

June 7, 2024

Members of the Key West Bight Management Board  
RE: Request for lease modification at renewal

Dear Key West Bight Management Board member,

I request a few moments of your time to explain what the not-for-profit Mel Fisher Maritime Museum (MFMM) is requesting and why. When Gary Moreira and I spoke regarding the lease renewal, he asked if there was anything we wanted. I replied that the museum wanted the CAM charges to be waived going forward. I must say that I was more than a little surprised when I read the agenda item for last month's meeting and did not see a syllable about our request.

When your oversight and investigation into the calculation and assessment of CAM fees resulted in published documents detailing each leasehold's assessment I could finally prove, what I had been repeatedly told over our 15 years at the Bight, that the other not-for-profit \$1-a-year lease PAID NO CAM charges. In fairness, I seek that the museum's lease be treated EXACTLY the same.

Entry to the museum and interaction with our highly trained education staff is **free** to the public. At the museum we see this operation as being purely educational, that helps us fulfill our mission. Operation of the Turtle Museum is today and always has been, at an overwhelming financial loss. MFMM has considered this ongoing investment to be our gift to city.

Our commitment to the KW Bight dates back to our previous executive director, Madeleine Burnside, PhD having served on the Bight board in the historic preservation seat, seeking to maintain a balance between commerce and historical significance.

When the city came to MFMM asking we step in and meet the Turtle Cannery deed restriction by creating the museum we were thrilled. While our commitment to the KW Bight is longstanding, economic conditions existing today are quite different than in 2009.

Educational staff for the museum, as all staff, for all businesses, is much more expensive in 2024 and with the loss of cruise ship revenues post-referendum our coffers do not support community gifts as they once had. We would prefer to use these resources in improving & maintaining the Cannery.

As a matter of fairness and transparency we request you waive these CAM fees. The next page details the Turtle Museum timeline, please read it. It explains what has transpired that brings us to where we are today. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Melissa Kendrick  
mkendrick@melfisher.org  
305-304-1210



**Key West Bight**

**FY 22/23 Billable Square Feet Per Leases for CAM Purposes**

(Estimated/Billed CAM per SF = \$6.87/Actual CAM per SF = \$7.53)

**FY 22/23 CAM PER SF**

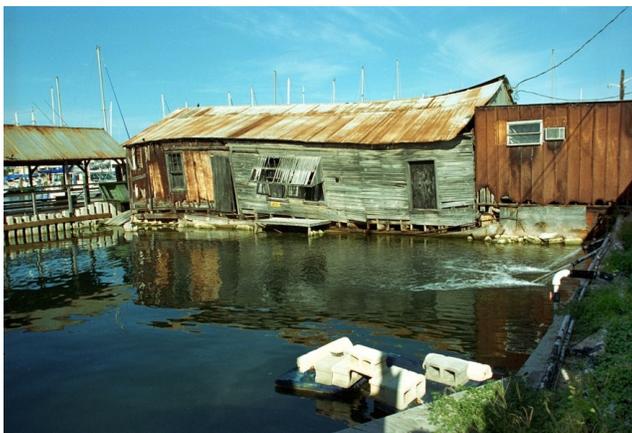
**\$7.06**

CID/CT	UNIT	TENANT	CAM SF	TOTAL CAM CHARGED	FY 22/23 CAM DUE	FY 22/23 BALANCE	SALES TAX	TOTAL DUE
C0006386/CT017649	631 Greene Street	Conch Republic Seafood Co. (FSCC)	15,345	103,488.65	108,335.70	4,847.05	339.29	5,186.34
C0007966/CT669481	Booth Greene Street	Fury Water Adventures	96	647.45	677.76	30.31	2.12	32.43
C0009464	631B Greene Street Gazebo	Captains Corner Scuba School	56	377.65	395.36	17.71	1.24	18.95
<b>C0009540</b>	<b>621 Greene Street</b>	<b>Reef Relief, Inc. (926 SF)</b>	<b>0</b>					
	<b>625 Greene Street</b>	<b>Storage Units (10) 2,162 SF</b>	<b>0</b>					
C0007042/CT539726	Lazy Way (Units A, A-1)	Yours and Mayan	337	2,272.78	2,379.22	106.44	7.45	113.89
C0007042/CT661296	Lazy Way (Unit B)	Yours and Mayan	135	910.44	953.10	42.66	2.99	45.65
C0009005/CT795920	Lazy Way (Unit C &D)	Fisherman's Café	576	3,297.95	4,066.56	768.61	53.80	822.41
C0007794/CT644470	Lazy Way (Unit F)	AER Photography	426	2,873.08	3,007.56	134.48	9.41	143.89
C0007041/CT539626	Lazy Way (Unit G)	Dragonfly Key West	326	2,198.65	2,301.56	102.91	7.20	110.11
C0007033/CT528191	Lazy Way (Unit H)	Captain Quick Dry	452	3,048.32	3,191.12	142.80	10.00	152.80
C0009622	Lazy Way (Units I, J & Storage)	RED Hospitality Office & Storage	974	6,568.85	6,876.44	307.59	21.53	329.12
C0005826/CT005826	Lazy Way Recording Studio	Jimmy Buffett	1,447	9,758.69	10,215.82	457.13	32.00	489.13
C0009624		RED Hospitality & Leisure Booth	98	661.00	691.88	30.88	2.16	33.04
C0005902/CT0005839	William Street Plaza Booth	Schooner Appledore Booth	30	202.41	211.80	9.39	0.66	10.05
C0005825/CT0005825	201R William Street	Schooner Wharf Bar	6,719	45,313.71	47,436.14	2,122.43	148.57	2,271.00
	201 William Ground Level (Unit A)	City Office (414 SF)	0					
C0008375/CT716907	201 William Ground Level (Unit B)	Bumble Bee Silver Company	152	1,025.10	1,073.12	48.02	3.36	51.38
C0005916/CT0005562	201 William Ground Level (Unit C)	Sunset Watersports Office	750	5,058.18	5,295.00	236.82	16.58	253.40
	201 William Ground Level (Unit D)	City ADA Conference Room (107 SF)	0					
C0006914/CT435219	201 William Harborwalk (Unit A)	Key West Artworks (transferred to Conch Tees)	0	-	-	-	-	-
C0009891/CT716907	201 William Harborwalk (Unit A)	Conch Tees	722	4,869.32	5,097.32	228.00	15.96	243.96
C0005916/CT682642	201 William Harborwalk (Unit B)	Sunset Watersports (Hammerhead)	1,006	6,784.69	7,102.36	317.67	22.24	339.91
C0008747/CT756052	201 William Harborwalk (Unit C)	Hayes Robertson (Ice Cream Shop)	1,001	6,750.90	7,067.06	316.16	22.13	338.29
C0008587/CT736253	201 William Harborwalk (Unit E)	Waterfront Brewery (Old KW Ice Cream)	1,447	9,758.69	10,215.82	457.13	32.00	489.13
C0008587/CT736252	201 William Street Harborwalk (Units D, F), Upstairs (Unit A), Roof	Waterfront Brewery	16,692	112,572.91	117,845.52	5,272.61	369.08	5,641.69
	201 William 2nd Floor (Units A-G)	City Port & Marine Offices (1,239 SF)	0					
C0005844/CT0005844	201 William & Caroline Parking Lot	B.O.'s Fish Wagon	1,816	12,247.31	12,820.96	573.65	40.16	613.81
C0008044/CT674871	284 Margaret Street	Cuban Coffee Queen Cuban Coffee Queen Storage	208 240	1,402.75 1,618.59	1,468.48 1,694.40	65.73 75.81	4.60 5.31	70.33 81.12
	KWB Marina (Vacant)	Thompson Fish House (Vacant) 1,728 SF	0					
C0007383/CT602110	<b>200 Margaret Street</b>	<b>Turtle Museum (tax exempt)</b>	<b>1,076</b>	<b>7,256.71</b>	<b>7,596.56</b>	<b>339.85</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>339.85</b>
	Mei Fisher Harborwalk	Public Restrooms (1,555 SF)	0					
	Margaret Street Plaza Booth	Vacant Booth (100 SF)	0					
C0009759	1 Lands End Village	Boat House Key West (Turtle Kraals)	9,732	65,633.80	68,707.92	3,074.12	215.19	3,289.31
C0005810/CT0005810	274 Margaret Street	Local Color	3,048	20,556.10	21,518.88	962.78	67.39	1,030.17
C0006185/CT0006185	208 Margaret Street	Mac's Sea Garden	1,689	11,390.90	11,924.34	533.44	37.34	570.78
C0006185/CT0006186	208 Margaret Street	Mac's Curio Shop	861	5,806.74	6,078.66	271.92	19.03	290.95
C0008520/CT721223	231 Margaret Street	Half Shell Raw Bar	8,873	59,840.68	62,643.38	2,802.70	196.19	2,998.89
C0007460/CT607765	241, 251A & 251B Margaret Street	Key West Bait & Tackle	3,280	22,120.73	23,156.80	1,036.07	72.52	1,108.59
C0009623	255 Margaret St. Plaza (Fish House)	Café' (RED Hospitality & Leisure)	1,404	9,468.72	9,912.24	443.52	31.05	474.57

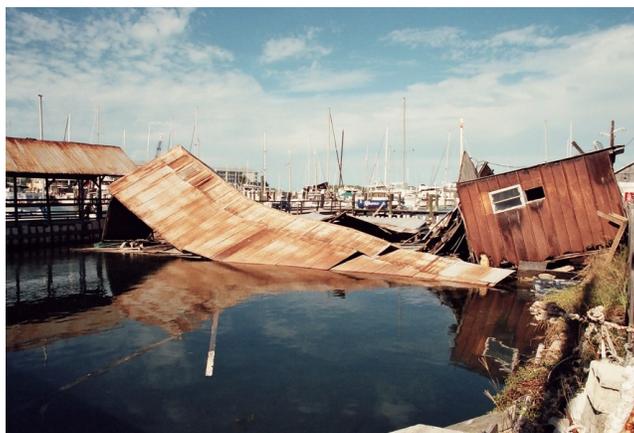
	Margaret Street Plaza	Public Restrooms (694 SF)	0						
C0005855/CT0005761	261 Margaret Street	Lost Reef Dive Shop	1,711	11,539.16	12,079.66	540.50	37.84	578.34	
C0006185/CT209214	901 Caroline Street	Flagler Station/HTA	5,586	37,672.80	39,437.16	1,764.36	123.50	1,887.86	
C0005811/CT0005811	907 Caroline Street	Good Day on a Happy Planet	975	6,575.47	6,883.50	308.03	21.56	329.59	
	907 Caroline Street (Rear)	Maintenance Shop (1,383 SF)	0						
	908 Caroline Street	Parking Lot	0						
C0006867/CT376845	FT 1st Floor Outdoor Area	Conch Electric Cars (Covered Ops Area)	337	2,272.78	2,379.22	106.44	7.45	113.89	
		Outdoor Parking Area (@ 50%)	297	2,003.05	2,096.82	93.77	6.56	100.33	
C0006836/CT354168	Ferry Terminal Suite 212	Vacation Key West Booth (vacant)	0	\$ -	-	-	-	-	
C0006574/CT500696	Ferry Terminal Ticket Counter	Key West Express Ticket Counter	172	\$ 1,160.00	1,214.32	54.32	3.80	58.12	
C0008514/CT719399	Ferry Terminal 213,225,225A	Paradise Porters	388	\$ 2,560.48	2,739.28	178.80	12.52	191.32	
C00097953/CT719336	Ferry Terminal 202/205	Yankee Freedom Office (309 SF); Office/- Storage (Suite 216) 99 SF; and Ground Level Storage (400 SF)	808	\$ 5,449.26	5,704.48	255.22	17.87	273.09	
C0009802/CT719399	Ferry Terminal 214	Superwoofie LLC	270	\$ 1,821.00	1,906.20	85.20	5.96	91.16	
	Ferry Terminal - All Non-Leasable/- Vacant Space	Restrooms, passenger area, hallways, vacant suites (8,137 SF)	0						
<b>TOTALS:</b>			<b>91,558</b>	<b>616,836.45</b>	<b>646,399.48</b>	<b>29,563.03</b>	<b>2,045.61</b>	<b>31,608.64</b>	

**Taxable:** \$29,223.18  
**Non-Taxable:** \$339.85  
**Total (Pre-tax):** \$29,563.03  
**Tax:** 2,045.61  
**TOTAL CAM DUE:** \$31,608.64

For more visuals click this link: <https://www.melfisher.org/key-west-turtle-kraals-photos>



The authentic Turtle Cannery in disrepair from neglect.

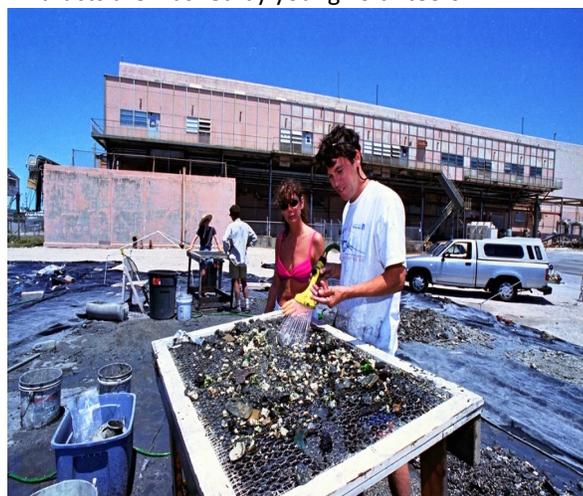


The Cannery collapses into the Turtle Kraals.

MFMM mobilizes a team for the artifact rescue mission.



Artifacts are washed by young volunteers.



The Turtle Cannery is a **National Register of Historic Properties (NRHP)** named structure.

In total disrepair, the city had applied for a grant to rebuild the cannery, but the city allowed the derelict historic structure to collapse into the turtle kraals. The State was angered by the neglect and lack of stewardship for the cannery, nonetheless they made the grant for a replica to be constructed, but it resulted in a deed restriction on the property that it be used as a maritime museum.

Earlier (circa 1998), then city engineer, and assistant city manager John Jones spearheaded an effort to rehabilitate the turtle kraals. Melissa Kendrick was TDC DAC I chair when the city requested and was awarded funding to install a water exchange system that could potentially improve water quality in the kraals with an eye to live animals being reintroduced. After years of approval delays, in 2000--the FL DEP issued a permit to the city to dredge the turtle kraals, the initial step in the water exchange project.

The FL DHR – specifically the Bureau of Archaeological Services goes berserk over the permit issuance. As a **NRHP** site, there must be a professional archaeological survey of the subject area before any work can begin.

**MFMM** is called by the State and informed that there is no budget, no staff, no supplies and no time, but this archaeological work must be done, and we are asked to perform the work and be steward of the project– from start to finish.

The Kraals are dredged by Toppino, and the removed muck is placed on then City Electric 's property. **MFMM** assembles materials, removing screen panels from our building, constructing legs to make screening tables, gather buckets, shovels, plastic bags, etc. – whatever we could get our hands on. All Makeshift. We assign all of our staff, solicit volunteers, assign tasks, train everyone and pay for the project.

**MFMM** processes, conserves, researches and catalogs the removed artifacts – over a 5 year period.

**MFMM** stores the artifacts for several years and then contacts FL DHR so that the objects could be transported to Tallahassee and take custody of these historic artifacts.

2008/2009 Richie Moretti (Marathon Turtle Hospital owner) and his then girlfriend Tina, operated the turtle cannery as a largely turtle themed gift shop with a plastic kiddie splash pool holding one green sea turtle until early 2009. The fact their operation was more gift shop than exhibit, is the reason why the current **Mel Fisher Maritime Museum (MFMM)** lease has a ten-percent square footage restriction for souvenirs. Richie and Tina break up, decide to close their operation and return the building to the city.

2009 The City asks **MFMM** to take over the occupancy of the building and create a maritime museum as required by the deed restriction/conservation easement.

**MFMM** staff travels to Tallahassee and retrieves the Turtle Kraal artifacts and develops the KW Turtle Museum.

The **KWTM** opens on 9-9-09 focused on the history of the sea turtle fishing industry that took place in the cannery building and surrounding pens. While historically accurate and elegantly done, the history is rather depressing, as it represents the slaughtering of green sea turtles almost to the point of extinction.

2010 **MFMM** reevaluates the mission and message and create a new version of exhibits in the cannery that balance the history and current conservation efforts.

To create some positive energy around the cannery, Melissa Kendrick reaches out to colleagues in Florida who do manatee rescue and rehabilitation seeking a partnership where the kraals could be modified for manatees to be held until they could be released into the wild.

Investigation of the kraals pilings and water testing was done. The water quality failed so extremely –the presence of decades of marina petroleum chemicals, toxins, fecal matter, etc. forced all parties to abandon the effort.