From: Kevin Roux
To: MVN Environmental;
Subject: Save Coconut Beach
Date: Friday, May 15, 2009 11:09:27 AM

Dear Gib Owen,

I am writing you this email in response to the closing of Coconut Beach for building of a pumping station. Although I share the sentiments of trying to make New Orleans a better city, and making sure the economy stays above water; I can't help but feel you are also threatening something great. Coconut Beach has been a place for wholesome family entertainment for some 21 years now. At a very basic glance, Coconut Beach seems to be nothing more than just a sandpit with volleyball nets strewn across the lakefront property. Taking a closer look I think you will see much more.

Being a resident of the New Orleans area my entire life I have seen businesses opened for family entertainment closing more often every year. Days are gone when parents could go to Fun Factory, Discovery Zone, or even Celebration Station. Bowling alleys and movie theatres are choices we still have, but often prove to be pricey for a family on a budget, which is becoming more prevalent these days.

How many children have grown up with the love of volleyball thanks to places like Coconut Beach? (For the answer, show up around 7 on weekends and see for yourself) Recent headlines relating to childhood obesity and violence have many wondering, where do we go wrong? The answer lies in these types of decisions! Taking away one of very few lasting forms of family entertainment can lead to nothing more than an increase in the headlines mentioned above. For one example of how Coconut Beach has helped our youth, look at Peggy Prescott whom I sympathize with when she mentions her son "was like so many of our youth, bored feeling like there is nothing to do in the area but go out clubbing, drinking." The result? She tells us and also brings up an interesting question, "Now he goes to Coconut Beach several times a week, training and playing on teams. He travels to Mississippi and Florida to participate in volleyball tournaments. How many other young people in our area have been helped this way by Coconut Beach over the last 21 years?" So as you make this decision, think of your sons, daughters, nieces, nephews, etc. Where is there future in this city headed if we continue to tear away at what's left of what New Orleans has to offer in the way of recreation?

Personally, Coconut Beach has offered a place for me to enjoy outdoor activity

without feeling too strenuous. I've struggled with my weight through my teenage years and into my adult life. What does that have to do with Coconut Beach? The answer is...everything. Never have I been one to enjoy outside activities or even exercise. Volleyball proved to be the only sport I could really get into and enjoy myself. Coconut Beach allowed me to enjoy the sport I have come to love and to use that love as a form of exercise to better my health. I'm sure I am not the only one out there with these feelings and the more you search, the more you will find people with stories similar to mine.

Coconut Beach has provided a home away from home for so many people. Post Katrina, no one knew what New Orleans would prove to be after such a devastating blow. Coconut Beach gave us an example of success through adversity. I can recall riding past the devastation that was lakefront property and passing by Coconut Beach in awe. However, little by little, two nets went up, two turned into four, and soon the entire lot was filled and ready. So what you are trying to take away is not just land, it's a symbol; a symbol that we can come through hard times and remember what it was like before. We can survive as people. We can come together and keep New Orleans alive even when the entire nation thought it would never be the same. So when it comes to the final decision, think hard and long. Save Coconut Beach, not just because we want you to, but because in your heart of hearts you know it's the right thing to do.

Sincerely,

Kevin Roux Jr.

Insert movie times and more without leaving Hotmail®. See how. <http://windowslive.com/Tutorial/Hotmail/QuickAdd?ocid=TXT_TAGLM_WL_HM_Tutorial_QuickAdd1_052009>