

FMIA BOARD MEETING MINUTES

MAY 4, 2022

Meeting held at the home of Robert Sonnier

Meeting opened at 7:00 pm

Members Present: Allen Johnson, Phillip Lege, Robert Sonnier, Gary de Leumont, Bryan Harms, Jeffrey Seymour, Bobby Moffatt, Maurice Sholas, Lisa Faatland. Guest Present: Bryan Duplechain

Lisa Faatland was voted in as recording secretary.

President's Report: Allen Johnson

Property at Dauphine and Franklin has been fined several times. Jim Thorick, the owner, owns multiple properties in the Marigny and Bywater. The hope is that the property will be cleaned up. The fence at present is not legal. Winston Fiore is keeping up with this and doing a great job.

Pollinator Gardens - There are three of these gardens in the Marigny. Volunteers will help to keep these gardens going and some have already started. Robert Ripley, who recently passed, had planned on recruiting volunteers; once his partner, Tom, returns, he will take on this task. Gary Rink and his wife, Jane, have been/will be asked to water the garden at Burgundy and Franklin.

Dan's Bar is being renovated, however it has seen no activity for months. The property is currently zoned residential and will apply to be rezoned commercial. The Pottery Studio on St. Claude will relocate to the bottom floor with apartments above.

Two Blighted Situations - Standard Coffee owned by Riley Foods, located across from Paladar & Grand Krewe. Police cleared out the building which saw considerable damage from Ida. It has been out of business since Katrina. The second blighted property is Aquatic Gardens. There is a need for a Blight Chairman.

Big Freeda project will be a food forward restaurant and have four rooms. It has gone through ARC. It backs up to Frenchman Hotel. The project has not started construction.

Treasurer's Report: Phillip Lege

FMIA currently has a little over \$50,000. About \$8,000 is set aside to maintain the Aids Memorial in Washington Square Park. (note: the granite bench is missing and a few glass blocks are broken.)

See attached Treasurer's Report.

Committees: Gary de Leumont

Parks and Parkways - There has been considerable turnover at Parks and Parkways and FMIA. Gary will contact them to coordinate what each entity will do for the park.

Membership Report: Robert Sonnier

Currently there are 176 members of which 75% open the email blasts. There were 300 members in the late 1990's. With about 3,000 people living in the Marigny Robert is seeking ways to increase membership by finding the best way to inform residents of the FMIA's existence. Robert will canvas different platforms and the types of people that would be interested in joining. The FMIA has an account with Next Door which could be used to promote the FMIA. In the past Lisa Suarez created a welcome package that realtors gave to new home owners. This could be revived.

Communications: Bryan Harms

More tracking on the FMIA website was implemented a month ago. The goal is to understand how to make it a more useful tool and expand tracking to Facebook and Instagram. Allen will pass on a game plan. There will be no redesign on the website at this time. It would be good to have a digital strategy going forward.

Land Use Report: Jeffrey Seymour

1. Making parklets legal - The CPS made more restrictive recommendations than was originally proposed. For example, in the Triangle, only a few blocks of Frenchman street would be allowed to have parklets. This would occur when both sides of the blocks are commercial. Parts of Magazine St. and the CBD would be eligible under the CPS recommendation. The French Quarter wants a total prohibition of parklets. The City Council could change the CPS recommendations.
2. City Council - Accessory Dwellings were denied by CPC and will go to City Council. Of those voting, only two planning commissioners voted for the dwellings - they are realtors. Freddie King has noted that many of the neighbourhoods were not in favour of these dwellings.
3. Small, multi family affordable dwelling units - discussion about relaxing the rules for affordable housing. The CPC recognises that the STR's are ruining neighbourhoods. CPC staff put in an appeal provision which would allow an STR in order to build affordable housing.
4. Trash House - The plans submitted by the applicant had another architect's seal on the drawings. The applicant removed the seal and resubmitted. The guilty architect, Walter Anton III, was fined \$1,500 and suspended by the architectural examiners for six months. The owner will need to apply for conditional use. The 621 Elysian Fields situation is motivating people to be concerned about the number of STR's and hotels coming into the neighborhood.

5. 502 Frenchman, an historically significant building, c 1836, is being deferred to the June 5 City Council Meeting. The HDLC has denied the request of the set back penthouse on the building as this would set a bad precedence. The PRC is also pushing back. Even with the set back, the penthouse would be seen from both Esplanade and Frenchmen Streets. What is proposed for the property is a Saunder style hotel and as the building is currently used as STR's, residents don't have issues with the hotel.

Outdoor Live Entertainment:

The City Council requested a report from the CPC on expanding the rules for live entertainment. After a year or better study, in which neither residents nor musicians were asked for their input, the CPC could not make recommendations on live entertainment for numerous reasons: the lack of a clear and constitutional noise ordinance, lack of enforcement of the current rules on the books for music venues, etc. It will now be up to City Council to decide the matter.

Residential Parking Program:

Bryan Duplechain has lived in the Marigny four years and would like to investigate having a residential parking program in the Rectangle. Not all were in favour of this idea. Currently there is no enforcement in the Triangle where there are parking restrictions. Not every block is restricted in the Triangle; it goes block by block for which the majority on the block approved the restrictions. Gary motioned that the FMIA approach the Parking Permit Division to potentially expand residential parking to the Rectangle. The motion was seconded by Bobby and passed. Allen will call the city and walk Bryan D. through the process. Bryan D. said he would take on the responsibility of the residential parking program.

Meeting concluded about 8:30 pm'ish

Let me know if I need to make any changes.

Lisa Faatland
Secretary
Faubourg Marigny Improvement Association