**From:** esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com
**To:** "American Folk Art"
**Cc:** Fletcher Tove; betseyrose@aol.com; "Debra Campbell"; "Brad Branham"; Brownie W. Newman
**Subject:** RE: re-opening ideas.
**Date:** Friday, May 8, 2020 1:18:46 PM

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Ms. Weiss – Hello again. I will let Fletcher address the issue of mandatory mask wearing verses encouraged/voluntary mask wearing, but I will say that yesterday at our daily briefing, Fletcher, the Health Department Director, the County Commission Chair, and I all encouraged people to wear masks - we continue to do this. The Governor is not mandating that people wear masks but continues to encourage mask wearing.

One question I have and maybe Fletcher or someone else can answer it is whether businesses could prohibit folks from entering who are not wearing masks.

I am also copying the city manager with this email so she can see your suggestion about having ambassadors downtown who can offer masks, and had sanitizer, etc. I think that is an idea the Emergency Operations team would need to look at.

Thank you for your continued vigilance around slowing he spread of COVID-19, you are helping to flatten the curve.

Thank you,
Esther

**Esther Manheimer**
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**From:** American Folk Art <amerifolk@bellsouth.net>
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 6, 2020 8:02 AM
**To:** fletcher.tove@buncombecounty.org; emanheimer@vwlawfirm.com
**Cc:** FOLKART@AMERIFOLK.COM; betseyrose@aol.com
**Subject:** re-opening ideas.

As a very small business owner, I am part of a group of downtown business owners:
Tracy Morgan Gallery
Mora Jewelry
Momentum Gallery
Patton Ave Pets
Asheville Gallery of Art
Paul Taylor Leather
Woolworth Walk
Hip Replacements
Willow's Dream
And my business:
American Folk Art
This is an *overnight* sampling of businesses that are not going to re-open on Friday, and have little confidence in re-opening soon. If you don't know these businesses, you should. We are all part of what makes Asheville the prized/unique destination it is….providing personality, jobs and tax revenue to our City, County and State.
NONE of us feel ANY of the matrixes have been met for us to re-open. NONE of us feel supported in finding safe solutions to meeting with the public.
We cannot hire extra staff to 'staff shift'. While we have employees, the business owners are the backbone of the business, the only way we survive is if we are healthy, that is the unfortunate reality…
Think of the Media NIGHTMARE of even one of us catching Covid-19 and God Forbid, dying.

There seems to be a lot of concern about us business owners welcoming and making our guests feel safe and comfortable.
I am asking YOU as leaders in this region to pay me the same respect and consideration by lawfully requiring anyone who enters a retail establishment to wear a mask.
If the county/city required mask inside retail establishments, we retailers will feel more respected and protected.

Another step the city can take? **Safety Ambassadors**. Folks who can be stationed in **several** locations downtown/west asheville commercial/south slope who can offer masks, hand sanitizers, maps, directions and information…It can simply be a table, every other block, until we get the testing and meeting any of the other matrixes that we have been assured would be in place before we re-opened our state….NONE of which have been met, as far as I can see…..

I am in my gallery every day…watching Biltmore Ave….next door to City Bakery, across from 67 Biltmore and The Wine Market…businesses that have been offering curbside pickup, I am in the perfect position to assess what our citizens are doing…..10-15% of the people downtown **are currently** wearing masks. 10 -15%. When restrictions start being lifted, it WILL send a message that 'things are better/safer'…and I don't think mask wearing will rise, I believe it will fall.
We need masks to remind people: This is a new era, and we need your co-operation to move forward safely.

PLEASE HELP US TO STAY SAFE & FRANKLY, ALIVE.
I am available: please reach out with any questions you might have.
Fearfully yours
Betsey-Rose Weiss
Owner
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