

From: Lori C-Renteria [<mailto:lorirenteria@grandecom.net>]

Sent: Thursday, September 02, 2010 12:55 AM

To: 'McCormick, Dusty'

Subject: I suggest ERGSO stop using the word "colony" with the Saltillo BEDI grant

Importance: High

Dear Dusty:

I got hold of a copy of the letter your org sent to GNDC about the BEDI grant. I'm sure that ECC Team members will get their copies via snail mail real soon since you mention our group being involved. But I just couldn't wait to tell you how I think many in our community will perceive the letter's language, leaving most with a very negative feeling. Language is key to building trust.

I think you should rewrite this sentence, "Section 108 public investments are often needed to inspire private economic activity, providing the initial resources or simply the confidence those private firms and individuals may need to invest in distressed areas." This sentence is sooo ridiculous, we have some of the most valuable land in any Austin neighborhood, it questions your dept's knowledge of our area and threatens your credibility. You should stress instead how our neighborhood needs grant funds to clean polluted land because of all the industrial uses pushed to and concentrated in the rail district over the last century. And then to use the word "artists' colony" is like OK, here comes the new millennium's pilgrims, get ready for battle native people! Suggesting colonization of a traditionally minority neighborhood in the 21st Century is a bit odd. Village is a much more comfortable word on this side of the plantation.

As you know Sabino and I are circulating letters under the United East Austin Coalition banner, asking our allies to support a push on your dept. to change the focus from an artists' colony to a Tejano Music Village and recording studio that would be a public-private venture requiring written contracts for design and management partners affiliated with the Austin Latino Music Association and Austin Tejano Music Coalition to ensure initial AND ongoing affordability and access to these federally funded projects by members of the community that is being rapidly displaced by those new, creative pilgrims coming to area, flooding our area without the lure of any federal subsidies meant to help poor people..

I really think that instead of sending letters like this to commercial property owners asking for more ideas, your dept should work fast and furious to hold a big public meeting with collaborative outreach and involvement by the neighborhood planning team most affected by your initiative, the East Cesar Chavez Planning Team. As I had suggested at the ECC Team meeting you presented at on August 18th.

Like I said at that meeting, I might be able to support a grant request with the private property owners you are working with, but there needs to be some serious reconsiderations on the cultural music focus and what kinds of people will benefit from this major public investment in the music industry and new affordable housing..

Peace out. Lori 478-6770