

Sarah Rooney letter

June 16, 2015

Dear Commissioners,

I know you have a lot on your plate and juggle many community concerns/needs. I sincerely thank you for your hard work and for your willingness to remain open to neighborhood concerns about the 9th Street Project.

Without going in to great detail regarding my own orientation/reaction to the changes, I would basically say I play 'left-center field'.

I totally support (think we need) ELNA's punk-rock -protect our neighborhood- style of intervention while actually being a bit more of a fence sitter, myself, on whether or not capitalist, conspiratorial elements are actually in play to sell our community to the highest bidder. Although, I'm not naïve enough to think some of that isn't going on – even at an 'unconscious' level.

Given that, I think moving towards a conservation overlay and code changes in the neighborhood would do A LOT to give our community a sense that Lawrence wishes to protect/preserve it from the predatory instincts of money, influence and the purchasing power of a few who wish to prosper from the changes going on. Buy up the good stuff, so to speak.

That's a given. No conspiracy there – just straight up capitalism 101.

And, well, that will happen. However, by choosing to protect (via conservation and code changes) the unique culture that is ALREADY East Lawrence you minimize the potential for a possible predatory bonanza as 'outside interests' seek to 'own and profit' from our close-knit, organically-grown, curiously quirky/grungy/arty-farty/live and let live East Lawrence Culture.

Knowing that our neighborhood is even a little bit protected from predation goes a long way in making us feel cared for and more at ease given the significant changes that are about to take place.

Any bozo knows that once someone 'brands' something, that 'something' changes in to a bought/sold commodity – changing/altering/often destroying the original culture that birthed it to begin with. I'm sure that's, in many ways, what many of us 'fear' in the long run as this project gains momentum.

As for ELNA – they'll keep up the fight. Their punk-rock and we need them! If it weren't for ELNA, East Lawrence would have been a K10 bypass by now. So ,for all the 'crazy' they been name-called, their dedication and love for our community is honorable.

And...sometimes you need a little crazy to fight crazy. That's called 'crazy wisdom'.

So – PLEASE, please...protect us through code changes and an overlay.

Thank you.

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