

FMIA Board Meeting Minutes

July 5, 2022

Meeting held at Robert Sonnier's home

Members Present: Allen Johnson, Phillip Lege, Robert Sonnier, Gary de Leumont, Bryan Harms, Jeffrey Seymour, Maurice Sholas, Lisa Faatland, Kip Hollar

President's Report: Allen Johnson

- 1) Allen introduced Kip Hollar as a new board member. He's a long time member of the FMIA and in the past took care of advertisements for the newsletter.
- 2) Party Buses and trailers pulled by trucks are a big problem on Frenchman St. Winston Fiore is looking into this.
- 3) Barbecue Grills - the 8th district is doing a good job of shutting this situation down as food trucks are allowed in only a few designated places.
- 4) Standard Coffee -the Riley Foods building across from Grand Krewe. Transients have claimed this building. Riley Foods is not cooperative, says it's not their problem. They own three city squares. Necessary to go through a process to be rid of the transients.
- 5) 502 Frenchman - still requesting a setback for penthouse. The neighbours are against this as well as Louisiana Landmarks and HDLC. This will go to Architectural Review July 19. Interior demolition has started.
- 6) Night time mayor - Howard Kaplan has been appointed by the Mayor. He is a bar and club owner. The VCPORA, Marigny and Bywater have requested to meet with him three times and to date, no luck.

Treasurer's Report: Phillip Lege

Public Works is trying to take over CVU art box projects. CVU has been overseeing and paying artists to artistically decorate/paint and has completed 300 boxes in the past 11 years. While it is still possible, the board approved to provide \$750 per box, to CVU at St. Claude and Franklin and at Royal and Elysian Fields.

Aid's Memorial in Washington Square: Phillipe Lege

No dedication information can be found for the missing granite bench. It was suggested that Ken Caron, Rene Fransen (landscaper), Tony Marino could be contacted for info. Phillipe spoke with Gretchen and got what info she had. Going forward perhaps a tomb builder could provide a similar bench.

The previous board decided to send back the checks that the FMIA was receiving from Greater New Orleans Fund as we were not doing anything with the money, thinking that when money was needed it would be given. This is not the case. The money goes back into the general fund and gets reinvested. We can't ask for the returned monies/checks that we sent back.

Membership: Robert Sonnier

Membership is down by 33 people to 173 members for 2022 compared to 2021. Possibly a welcome package could be given to new residents of the neighbourhood which could include: FMIA organisation information, garbage pick up day, sample eblasts, meet the neighbours etc. Allen to contact Garden District to see what they do. Gretchen could be contacted for past welcome package.

Committees: Gary de Leumont

No committee person responded to Gary's email requesting information/updates.

Meet the Neighbors: Lisa Fatland

- 1) July 14 will be held at Horn's in the rectangle. Kappa will decide on the refreshments. August 11 Meet, will be held at Ayu Bakery which will provide nibbles and drinks.

2) Suggestions for future Meets included: Breakaways, (formerly Love Lost Lounge), Nonno's Anna's (formerly Mimmi's), Baldwin's, Sidney Torres' Bed & Breakfast across from Buffa's. The idea is to alternate Meets between the triangle and the rectangle.

3) The December Caroling was discussed. The date needs to be the week before French Quarter Caroling to avoid conflict. Allen will try to find a contact at Patio Planters which sets the date. We would like to hold it again at Peter and Paul with the Physter Sisters leading the Caroling. In the past Who Dat Cafe provided refreshments.

Land Use: Jeffrey Seymour

- 1) 2121 Chartres (Trash Palace) The sponsors continue to push for hotel project. It needs to have a conditional use to proceed as it is over 10,000 sf. Mr. Walter Anton is the developer. The owners have decided to maintain two stories, instead of three, in order to receive tax credits. It will be will be a Saunder style run hotel. It will have lobby, cocktail bar, perhaps with light food. They are being encouraged to include the community much like what Peter and Paul did.
- 2) Forty seven parking spots are required and currently no parking is provided which would require a waiver. The hotel owners' idea would be to contract parking across the street. However, French Market owns the parking lot and it's managed by Premium Parking, which uses dynamic pricing much like Uber being based on demand. It's public parking and not meant as parking for hotels. The current parking management contract can change every five years. Previously the Trash Palace had parking, and with fewer rooms on the ground floor. parking could be made available for the hotel. The hotel should pay for the parking spots - not the clients, otherwise the clients will park in the neighbourhood.
- 3) FMIA needs to decide what its' position is on more hotels in the neighbourhood considering there is a moratorium on hotels in the Quarter. The FMIA with the Bywater should develop a plan as to how many hotels could be built, where adaptive reuse could be considered, and the density of hotels. Plan long term ideas. A survey could be taken as to empty lots, warehouses - what could go there. Parking remains a huge problem for the neighbourhood and should be a requirement particularly with new buildings.

Note: In regards to parking, 502 Frenchmen got conditional use without parking as it is an existing building which is being given a new lease on life and basically no one lives along that part of Frenchmen.

Hampton Inn has parking underneath on the premises. Hampton Inn will also need to find additional parking as it does not have enough places now. (They received a height waver.)

4) Suggested to go to MPP meeting and ARC meeting on July 19 at 12:30. ARC is very organised with 10 minute slots for speakers so they know when to be present.

Cultural Facility Text Amendment: Jeffrey Seymour and Allen Johnson

Krewe of Red Beans, Ben Landia, wants to have the building across from Markey Park (in the Bywater) and open it as a cultural facility to hold events and fund raise for Krewe of Red Beans. They would need conditional use to have a bar and need an ABO license to sell liquor. As they are across from a park they will need to get 75% of the surrounding residences to be on board with this idea.

There are two different items to consider - One would be a specific zoning change for Ben Landia, Krewe of Red Beans, which no one is opposed to; the other, a text amendment, would affect all museums and cultural facilities throughout the city in terms of live music.

The board unanimously opposed the text amendment as it relates to live entertainment for cultural facilities.

Outdoor Live Entertainment: Jeffrey Semour & Allen Johnson

The city council has a **proposal for the sound ordinance**. Joe Giarusso is shepherding this through. The Health Department would oversee it, but the actual running of it would be Safety and Permits and the Police Dept.

The other issue, **ambient sound**: enforcement is currently not viable in terms of how many decibels. How much sound is one allowed to emit - ie, residential against commercial. Not discussed was what sound can be emitted from public right away, ie brass band, party bus, or bands set up in french quarter.

Jeffrey is working with VCPORA on live entertainment, parklets. etc. VCPORA shared the sound consultants report with FMIA which cost \$1,000. To foster a good working relationship with VCPORA, we could contribute \$250 as a nice gesture. For now we will not issue a check.

Parklets passed. Enforcement will begin when LaToya rescinds her emergency power (due to Covid), then enforcement will be begin. There will be no grandfathering of illegal parklets.

FMIA could consider hiring a professional such as a city planning consultant regarding things like hotels. We would state our our top priorities - our mission statement and how we could accomplish these.

Outdoor Live Music

July 21 City Council Meeting - Came out more stringent than expected. There can be music 3 nights a week if the business is 600 feet from a residence. If within 600ft, need to go through conditional use permit process with city planning commission. At that point, the business could get 3 nights a week. There is a ban on live entertainment in the Quarter. Currently the Marigny has no live entertainment without a conditional use permit process. Business would need to have a 15 foot buffer zone between residential line and commercial. An accessory permit could be applied for having live entertainment on any commercial property throughout the neighbourhood as long as there is 15 foot buffer once a week and twice a week if the business is in the overlay - for example the Red House could have live entertainment once a week. The best option would be to eliminate the Accessory permit as it would be city wide.

Places like Peter and Paul are allowed eight special permits a year for three nights each. The sound ordinance should have been in place before discussing where outdoor live music can occur and with what criteria.

There will be a live entertainment meeting on July 13 at St, Roch Church. They are asking for a handful of people from the neighbourhoods as they are concerned that the Royal Frenchman and MACNO will bring their people and sway opinions for the live music ordinance.

Misc:

Kip brought up 939 Elysian Fields next to the Phoenix which is being broken into.

Cats claw is considered blight and against code.

Dauphine St. house started and stopped. The plans were not on line as is the norm. HDLC concerned and went to Safety and Permits.

The meeting ended around 8:45.