

## FMIA Board Meeting Minutes

September 7, 2022

Meeting held at Robert Sonnier's home

Members Present: Allen Johnson, Phillip Lege, Robert Sonnier, Gary de Leumont, Jeffrey Seymour, Lisa Faatland, Kip Hollar, Bobby Moffit, Dr. Maurice Sholas, Devin Dewulf

### **President's Report:** Allen Johnson

1. Elections will be held at the next general meeting. Four positions are open: Dr. Maurice Sholas, Bobby Moffit, Mark Malousse, and Jeffrey Seymour will be standing for the board elections. Robert Sonnier will not return to the board.
2. Department of Public Works will be at the next meeting. SWB has to do with drainage and water; Public Works deals with sidewalk repair, street repairs, street lights, signage, etc. For the October meeting we could have the Sanitation Department speak. Discussion would centre on services provided as opposed to the past.
3. No scooter position by City Council or administration. Trying to have scooters pulled from the streets. Public Services could be requested to pick up the scooters.
4. Issue with Frenchmen St. and vendors. Lots of party buses, food vendors etc on street. Regular business have to pay taxes and vendors do not, plus the vendors leave a lot of trash behind. Trying to get 8th district to rein in party buses, but their emphasis is focused on the French Quarter.

### **Treasurers Report:** Phillip Lege

1. Not much has changed from last month. About \$1,500 has been paid in for membership dues.
2. \$51,783.00 is total now on hand. No notable expenses for the last month.
3. No one is being paid to develop the website. Mail box rental renewal has already been paid.
4. All accepted the treasurers report.

### **Membership:** Robert Sonnier

1. We're down by 3 members from last year. We have nine new memberships in the last 30 days. We have 183 members now. We are up by four small business memberships.

### **Committees:** Gary de Leumont

1. Deborah didn't have anything to contribute and the other committees are represented on the board.

### **Beanlandia:** Devin Dewulf

1. They have bought the Diagiorno furniture building in the Bywater, across from Markey Park.
2. Devin gave out a pamphlet outlining the plans for Beanlandia. The purpose of Beanlandia is to carry out programs such as having a meeting place for the Krewe of Red Beans, other krewes and culture bearers; implement programs for children starting with sports and science; provide help in times of duress such as Covid, as well as relief for those affected by natural disasters, etc. For this, 250 people have been hired providing \$1,000,000 in jobs.
3. Beanlandia space (25,000 sf) was purchased with owner financing and a private loan - It is a fixer upper. They hope to move in in a couple of months. They are using grass roots funding, but would also like to have live music and a bar to raise money for their existing non-profit/cultural facility.
4. There are two things to consider: a) Beanlandia wants a conditional use to have a bar and live music as a cultural facility/non profit, b) Freddie King has proposed a text amendment which would allow this but, would have a city wide effect for all non-profits/ "cultural facilities".

5. The text amendment is opposed by the Garden District, FMIA and Baywater Neighbor Association as it would have far reaching consequences throughout the city. To date non profits can request a special permit for events.
6. Another issue is parking. They need 92 parking spaces as per the square feet. There is a parking lot but currently it is not safe. They could possibly rent spaces from the Father Sealos church four blocks away. It was brought up that many of their members are within walking distance.
7. The board voted against the text amendment.

**Cafe Istanbul:** Mark Fiorillo (not present)

1. Mark lives near Cafe Istanbul and has documented numerous occasions when the Cafe is not abiding the community benefit agreement. The City says that Cafe Istanbul must abide by the agreement but there is no enforcement. The city or the FMIA would have to sue the Cafe in order to force them to follow the agreement. Mark will address this issue in the October board meeting.

**Meet the Neighbors:** Lisa Fatland

1. September Meet the Neighbors will be held at Silk Road. Food and drink will be provided
2. Nonno's (formerly Horn's) will be the site for the October Meet the Neighbors.
3. Carolling in December at Peter and Paul from 6-7:30, December 11. Lisa to contact Lisa Suarez for the carolling template she used in the 2019 newsletter.

**Land Use:** Jeffrey Seymour

1. Peps Bar trying to reopen the parklets issue as well as other bars.
2. 502 Frenchmen appealing the decision of not permitting the penthouse/terrace. Winston Fiore, the land use person, has been rubber stamping appeals. HDLC and ARC have strict prohibitions on removing the roof on significant historic buildings. The HDLC has opposed the penthouse concept for the third time. 502 will appeal to the City Council again. The various city associations are in agreement in not permitting the terrace/penthouse. If successfully appealed, it sets a precedence city wide.
3. 621 Elysian Fields - Property has been completely cleared. They are putting a hotel on the Chartres Street side. By doing so it seems they will develop a piece of the property at a time.
4. 2121 Chartres - There is no parking. The developer has said they could have contract parking with Premium Parking across the street, but there is no proof of this. Allen sent a letter to CPC to deny or defer the conditional use for lack parking.
5. STR's - The Court of Appeals ruled against the STR homestead requirement.
6. Aid's Memorial in Washington Square - missing bench: Crescent Care might have old records or Richard of Aquatic Gardens might have information as to who donated the bench.

**Rail Crossing Gates:** Gary de Leumont

1. If drop crossing gates, no need for train horns, however, two gates are missing.
2. The City is doing a study on quiet zones.

**Night Against Crime:** Kip Hollar

1. to be held the evening of October 4. Kip having difficulty applying for street closure.

The meeting finished around 9 pm.