

From: Jennifer Naset <jennifer@birkenstore.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 1, 2019 4:39 PM
To: Clayton Lopez <clopez@cityofkeywest-fl.gov>
Subject: Mall on Duval- Birkenstock

Hello Mr. Lopez,

8/1/2019

We own the Birkenstock retail store at 612 Duval Street. Our hours are 10:00AM - 9:00/10:00PM seven days a week (11AM on Sunday).

We are opposed to Duval Mall for the following reasons:

- 1) We have not seen financial gain. Our numbers are down on the weekends.
- 2) With the street open to walk in the middle, it detracts from our window display that normally draws potential customers into our store.
- 3) We have no rear entrance for our deliveries. We personally transfer merchandise thru our front door frequently between our other locations.
- 4) With Duval closed off, it increases the traffic to side streets and creates frustration of trying to navigate thru 1 ways streets.
- 5) With elderly clientele (snow birds and guests), who are unable to "walk" Duval St. enjoy viewing the stores and atmosphere by driving Duval St. from Atlantic Ocean to Gulf of Mexico. It's an attraction in itself.
- 6) The ability to "drive" by and get dropped at a store where they would like to shop is HIGHLY important to Handicapped people. Verses having to walk the UNEVEN terrain between parking (if there is any parking) and stores location.
- 7) Duval Mall has increased the volume of alcoholic beverages into our store, leading to damaged merchandise and cleanup from spillage. Overall intoxication level of customers has increased, which has caused us to close earlier than the normal 9pm. Intoxicated customers are very hard to deal with.
- 8) Having to add the City of Key West to our insurance policy with the way the roads and sidewalks are, is just asking for our insurance premiums to increase when an accident will happen, due to potholes and cracked sidewalks (more so at night).
- 9) To participate with Mall on Duval, bringing our store out to the sidewalk is not as visually appealing as tables for a restaurant. We would need to add extra staff, costing more money, and then reducing our overall income.

Ways to Improve Duval Street quickly and inexpensively and without Duval Mall/\$40,000,000:

-

- 1) Keeping Duval Street as is with two-way traffic. Just improve the unevenness of potholes and sidewalks or repave.
- 2) Lower speed limit/post speed limit signs.
- 3) Keep streets & sidewalks clean, painted, and pressure washed frequently.
- 4) Keep trees trimmed and plant more trees where space is available.
- 5) Refurbishing current planters and adding more where space is available. Adding tropical flowers and colorful plants, increasing "island vibe".
- 6) Displaying seasonal decorations multiple times a year to enhance visual atmosphere and change for repeat tourists.
- 7) Adding extra streetlights and/or tree lights to brighten the atmosphere at night.

Other considerations:

There should be a review of the data collected due to lack of communication with actual stores owner and managers as opposed to speaking with staff who have no vested interest in the business.

Who is going to fund the "revitalization"? Increased taxes? If taxes increase, stores will begin to shut down (due to rent increases) and there will not be a "destination" to come to because there will be only a few shops. It will remind you of what it looked like the 70's when the Navy pulled out.

Duval Street is unique in its own special way. KEEP its CHARACTER. People come to visit because it is NOT like being in other "revitalized" cities. Why do we want to copy "other" city malls? Key West is about individualism.

Thank you for you time and consideration and taking a stand for our voices,

Ruth, Wally and Jennifer Naset

Birkenstock Sandals 612 Duval Street

Work # 305-294-8318

Ruth & Wally Naset 305-304-2044

Jennifer Naset 305-588-3096