayers and homeowners living around this project. We need to allow some improvements like Chill headquarters, Talent Skate park, and cafes within our neighborhood. A museum of Burton history would fit well with the R & D facility. There are projects that make sense here, but the Higher Ground portion of this project is simply out of character with the surrounding neighborhood and is inappropriate.

Respectfully,

Elisa C. Nelson
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