

## Meagan Tuttle

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**From:** C. W. Norris-Brown <conewango@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 14, 2016 11:06 AM  
**To:** Meagan Tuttle; David E. White; "Diana Coangelo"; Sara Katz; Harris Roen; jwb@burlingtontelecom.net; echurchill@ccrpcvt.org; SEA-Talk@googlegroups.com; Bruce Seifer; Amey Radcliffe; Ibnar Avilix; Jen Berger; genese grill  
**Subject:** PlanBTVSE edit doc  
**Categories:** BTV South End

### Comments on the PlanBTV South End edits

Kudos to you all for making this effort. It looks great. Kudos for changing the focus to questions on how to empower the Enterprise Zone. There are just a few things I want to share with you about it.

1. Please begin to think on a more regional basis. I know that is mentioned in one place (future role of the Shelburne Road corridor), but think as follows:
  - a. PlanBTV in general restricts itself to the mandate of the Burlington Planning Commission -- ie to the geographically defined confines of Burlington. One option may be to merge with South Burlington, or at least that part that includes the "south end" (see item 2). That would solve part of the problem. After all, cities grow and towns merge, and the Vermont way of sitting behind little mounds of dirt and firing back at the neighbors is getting out of date. Another option is simply to meet together.
  - b. a regional approach will actually solve most of the problems related to affordable housing;
  - c. couple this with the need for a real public transportation plan -- I mean a real one. Right now, transit drops in on side notes in the plans. This lack of a serious plan for public transportation is really astounding and reflects this insularity. Note your statement that employees of "South End" businesses are "forced to drive and park," etc. I might add that many who work there also use public transportation, but I think my point is made.
2. Thus, similarly, this will help visualize the difference between a Burlington "south end" (which is really the whole area south of Maple Street to the Shelburne line) and the Enterprise Zone. Thus a statement like "a demand for housing in the South End" would read the greater "south end" and not look like people are demanding housing in the Enterprise Zone. This has been a point of confusion we of the SEA have been mentioning for some time now.
3. We all need to know what is meant by a "new creative economy" and how focusing on that may commit us to things that do not materialize down the road. The suggestion to "find creative solutions" also needs to compare other "innovation districts" in a critical but heuristic way.
4. The Toolkit is mentioned several times, and, as we have pointed out before, it needs

to be addressed with more critical care. But this is implied in your suggestion on how to move forward.

5. Unclear what the BCA market study refers to, but if it is the survey done a while back looking at housing issues, it needs to be re-done since, as I pointed out last year, it is to a great extent poorly done and contains no real implications on needs. Using these numbers for developers will give a similar false impression that referring to the EZone as the "South End" does in other places, especially in regard to housing.

6. Finally, your suggestion about a collaborative working group is great. But I am hoping that it will not be restricted to the same players that have been part of the planning process to date (as listed BCA, SEABA, P&Z, CEDO, etc). In fact, part of its mandate should be to indicate where new thinking is required in the planning process -- and there is a great need for this as a start to the whole, very challenging process outlined so well in your edits. This is implied in part by the suggestion that this be a real "melting pot," but this has been going on now for over a year. SEA, for example, has a lot of data, concrete suggestions, and useful visions and should not continue to be sidelined. Nor should the working group be just another hodge-podge of community representatives. As a start, it needs to be a group capable of identifying problems and refining approaches to solutions, plus a group capable of being visionary. It needs a sort of "high-end" kick-off so that this working group is established based on a strong visionary but critical mandate.

This is an exciting time if all of this goes well. But it is a challenge, and I deeply appreciate your efforts to edit the plan in such a way to more clearly focus on the real challenges involved with empowering the Enterprise Zone in ways that could be both of great socio-economic importance to the greater Burlington area as well as making a unique step in addressing the "creative economy" that may have gone by the wayside in other places.

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PS: also just curious about who wrote the edits