

Angela please post to the agenda.

Cheri

From: gregory lloyd [<mailto:glloyd7@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Monday, May 15, 2017 11:42 AM

To: Cheri Smith <csmith@cityofkeywest-fl.gov>

Subject: Agenda #23 and #24, Mel Fisher

Please add the following to the record for Agenda #23 and #24 for City Commission Meeting May 16, 2017...

Agenda Item #23 and #24, you will be hearing the first reading for the expansion of lower Duval Street Zoning (HRCC-1, Historic Residential Commercial Core) to include the Mel Fisher Museums located at 200 Green Street between Front and Whitehead Streets. This request to rezone, one property site for one business, comes at the exclusive behest of the Mel Fisher Maritime Society Incorporated, not to be confused with the Mel Fisher Family themselves.

The Mel Fisher Museum is at the cultural heart of our City, surrounded by Truman Little White House, Audubon House, Customs House, Historic Clinton Square with the Aquarium and Shipwreckers Museum and a mere stones throw from there is the Waterfront Playhouse. Do we really want this site to be packed with raucus bars, cheap \$5 t-shirt stores and not-so-free soap/perfume/cosmetic shops or even the possibility of adult entertainment establishments?

This Society has been vague as to exactly what they intend to do with this new dense commercial core zoning. Only "that it's commercial and community oriented activities are better protected if the property is rezoned into the HRCC-1 district." However, as has been repeatedly pointed out by the Planning Department, the fact of the matter is that their current zoning of HPRD and their grandfathered in status already allows commercial retail, community centers and cultural and civic activities as Conditional Uses, as well as, insuring that all such activities are protected in the future.

The Society has made other arguments for the supposed need for this new rezoning, from grant funding to an improper original designation, all of which have been debunked by our Planning Department for reasons too numerous to recount here. The upshot of this new HRCC-1 zoning everything they can currently do on Lower Duval Street – they will be able to do here.

The Society has endeavored to assuage our fears with oral assurances that they have no intention of converting this property to any incompatible uses but what if circumstances change (as they have been known to in our fair City) and the property is in fact sold, will the new owners continue to wish to preserve the cultural integrity of this neighborhood or will they choose to maximize their potential profits and take full advantage of every known commercial opportunity this new HRCC-1 zoning would afford them?

It should be noted that the current zoning does not allow for adult entertainment however under HRCC-1, Adult Entertainment establishments become a Permitted Right and although there are numerous current reasons why this would be “impossible” to have at this location, never forget we live in a city that on an almost annual basis, the seemingly “impossible” becomes “possible” (maybe a license is transferred or an ordinance is tweaked). This begs the question why should we have to live with this possibility no matter how improbable. Said another way the new HRCC-1 zoning, no matter how slight, opens the door to adult entertainment. Whereas the current zoning keeps it firmly and irrevocably shut.

In conclusion, the rezoning for one property and one business, sets a horrible case precedent that will quickly be followed by a dozen other businesses seeking the same privilege and as much as the Mel Fisher Museum is a revered institution in our community, I hope you will look to the future and vote “no” to this expansion of Lower Duval zoning and choose instead to protect and preserve the cultural integrity of our City.

Gregory M Lloyd
Key West