

Keri O'Brien

From: johnwalshlfd (null) <johnwalshlfd@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 8:06 PM
To: City Clerk External E-Mail
Cc: Teri Johnston; Samuel Kaufman; District I; District III; District IV; District V; District VI
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter in support of North Roosevelt Boulevard railing.

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Mayor Johnston and City Commissioners:

I write to address agenda item 45 regarding the North Roosevelt Promenade. I think that almost all of us love the palm trees that FDOT lined the boulevard with. I find it incomprehensible that FDOT needs five feet of clearance to install a guardrail. I am however, again, shocked that the city would expose the 1100+ cyclists who use the promenade to grave danger to maximize the view for our tourists.

I have been and continue to be a zealous advocate for a safety railing along the promenade. A headfirst fall from a bicycle over the seawall into the rocks is most likely to be fatal. Imagine, if you will, diving head first off of the seawall into those rocks. The fact that no one has died is a miracle. A simple collision or even gust of wind can cause a cyclist to hit the edge of the sea wall and be catapulted head first to their death.

The promenade has become far more dangerous with the explosion of high speed electric vehicles traveling the promenade. I, myself, have largely stopped cycling downtown, after being struck by a three wheeled electric vehicle. For a community focused on being car-free, it is unconscionable to prevent the installation of such an obvious safety feature.

That no one tracks the number of cycle versus cycle or cycle versus pedestrian collisions is not evidence that these do not occur daily, as the lack of police citations for electric vehicles speeding on the sidewalks does not indicate that electric cyclists use care for the safety of those around them. We have to have a safety railing.

Although bicycle safety advocates will insist that bicycle lanes be separated from vehicular traffic by a barrier, I am not among them. No other street in town has such protection, and it does not seem well suited to this application. I am ambivalent toward a guard rail to separate vehicles from pedestrians and cyclists. If FDOT can install a guardrail without disturbing the trees, that is great. If not, I would rather have our beautiful tree lined boulevard. The railing, however, is the top priority.

Cordially,

John Walsh
3312 Northside Drive

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