

ULSTER COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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The Ulster County Commission of Human Rights discussed the proposed shooting range (and gun shop) on Prince Street in mid town Kingston, NY at our May 2th, 2016 meeting. We have noted several concerns.

We are concerned that the placement of this environmentally hazardous land use in a low income and predominately minority community in midtown contributes to the economic, social and environmental degradation of the midtown area. This is very counterproductive at a moment when the city and midtown residents and business owners have organized to promote and improve the quality of life. Midtown Kingston has articulated a brand for its core commercial corridors as an Arts District. The City of Kingston has a comprehensive plan that outlines sustainable development for midtown. The placement of a gun range and gun shop in the center of this community appears incompatible with that vision.

The shooting range and gun shop in close proximity to the YMCA and the High School, where the youth of our community congregate and recreate, are extremely troubling on a number of levels.

Additionally, the potentially high lead levels associated with shooting ranges, even those with "state of the art" filtration, threaten an area dealing with already high levels of lead. Noise levels may also be a concern even in ranges which are sound proofed with the latest technologically advanced materials.

We are also concerned with the language used by some of those who support this range. They describe midtown residents as people from whom we may need protection. The purpose of a shooting range and gun shop is NOT to protect individuals from their neighbors.

We are further concerned that a certain contentious understanding of property rights-that I have the right to develop my property as I please -might trump the political voice of local residents and business owners, and the concept of public good.

In closing, this proposed range raises many issues that we find inconsistent with fostering respect for all of our citizens.

Sincerely,

JoAnne Myers, Ph. D.
for the Human Rights Commission