

Duval Street Committee Meeting Minutes

June 4, 2008

2:00 p.m.

Present: Jimmy Weekley, Chairman
Gloria Sellers
Janet Kelly
Christine Russell
Perry Johnston
Roger McVeigh
Melissa Kendrick
Kevin Boucher
Barry Gibson, City Commissioner District IV
Vivian Perez, City of Key West Mayor and City Commissioners Office

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Chairman Jimmy Weekley asked for motion to approve the minutes of May 14, 2008 and May 21, 2008. It was moved by Roger McVeigh and seconded by Perry Johnston to approve the minutes of May 14, 2008 and May 21, 2008. The Chairman asked if everyone was in favor, the response was unanimous.

Chairman Weekley spoke to Virginia Panico about the possibility of sponsoring a 2-block street closure for Dog Days. Ms. Panico hesitated, saying that the Chamber had never done anything like that and said she would get back to us on the idea.

Tropical Heat Days, sponsored by the Business Guild was discussed as an alternate date.

Chairman Weekley reminded the committee that we need to get a request for a closure before the City Commission a minimum 60 days prior to the event.

Chairman Weekley asked Commissioner Gibson to check to see if the City still has benches that could be used for the public during a street closure.

The idea of closing the 500 and 600 blocks was discussed once again. Kevin Boucher suggested that the Committee think seriously about starting the pilot on upper Duval—Truman to United—as it is less crowded and Gloria Sellers thought that area was more amenable to creating an atmosphere that would encourage local interest.

There was a discussion perhaps we inviting the Key West High School band, Bahama Village Music, etc. (or parts of it) to play at the event.

Christine Russell, Roger McVeigh and Kevin Boucher suggested the Committee restate and define specific goals and create “talking points” for discussing the idea with merchants. Ms. Russell will create a short list for the committee to peruse.

Kevin Boucher asked who is going to approach the merchants. Chairman Weekley agreed to do so as did Kevin Boucher and other members of the committee.

Melissa Kendrick raised a caution flag in allowing street vendors to come into any closed area if their business was not in those blocks as they take business from the stores in the closed blocks.

Chairman Weekley asked again about the number of days and the time of day for the closure. Nothing was decided, but Friday –Saturday or Saturday-Sunday was preferred over a three-day event.

Roger McVeigh returned to the question of “what are we trying to do? Chairman Weekley responded that the Committee is interested in trying out a different direction for Duval Street: clean it up, make it green, and get locals back.

Commissioner Gibson pointed out that every city is reinventing themselves - but “it’s been a long time coming for Duval Street.”

Kevin Boucher cautioned that it may be difficult to say NO to some store owners. Melissa Kendrick pointed to the “merchandise” of some enterprises on Duval Street.

Chairman Weekley returned to dates and the blocks in question: 1) we are tentatively set on Womanfest, the first weekend of September, and 2) the upper Duval area makes sense for its wider street, more parking, and more places for people to gather.

Chairman Weekley will start talking to merchants to see if we can get a meeting with them at the La-Te-Da late one afternoon to: 1) explain what we are trying to do, and 2) listen to their ideas about how we can together make it a success.

Chairman Gibson will initiate street closing application

The next meeting was set for Wednesday, June 11, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. at 525 Angela Street in the ADA Conference Room.

The meeting ended at 3:05 p.m.

(Partial recordings of the meetings are maintained with the Executive Aide to the Mayor and Commissioners)