
MEMORANDUM

TO: CITY WEST CITY COMMISSIONERS

FROM: DANIEL J. DINGEMAN
COMMERCIAL PROPERTY OWNER - 623 DUVAL AND 700 DUVAL
COMMERCIAL BUSINESS OWNER -MANGOES RESTAURANT AND
626 JOESPHINE PARKER OFFICE PLAZA

SUBJECT: DUVAL STREET – REVITALIZATION VS PEDESTRIAN MALL A/K/A
“MALL ON DVUAL”

DATE: NOVEMBER 18, 2019

Since public comment is limited to two minutes, we are submitting this memo for your objective consideration prior to Tuesday nights meeting.

1. What is the City Commission’s purpose?
 - a. *“Sets City wide policy, Ordinances and laws in accordance with the Florida constitution, state law and City Charter; approves annual budget; members also act as other City boards.”* City Web Page <https://www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov/boards/> see section on City Commission.
 - b. Is the detailed planning and management of a sporadic pedestrian walking mall, on three-blocks of one street, the best use of the City Commission’s time, financial resources and purpose, or should its efforts be focused on the revitalization of the entire 14-blocks of Duval?

2. “Fixing City streets and sidewalks” ... is what is this City Commission will be focusing upon. Mayor Johnson, 104.1 Radio interview, November 18, 2019. She stated this includes the Commission looking at:
 - a. Pavement analysis
 - b. Cost to bring streets up to proper condition
 - c. Repair and raise our roads in anticipation of the future rising water levels and the king tides
 - d. Maintaining public infrastructure
 - e. The Mayor stated in an August 2019 radio interview on 104.1, **it has been 43 years ... not since 1976 ... since the last major capital investment was made by the City into its Duval Street infrastructure.**

3. What problem is the City Commission trying to fix by having a sporadic pedestrian mall on three blocks of a 14-block main street?
 - a. Revitalization of decaying infrastructure; or
 - b. Providing entertainment options for locals?

4. What professionals with the appropriate educational and real-world experiences have been engaged to provide insight and experience on how sporadically closing three blocks of Duval Street, accomplishes the Commission's objective?
 - a. Does the City Planner have a recommendation?
 - b. Has a Transportation Planner been consulted?
 - c. Has an Urban Planner been consulted?
 - i. Understand that an RFQ has been prepared for an Urban Planner.
 - ii. Should the Commission wait to receive the Urban Planner's input?
 - d. Has a Municipal Real Property Tax advisor been consulted on how to increase property taxes to pay for:
 - i. Pedestrian Mall Director and staff
 - ii. Mall infrastructure and physical equipment
 - iii. Implementation and enforcement of rules and regulations
 - iv. Additional police, fire, and safety needs

5. **Do pedestrian walking malls work?**
 - a. **There is a 90% national failure rate.**
 - b. Over 200 major US cities tried them in the 1980s and 1990s and now less than two dozen remain. American Planning Association.

6. Why do pedestrian walking malls fail at such an astoundingly high rate?
 - a. A failure to provide the necessary infrastructure.
 - i. Public parking lots and decks
 - ii. Safe and maintained sidewalks
 - iii. Clean streets
 - iv. Street lighting
 - v. Landscaping
 - vi. College, hospital or major business employer, with immediate adjacency to provide on-going source of pedestrians

 - b. Follow through and money.
 - i. An on-going total commitment to maintenance, improvements, and enforcement of rules is required to succeed.
 - ii. To maintain and enforce for years to come requires:
 - a) A dedicated department/enforcement division is needed
 - b) A full-time director perhaps with staff
 - c) Money to fund it
 - iii. Source of money?
 - a) City tax base
 - b) Special Assessment Tax district
 - c) Tax Increment Financing district

7. Division in opinions
 - a. There is no denying the other 11 of the 14 blocks of Duval do not want the street closed. That's 79% of Duval Street.
 - b. What percentage of the 500, 600 and 700 blocks want it closed remains unclear.
 - i. Is it unreasonable to believe the 500, 600 and 700 blocks would be dramatically different than the other 79% of Duval?
 - ii. If half of the 500, 600 and 700 blocks are in favor and half are not, that would mean a total of 12 ½ blocks out of 14 blocks of Duval or 89% do not want the street closed for a sporadic pedestrian mall.
 - iii. A proper survey of the groups effected - property owners and tenants have still not yet been conducted.
 - c. The survey you have.
 - i. While well-intended, was it conducted in an objective and consistent manner?
 - a) What standards were used?
 - I. What survey methodology was used?
 - II. The sample population studied included only 124 people attending the Locals Night Out events. Millions of people visit Duval each year.
 - III. Who designed the survey?
 - IV. Who approved the survey?
 - V. How were the respondents chosen?
 - VI. What were the demographics of the respondents?
 - VII. Was there selection bias or did they use random sampling?
 - VIII. Were the surveyors trained and qualified to conduct the surveys and did the interviewer(s) have trait effects?
 - b) Were the American Association for Public Opinion Research, or some other national objective standards used?
 - c) The questions did not address the economic impact on the building owners/tenants.
 - d) Only 124 people were asked, with "visitors" being the single largest group responding, residents from other Keys being the second largest group. They are not stakeholders.
 - I. The sample is not nearly large enough
 - e) If you took a survey at Disney World asking people inside the park if they like Disney World, of course, they are going to say they do ... they made the effort to go to Disney World. It ignores everyone else. The same is true with this sampling.
 - ii. **The stakeholders are the property owners and tenants – who literally have hundreds of millions of dollars at risk. They are the ones that should be surveyed.**
 - a) **This is what the Commission said it was going to do at the August 20, 2019 vote. It still has not properly done so.**

8. Conclusion:
 - a. Fix the streets and sidewalks, provide public parking. It has been over 43 years since the City has done so.
 - i. This is what the City government's responsibility is – not providing entertainment options.
 - b. Pedestrian malls have been an indisputable failure across the county.
 - i. They have a 90% failure rate.
 - ii. At least 79% of property owners on Duval are against it, perhaps as much as 89% are against it. Listen to the stakeholders.
 - c. If you continue, at least hire objective skilled professionals to guide you through all the critical components, including:
 - i. Urban planners
 - ii. Transportation planners
 - iii. Municipal Real Property tax advisors
 - iv. Public Opinion and Survey Research professionals