

Retailing

'I think I want to move': South Street business owners react to Saturday's mass shooting

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Ivy Cheng, the owner of Jade's Fashion Boutique on South Street.
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Ivy Cheng began closing her store, Jade's Fashion Boutique, at 7 p.m. on weekends last year for safety reasons as crowds would gather on South Street. On Sunday morning, she returned to her store to find blood smeared across the pavement outside.

Three people were killed and 11 were wounded in a mass shooting on South Street late Saturday night. Police say dozens of bullets were fired into a crowd of hundreds of people between Second and Third streets. Jade's Fashion Boutique at 250 South St. sits directly across from windows that are now marked by three bullet holes.

Cheng said before last year, she never had a problem staying open until 11 p.m. Her business has gone down as a result of the early closings, Cheng said, but she emphasized the need to put safety first. Now, she's not sure how much longer she wants to call South Street home.

"I think I want to move," Cheng said. "I feel like I have to right now,"

She lives close by in Queen Village with her family, and was able to hear the gunshots. She thought it was a motorcycle or ATV, but then heard sirens and ambulances.



Bullet holes can be seen in a glass storefront across the street from Jade's Fashion Boutique on South Street.
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"People died right outside," she said pointing to the street. "It's scary. I just cannot comprehend it right now."

Sam Shaw, who opened Sam Shaw's Treatery on the 300 block of South Street in January, said that the shooting speaks to the current state of affairs in Philadelphia, where "law and order has been defied."

Shaw left dinner on nearby Bainbridge Street around 11 p.m. on Saturday night, getting home about a half hour before the shooting happened.

"I was enraged," Shaw said of her reaction to hearing about the shooting. "I felt every emotion: sad, terrified, angry. And what can you do?" She said that because of the increasingly larger crowds on the streets, it's "not necessarily surprising, but it's still shocking and traumatic."



Sam Shaw's Treatery opened four months ago at 306 South St.
RYAN MULLIGAN

Shaw said she is meeting with other business owners this week to discuss potential steps to take in the wake of the shooting. The new business owner said many of her fellow South Street retailers she's spoken with feel "a collective frustration" about what transpired. She said the owner of the bar Dobbs on South next door ran outside to help victims of the shooting.

"I'm not afraid to yell and scream and do what I have to do. We need to change some of this around here," said Shaw, a Society Hill native. "I'm not going to be quiet."

Ali, who declined to give his last name, works the morning shift at Fresh 2 Go Grocer. The market at 301 South St. is open late on weekends, and he said he heard from his coworkers that there was a shooting victim outside the store and bullets on the streets.

"It affects the whole street," he said. "It's madness, it's not supposed to be like that."

Shaw said that despite the violence, she wants to encourage people to return to South Street, a popular destination for both locals and tourists where she spent many days as a kid. She has seen the ups and downs of the neighborhood but wants to be a part of its resurgence. Small businesses are "the heart and soul of South Street," and staying away from the area won't help the cause, Shaw said.

"I try to remain positive," Shaw said. "People have been checking in; they want to see this area thrive. No one wants to see it crumble."



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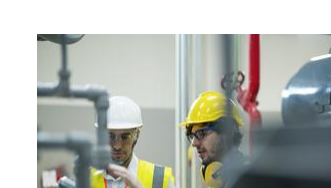
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