South Bronx residents skeptical of de Blasio rezoning plan

A new report highlights fears of higher prices and lost jobs
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Trepidation toward Mayor Bill de Blasio’s mandatory inclusionary zoning plans is bubbling up in the very neighborhoods the program aims to help.

A new report from the Bronx Coalition for a Community Vision outlines community fears that new development will raise prices and reduce job opportunities in the neighborhood. It also proposes making more apartments permanently affordable, setting aside 50 percent of affordable units for local residents and requiring more community input on new projects.

According to the report, 80 percent of South Bronx residents fear being displaced by the rezoning.

The de Blasio administration plans a rezoning of a 73-block stretch around Jerome Avenue. Today, it’s mostly devoted to heavy commercial uses like auto shops and gas stations. The new plan would emphasize mixed-use residential development.
“We’re watching the Bronx change very quickly,” South Bronx resident Michael Kamben told the Wall Street Journal. “I think the mayor’s heart is in the right place, but it’s not an easy task, and he has a lot ahead of him.”

Gentrification has gradually begun creeping into the Bronx, with rents in some areas increasing by as much as 300 percent.

A related proposal to rezone East New York has met with serious community opposition. [WSJ] – Ariel Stulberg

Tags: inclusionary housing program, Mayor Bill de Blasio, Rezoning, south bronx