

The New Freret Business Association
Board and Members

March 5, 2011

We at Las Acacias have applied for a Conditional Use Permit to sell Low and High content alcohol beverages at 4929 Freret Street. We are aware of both the positive and negative concerns from the businesses and residents. The Freret Street corridor's prosperity (not alone) but with Las Acacias is our top priority. Las Acacias was one of the first new businesses to open in the area after the storm and was highly welcome, first by the surrounding people in the neighborhood and second by other businesses. The new businesses along with the current businesses recognized we were convenient for their needs.

Las Acacias has supported the following businesses; Cure Cocktail Bar, with daily refreshment, snacks, ice for workers during construction, sometimes a cold beer at the end of the day and even hotdog buns after they opened for business. The guys from Beaucop NOLA Juice frequently came by to get products that they needed, including when they first opened. We supplied Freret Street PoBoy & Donut with ice and bread and other things when they were out of stock and Sarita's Grill with Latino specialty products. We were there for The Neighborhood Housing Service when someone just wanted a pack of cigarettes or a coke when taking a break and our next door neighbor in the old Blue Building at BrottWorks was always nice to buy cigarettes and Las Acacias would often accept his FedEx or UPS deliveries.

There are others, but these are just a few that stand out, as they thanked us for being in the neighborhood. These are a few of the existing businesses we supported when we first opened and others as new businesses came in. I know they were glad for the convenience. Some of these businesses' employees bought alcohol beverages that we sold in the store. They often said how nice it was to have a beer at the end of their work day.

We could not survive if we relied only on fellow vendors nor could they survive without the neighborhood people. The people that live around this Freret Street Corridor are why many of the businesses are here and stay in business. Each business provides the needed service as they see it. I believe not everyone from the next street off Freret in all directions is supporting the business as it may be unaffordable or they prefer to go elsewhere but Las Acacias saw the need (as other vendors did) to be able, within our capability, to provide this store.

When we had to move and the neighborhood folks realized it, many patrons asked us to stay. They said our service was needed. The neighborhood people that make up the neighborhood assisted in finding this new location for us. They wanted us to stay. They also said that alcoholic beverages in the store are a plus.

At present, we still provide this convenience at a much nicer, improved location. Las Acacias is recognized and complimented daily by the returning patrons who come by the new location.

Las Acacias was granted a low and high alcohol permit before we relocated to our new site. Though the granted permit was short lived, our standard will not change just because we are one block away. In fact, we feel we have improved our local image with the neighborhood and it would be foolish for us to retract. Las Acacias will continue to look for improvement. But improvement comes with businesses growing and being able to sell what will make a business grow.

We did not have any violations at the last location nor was given any negative feedback (from surrounding vendors or neighbors) about our business practices, upkeep around the store, hour of operation, loitering etc. In fact, in our past location, the property manager came by the store with a letter that was being sent out to surrounding folks about trash on Freret Street but said we weren't a problem and we kept the place up. We can say that the majority of feedback has been suggestions of what items we should put in the store. But we cannot accommodate everyone's wish, for everyone is different in what they want and think.

I understand some of the negative concerns about the past business at our current location. What was past is not today and Las Acacias is today and not the past. We do not have a short term lease at 4929 Freret. We do not have loiterers around the store. We open and close the store from 8am to 7pm. Our trash is controlled within our boundary. What we do is within business practices as other vendors on Freret Street. We will not allow our standard to go down. We can and will only improve. I would say shame on you that did not come by and tell us about any of the negative things that would down grade Freret. But which of you is without a negative that would come forth and tell the other.

We're an independent store like the rest of the vendors on Freret. We have products that you all see each day in other stores and advertised on TV like Lays Chip, Borden Milk, Bunny Bread, Coke, Pepsi, and products for the Latino neighbors that helped re-build the Freret Corridor. Selling alcohol beverage as any other convenience store or cocktail bar will help the area and not take away.

Please share this letter with others.

Sincerely,

Eldridge & Alba
Las Acacias, LLC