

Mick Palmer – LJW letter

<http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2015/jun/19/letter-affordable-area/?opinion>

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To the editor:

For nearly 150 years, the East Lawrence neighborhood has provided affordable housing for lower-income residents of Lawrence. And while there has always been a good deal of commercial activity in some parts of the neighborhood, that activity has almost always been compatible with its residential character.

As the City Commission considers ways to reduce homelessness and increase access to affordable housing, they should consider carefully the effects that new development along New Hampshire and Ninth Streets and in the “Warehouse Arts District” will have on the residential nature of East Lawrence, particularly on the remaining affordable housing stock north of Tenth Street.

Bringing the “arts” into East Lawrence and improving infrastructure along Ninth Street are fine ideas that few would object to. But if the nature and intensity of commercial activity changes forever the residential nature of the neighborhood, what has the city gained? And just as importantly, what have the current residents of the neighborhood gained?