

When I and several other downtown businesses made our statement regarding the potential cancellation of the Melon Fest, I was hoping that the outcome would be that the City would rescind its ultimatum to HAPRA and allow the Festival to go forward as planned, including no early tent closure.

Although I am disappointed with the outcome of the decisions regarding the Melon Fest, I respect and understand the decision that HAPRA made to cancel the festival tent all together, rather than to lose money bringing it in during low traffic hours only.

The Festival Tent cancellation is a loss for HAPRA, for the businesses who benefit from the draw of the tent at peak hours, but, mostly, it is a significant loss for the Howell community - the City of Howell and surrounding townships - whose image has taken a hit once again.

I think that I speak for many businesses in downtown Howell when I say that we are grateful to HAPRA for moving forward with the rest of the events in an effort to help mitigate the financial impact of canceling the entire festival.

I look forward to welcoming those who attend this year's "Mini Melon Fest" but hope that next year's will be open in its entirety...and that we, as a community, can make all feel welcome.

Lorna Brennan
Uptown Coffeeshouse