

January 21, 1999

Mr. Jonathon Poston
Historical Charleston Foundation
P.O. Box 1120
Charleston, SC 29402

Dear Mr. Poston,

The French Quarter Neighborhood Association (A.K.A. Dock Street Assoc.) is interested in letting you know about the efforts we have begun to stop any more progress at the property at 6 Chalmers Street that is proposed to open as a Slave Museum and gift shop. Please understand that we believe the concept has merit. But, as we mentioned in the attached letter to Mayor Riley, we feel that opening any new tourist site in our neighborhood will adversely impact us. We also strongly object to the manner in which the city has proceeded. We believe that someone from the city or the tourism office should have contacted us from the beginning of this project.

To date, Mayor Riley has not responded to the attached letter that I faxed to his office on January 14.

We are seeking a coalition of interested parties who see this as an opportunity to be heard by the city. With legitimate concerns and objections, we feel that our case could very well be similar to what has happened or could happen in your neighborhood. If you would like to be part of this effort or want to know more, we have scheduled a coalition meeting for Thursday, January 28 at my house, 25 State Street. We begin at 6:00 PM.

Please contact me at 722-8307.

Most sincerely yours,



Jacqui Brokaw
President, French Quarter Neighborhood Association

January 14, 1999

Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr.
P.O. Box 652
Charleston, SC 29402

Your Honor,

As president of the French Quarter Neighborhood Association (a.k.a. Dock Street Neighborhood Association) I am in my official capacity informing you that the residents of this community are opposed to the development, at this time, of any additional tourist attractions in our area. We are speaking here about the proposed development of a Slave Museum on the Chalmers Street property. Please understand that the concept of the Museum is not what we oppose. After hearing Ms. Maybank Turner and her colleagues at our December 22nd association meeting, we appreciate the enthusiasm for the proposed Slave Museum. In and of itself, the project has merit. Our opposition is based on the belief that the increased number of tourists and groups of school children will have a deleterious effect in our neighborhood.

With a mix of approximately 70% residential and 30% business or commercial, this already fragile neighborhood is being burdened beyond what any of us can be expected to endure. Our main objection is that the past performance of the city in enforcing existing ordinances has been ineffective and inefficient. It has not been unusual, as nearly all of us can attest to having our complaints unanswered, and in far too many cases, seemingly ignored by city employees. Ms. Maybank Turner told us that new ordinances would address our problems. Ordinances without enforcement are no solution. In fact, one could argue that they undermine the law as there is no consequence for violation. As a result, we are unable to trust you when your various representatives say, "these issues have been addressed and will be taken care of".

The second objection that we have concerns the fact that no one from the city or the tourism office contacted the Neighborhood Association at the start of this project. We feel that our input should have been solicited based on the first line of the mission statements concerning the Downtown Plan and Charleston 2000, which reads, "To preserve and enhance the quality of life of the citizens of Charleston". Clearly, if the well being of the residents is paramount, we should be heard from at the start on all issues. I'm certain you would prefer to have us be part of the solution, instead of the problem. Involvement, as any astute manager or politician knows is the way to create consensus and prevent the dissemination of misleading information and rumor.

The following list of actual documented events is representative of the issues we face daily and at all hours of the night:

- Large tour groups of children stopping traffic for up to 12 minutes while they cross streets
- Littering, vandalism and theft to plantings, window boxes, cars and homes and signs
- Inadequate parking for residents, particularly from 5-6PM and on weekends due to the influx of bar, market and restaurant patrons and employees
- Illegally parked cars at intersections, along "no parking" sides of streets, in loading zones and blocking driveways
- Noise and ringing of door bells late at night and in the early morning from bar and restaurant patrons returning to their vehicles or simply walking the streets
- Noise and air pollution from illegally parked delivery trucks that leave their engines running and cause houses to rattle as they speed down the street

While it is wonderful that residents take pride in their neighborhoods enough that they have personally policed their own area, we need more help from you. We pay for these services. Now we expect to receive them. It is sad that one child has already paid the price with his life on our busy and congested streets.

Until we are satisfied that more help and enforcement is being targeted for the French Quarter neighborhood, we intend to remain steadfast in our opposition to anything that will be viewed as a burden to our neighborhood. We respectfully request an appointment with you personally, Mayor Riley. We need to know that our concerns will receive more than just lip service.

We understand your busy schedule and request your quickest response. Please contact me at home, 722-8307. Since I will be out of town until Jan. 19, please leave a message and I will call you from Seattle. The Association has another committee meeting scheduled for January 21, so I would appreciate the opportunity to talk with you before then.

Sincerely,



Jacqui Brokaw, President

French Quarter Neighborhood Assoc.