

**John E Wells, Jr**  
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TO: Mayor Johnston, City Commissioners, City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk Smith:  
FM: John Wells  
RE: Comments on KWC Meeting 15 March 2022, Agenda Item 11;  
Resolution for Creation of the “**Mallory Cruiseport Coral Nursery and Sanctuary**”  
DATE: 14 March 2022

Mayor Johnston, City Commissioners:

This letter is an endorsement of Item 11 of the Key West City Commission Meeting Agenda for 15 March 2022.

The maintenance and improvement of the Mallory Cruiseport is necessary to support the continued safe mooring of cruise ships and the debarkation of cruise passengers into downtown Key West. In addition, the planned structural maintenance of Mallory will ensure safe public use of the pier for all citizens and visitors, including during the famous Mallory Sunset Celebration.

Despite your passage of the recent Resolution directing cruise ships away from City controlled piers, it is my hope that cruise ships will continue to utilize the historic facility known for many decades as Mallory Pier. Key West has been an active seaport since the early 1800s. Maritime commerce centered at downtown dock facilities has been a vitally positive driver of the Key West economy since those early years. This Commission would do well to continue prior Commission’s conscientious efforts to promote the beneficial economic benefits of an active seaport.

I am most gratified to see that the 2020 Mallory Pier Benthic Resource Assessment has been entered into the public record. For months, I have encouraged the Commission, and all Key Westers, to review this interesting document. It is unclear if decades of cruise ship operations at Mallory have enhanced the health and well-being of the coral community affixed to the pier. What is perfectly clear, is that cruise ship operations have certainly not harmed the robust corals on the pier. It is also incontrovertible that turbidity, neither storm-driven nor ship-driven, has inhibited in any way the vigorous marine growth of corals and sponges in the harbor. Similar benthic surveys at the Navy Mole and Ocean Key House also report healthy coral colonies.

The Mallory stony corals represent an opportunity for use of the site as a place to culture important corals for transplant to stressed locations on the reef. In fact, two of the numerous species of stony corals on Mallory Pier are federally listed Threatened species. They appear healthy and thriving.

Therefore, I am respectfully requesting that the Commission initiate and pass a Resolution designating Mallory Pier as the **MALLORY CRUISEPORT CORALS NURSERY AND SANCTUARY**.

I also urge the Commission to rescind the Resolution passed last week that effectively closes the Mallory Cruiseport. It appears to be more environmentally expeditious to continue cruise ship operations into the future, maintaining the favorable marine habitat found under and around Mallory.

In all Sincerity,

*John E. Wells, Jr.*

201 Front Street, Key West