From: Greg Kolenovsky
To: MVN Environmental;
Subject: Save Coconut Beach
Date: Friday, May 15, 2009 10:19:01 AM

Dear Mr. Owen,
I am writing this note to you about saving Coconut Beach.

I've played volleyball at Coconut Beach for over 10 years now, and it is one of the main reasons I still live in New Orleans. The friendships I have made through my volleyball playing at Coconut Beach are a big reason of why I am now so deeply rooted in New Orleans. I've had several opportunities to leave New Orleans over the years, particularly since Hurricane Katrina.

Our friend group started out about 10 years ago as a group of fun single people looking for something positive and healthy to do with our time. We began playing together and formed friendships and even began volunteering locally together. Our group of over 40 people would meet up to volunteer by helping clean schools and playgrounds, painting houses and mentoring kids. Then we'd head over to Coconut Beach to play some pickup volleyball. We found each other at volleyball, and as a result, we encouraged each other to be better people and better citizens of New Orleans - an impact that is difficult to quantify and measure but the results cannot be denied!

This group is now mostly married, many have children and our dynamincs have changed, but we still meet up at Coconut Beach to play volleyball, talk about our lives and the city we love. Our kids now come with us to "the Beach" and love playing in the "big sandbox" -- what kid wouldn't love that!

I can't quite express how glad I am that my family and I live in New Orleans and have decided to stay. I have an amazing life filled with a family of friends that keep me going every day, and it really all started with/at Coconut Beach. Our group of friends were included in the ones cleaning up Coconut Beach after Katrina so that we would have an outlet to release some of the stress of the aftermath, and we wouldn't hesitate to do it again if needed.

Please consider this note and all of the other emails, letters and phone calls you are likely receiving in your decision to locate the new pumping station. Please do not take Coconut Beach from us. There have to be other viable options. I know you are in a difficult position with this and there is a lot of controversy surrounding the flood protection projects. But again, please do not take away Coconut Beach.

Thanks for your time and consideration, Mr Owen!

Long live Coconut Beach!

Greg Kolenovsky
New Orleanian & Coconut Beach Volleyball Player