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Cahill, Suzanne

From: weiss megan <megs1021@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2015 1:17 PM
To: Cahill, Suzanne
Subject: Comments on Comprehensive Plan

Hi Sue,

I would like to make a few comments on the Comprehensive Plan that is currently under review. Please note that I appreciate the time, energy and effort put into this plan and am supportive of many of the components included in this draft. I agree with many of the comments made during the public hearing, including the need to focus more on our historic resources throughout the City, the need for more photographs and visual representations in the document itself, as well as the need to avoid specific situations or projects that are impacting our community now but may not be as relevant 10 years from now.

I was disappointed when I first noticed that a public facility like the Everette Hodge Midtown Community Center (a.k.a. Hodge Center) was left out of this document. It occurred to me that other well established youth and family serving facilities, such as the Kingston Library, Rondout Neighborhood Center, Boys and Girls Club, Center for Creative Education's facility and the former Carnegie Library were not included as well. It seems to me that these major institutions, some of which are city owned and all of which have played a critical role in the development of youth and family services, must be included. Midtown may have significant problems and barriers, but it also has assets. The plan references the need for additional play spaces, including a possible indoor soccer field or ice skating rink. I think this is great, but how do those suggestions connect with already existing facilities and services? I am aware that this is briefly referenced on page 53, regarding the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. I believe more details of how these two plans will complement each other is important. It should be noted that the youth that are utilizing these facilities now will be the adults updating this plan in 2025.

I appreciate the focus on education, health and civics in Midtown. These issues are relevant to all residents and we must invest and build these resources. I also believe we have a significant amount of infrastructure, facilities and opportunities for partnership already in place. I am also fully in agreement that Midtown in particular needs more green spaces and communal meeting spaces to socialize, exercise and develop additional neighborhood attachment.

As some of the other speakers indicated, I was disappointed that there is a disconnect between the development and presentation of this plan and many of our current residents. I am aware of the significant outreach that was done, but am still concerned that not all perspectives are reflected in this plan.

The arts are certainly a highly valuable component of the future of our community. I think the description of the Arts and Crafts Industry center is well thought out. I would like to learn more about how that proposal will impact individuals and families residing in the outlying areas off Broadway. I have concerns that some residents may be displaced over time and that the employment opportunities may be limited in scope and inaccessible to local residents. I am left wondering what will happen to the residents who do not connect with this initiative. I do not want to see my neighbors lost in this transition. I do believe the investment in this portion of the plan, as well as connecting it to other similar initiatives already in place in other parts of Kingston, is a positive step. I would just caution that all members of the community be fully represented as this portion of the plan moves forward, to ensure that this new industry is inclusive. In addition, the Culture and Entertainment Center should include the diverse history, skills and interests of all residents.

Please note that all comments I have made are my own and come from my perspective as a home owner in Midtown Kingston.

Thank you again for moving this important document forward. I am truly excited to see what Kingston will look like in 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,

Megan Weiss-Rowe
11 Center St.

Kingston, N.Y.