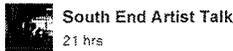


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South End Artist Talk  
21 hrs

Just sent this to North Avenue News. I hope they publish it:

Bill Keogh's recent "South End Almanac" (North Avenue News 45(8) August 7, 2015) provided a report on the city's Plan BTV South End draft which inadvertently revealed the real threats of the changes which the city is proposing to the Arts and Enterprise District in the South End. While the plan actually pretends that the changes it proposes will help the artists and small businesses in the area, Keogh's assessment is much more accurate. Lacking in Keogh's report, however, was any analysis of how much these changes would hurt not only the artists and small and large businesses in the area, but also the entire economic and cultural state of the city and the state of Vermont. In short, Keogh admitted that the artists would be pushed out by the changes in the plan, and that rental prices would rise in the area, making it prohibitive for the enterprising work, risk-taking, and innovation that has taken place in the area for the last few decades to continue. It is, however, not only the artists who will be pushed out of the Enterprise District by the city's push to take away the traditional industrial zoning of this 4% area of the city (where 92% of the industrial manufacturing and 20% of the city's jobs are located), but also the small and large businesses who depend on the lower rent, the room to expand, and the ability to make noise, mess, and smells that are incompatible with residential life. We of the South End Alliance, a citizens group made up of businesses, residents, and artists concerned about the changes proposed in Plan BTV South End, are urging the city to preserve the industrial zoning of the enterprise district and to utilize the ample opportunities for housing development in the 73% area outside the industrial area in the South End, in the 96% of area in the rest of the city, and the much larger areas of neighboring communities such as South Burlington.

The push to change the zoning to housing is not the only concerning aspect of this plan. Citizens are up in arms throughout the city and especially in the South End about the antiquated thinking behind the Champlain Parkway plan (which last had a public review a decade ago), which will dump 4 lanes of parkway traffic out onto Pine Street (if you have ever tried to drive there at rush hour you know what a bad idea that is), and which ignores 21st century priorities for bicycling, pedestrian safety, and connectivity of neighborhoods. The plan's disregard of the dangers of disturbing brownfields, especially in the Barge Canal, is also deeply disturbing. The push to allow as much development as possible seems to trump all reasonable considerations about neighborhood sustainability, affordability, and environmental hazards. Keogh praises the plan and calls it "well done". But an assessment of the work of the highly paid consultants can really only be attempted when their assertions are compared with what the residents of the city actually think and feel about their neighborhood as well as the lack of any serious study by the consultants of the economic, environmental, and cultural dangers of their suggestions. The draft plan's 'big reveal' at Art's Riot was greeted with outrage and vocal opposition by a room filled with approximately 200 people. Most people felt that their perspectives and concerns were ignored by the planners, and when someone asked the crowd if there was anyone in the room who wanted the Champlain Parkway not a single person raised their hand. We of the South End Alliance have been pounding the pavement of the South End, talking to residents, business owners, and artists to find out what people really want for the future of the South End Arts and Enterprise District. What they want is: a truly participatory planning process, preserved industrial protective zoning, a community center, a revised public process, and plan for the Champlain Parkway, a 2030 energy district that looks to bringing the area up to speed in terms of environmental innovation, and an enhancement of collaboration between makers of all kinds. This is planning from the community up. It looks very different from the kind of city and consultant-driven planning that motivated Plan BTV South End. There is still time to comment on the draft plan and to render it something that looks more like "our neighborhood, our vision". Remember, this is not just about the South End, but about the only industrial area in the city. There are free copies at city hall and at the library, and the plan can be found on-line at <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/planBTV/SE> where you can add comments. Please check out our website at <https://www.southendalliance.org> to learn more and to sign our petition to keep the enterprise district zoned industrial.

### South End | City of Burlington, Vermont

planBTV South End is a community conversation! The South End is rapidly growing and changing, as we have seen in the last few years. We are engaged in a planning process to protect and preserve what is most loved about the South End while proactively preparing for the continued growth and change.

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