

Southside voices (5): Kim (Think “funky”)

The Bethlehem Gadfly Southside November 21, 2020

 *The latest in a series of posts on the Southside* 

Kim Carrell-Smith (9 mins.)

We want a vibe that’s not just generic every place. Steel and glass is a lack of identity. History is how Bethlehem has branded itself already. History is a great way to create a sense of place. 30-year resident, I have a lot of feelings about this Southside stuff. We have a great stock of historical buildings, and I would encourage you to figure out some way to enhance those historical streetscapes. Historical guidelines don’t square with the zoning ordinance. Need to start with changing the zoning ordinance. Can’t have towering buildings that overshadow the sidewalks. For many folks darkness is perceived as unwelcoming. We need to think about things like height and shadow. We have great streetscapes, we just need to tweak the buildings we have. The other thing we need to think about is historical vistas. Vistas provide a validation for life and work. Gives us identity. Distinctive. No franchises. Cultivate small businesses. We want smaller locally owned businesses that can serve local folks. Places to buy socks and underwear. What about sports facilities. Like Iron Lakes — drop off kids, then go shop. We don’t often serve youth in South Bethlehem. More places for kids to stay occupied. Need well marked walking paths and well marked parking to bring people in to the core. Greenway is starting to show us that that works. Need affordable housing, not just luxury apartments. We don’t need to serve student population, but empty-nesters and people like that. We need affordable housing for families, for young people. Arts District people working hard. Please help us keep what makes this distinctive. And don’t turn us into every other place in the United States. No franchises, anonymous glass.

We've got cool stuff now to improve upon. Cool, eclectic, and kind of funky place. Keep South Bethlehem funky.*

** We need a vision for South Bethlehem, something we can define in a word or phrase on which we can focus our thinking. Kim has used that term "funky" before in presentation at Council. It's vision that resonates. What does "funky" mean to you? Interestingly odd. Unconventionally stylish. What place comes to mind as an example of a funky place? Gadfly thinks we should pursue this vision.*

Gadfly says try to keep your body still while listening. That's what I'm talking about.

"Funky Town"

Gotta make a move to a town that's right for me

Town to keep me movin'

Keep me groovin' with some energy

Wont you take me to

funky town

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