

Jonathan Douglass

From: Jwmfrick@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, May 27, 2008 4:11 PM
To: jdouglas@ci.lawrence.ks.us
Subject: DOWNTOWN CONCERTS / ISSUES

Mr. Jonathan Douglas:

Thank-you for entertaining my conversation this morning regarding the issues surrounding the recent Wilco concert at 9th and New Hampshire on the evening of May 14th and the planning of future concerts. As I stated, I have serious concerns for the negative impact that turning the vacant properties on the southeast and southwest corners of 9th and New Hampshire into outdoor concert venues (referred to 'Wilco Fest' & Wkarusa Fest by the media) will have upon the adjacent properties (specifically 10 East 9th Street). You are the first to return any of my recent calls, so thanks in advance for lending an ear. Calls to the mayors office and Pipeline productions and Mike Logan on May 14th & May 15th have to date have fallen of deaf ears.

I will be the first to say that I enjoy an outdoor concert venue and I am fully supportive of anything that enhances downtown Lawrence, The Lawrence Chamber of Commerce and the Art Center as far as that goes. I have owned the property at the corner of 9th and New Hampshire since the early 1990's. I have recently re-invested substantially to maintain and improve the aesthetics of that corner.

My basic message is that I am not in favour or in agreement of using these downtown corners for 'outdoor concert venues'. We have a major problem in general with vagrancy, vandalism, trespassing and graffiti and the likes in this area of downtown Lawrence. Some of it gets reported to the police and much of it doesn't. Either way, it's a pretty obvious scenario to most everyone. The property at 10 East 9th Street is a weekly victim to these patterns.

On the night of the May 14th it was simply multiplied many times over. I personally spent over 2 1/2 hours picking up trash and drug paraphernalia. Mistakenly, I picked up all evening instead of just once the next morning. There were altercations in which the police were involved on the property directly.

There was obviously a very nice mix of attendees at the concert by and large, but no one can argue that a venue of this type attracts some undesirables also. It's should be of no surprise that these folks do not buy tickets or spend any additional funds at these promotions. Specifically, we had people sitting and standing on the newspaper vending machines, our sidewalk railings, etc, to get a free view. There was at least two fights in our parking lot (police were dispatched). There were vagrants who attempted to set up an overnight camp on a porch on our New Hampshire side of the property. There was a camper truck from Texas in the back lot for an extended stay. There were broken bottles and debris everywhere. Like I say, this is not unusual downtown activity, except that the impact is multiplied at an event of this nature.

I visited with one sponsor of the event and asked that they bring up these concerns if there happened to be a post concert evaluation. Their immediate response was that I simply hire security. Wrong answer ! I might add that the security that was present on the south side of 9th Street did observe some of this activity and just disregarded it. There is obvious an obvious liability factor involved at events of this nature and it inherently overflows to adjacent properties. It's unreasonable to expect the impact to be contained to the confines of the concert.

If downtown concerts are desired to be approved and sponsored, then I would respectfully ask that they not be held at these intersections where this property is negatively impacted. I might suggest one of the nearby city parks for a local presence. Our building specifically is of mixed use with dentists and other professionals as tenants. They expect a professional environment when they open up for business in the morning - not the remains of a concert. I'm curious as to how this detail was overlooked or not deemed important when approval for this activity was authorized.

Please assure me that these concerns are being addressed and that future events of this nature will be scheduled elsewhere.

Respectfully,

John Frick
Property Owner, 10 E. 9th
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