



Les Amis de Marigny

Helping to make Marigny a better place to live, work and play

The Long, Hot Summer

By Lisa Suarez, FMIA President

With no July newsletter and hot, hot summer days, I thought things would slow down a bit. No way. There were even more meetings, mostly due to the city's Budget process, and the Consent Decree Public Reports. The Mayor's Roundtable Budget Workshop on a Saturday morning, and then the District C Budget Meeting held on the Westbank all sounded like pretty dry stuff, but we have to take our entertainment where we can find it.

More about the Consent Decree later, which ties into the hottest issue in the country right now, racism and police brutality.

The issue for our little pond, which has been affecting our quality of life for quite some time, is the scourge of the Short Term Rentals (STRs). Watch a video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmJE1_MSbFA



Like the Riverfront Overlay in the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (CZO), if the Mayor has his way, and 50 percent of homes in Historic districts become ersatz hotels, we

are relieved of any say, called "Conditional Use," in development process.

Make no mistake, we are still fighting the process by which the Riverfront Overlay, giving height bonuses of 25 feet to 55 foot buildings, despite the promise of the Master Plan protecting "the character of Historic neighborhoods," was made law by last minute

amendments without having been formally reviewed by City Planning Commission (CPC).

With STRs, the CPC has, thankfully, turned up its nose at the concept of whole house rentals (without an owner on premises,) allowing investors to scoop up multiple homes to be made into mini-hotels, being forced on us by our Mayor, robbing renters of not only affordable places to live, but also ridding us of Registered Voters, so that we may never have any say in the process. That's been the goal all along, by the way, Tourist Heaven, and who cares about the people who live here.

Keep in mind, the CPC has virtually no power here, they are only a body of recommendation to the City Council, who make the real decisions. In District C, the majority of voters live on the Westbank, in Algiers, so you may already believe you have no say, but on Tuesday, August 9th, after 1 p.m., and the day two months from then when the Council takes it up — this is when your voice is needed.

What's Inside this edition of
Les Amis de Marigny

The Logical Fallacy

Property Tax Rolls for 2017

Yours Truly in a Swamp

Marigny Green

Speaking Volumes

. . . and More!

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Wear Red — Now the Color of Objection

The FMIA has never been against reasonable regulations to maintain the quality of life we have come to expect, since investing in Faubourg Marigny — not as investors buying up housing to make hotels — but actually having chosen to make our lives here.

The Mayor says, "You can't stop the 'disrupting' economy." Notice it's not the "sharing" economy any more. The lobbyists and their public relations firms have arrived. Airbnb beat'em in San Francisco, will they beat the will of the people here? Here's a sensible comment from Uptown's Keith Hardie that went to the CPC recently:

"Three Senators have called on the Federal Trade Commission to investigate the short term rental industry. In the attached article, the Guardian quotes from a letter written by Senator Elizabeth Warren and co-signed by Senators Brian Shatz and Dianne Feinstein: "[W]e are concerned that short-term rentals may be exacerbating housing shortages and driving up the cost of housing in our communities."

. . . we are concerned that communities and consumers may be put at risk through violations of sensible health, safety, and zoning regulations under state and local law.

"Furthermore, we are concerned that communities and consumers may be put at risk through violations of sensible health, safety, and zoning regulations under state and local law."

The senators' inquiry also notes complaints about the alleged "widespread discrimination against African-American guests" by Airbnb hosts.

Please, do not approve any form of short term rentals other than those where the host is actually present and lives on the premises. All other forms of STRs will reduce available housing across all economic strata and force people who have lived in New Orleans for generations to move out of town. This is a predatory industry that distorts housing markets and destroys the cohesion of neighborhoods. Recommend to the council that most forms of STRs continue to be illegal and that the City

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Ads should be photo ready, or in jpg, tif or pdf format.

All advertising must be received by the 15th of each month for publication in the next month's issue. For information regarding advertising, contact us at secretary@faubourgmarigny.org.

Classifieds Now Available

The newsletter is now accepting classified ads. Personals, however, are not being accepted. Contact ads@faubourgmarigny.org. Classified Rates: \$5.00 per each 25 words.

About the Newsletter

Les Amis de Marigny is the newsletter of the Faubourg Marigny Improvement Association, a 501(c) non-profit, all-volunteer organization committed to the preservation of the unique architectural and cultural heritage of our historic district, and to improving the quality of life in our diverse community.

Contents, editorials and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the official views of the FMIA, its Board or its members. The FMIA does not warrant the legality of any business advertised in its newsletter.

Contents of Les Amis de Marigny are copyrighted. Permission to reprint any of the newsletter, including photographs and original artwork, must be obtained from the editor and/or byline columnist.

Manuscripts, photographs and articles dealing with topics of interest to the Marigny neighborhood are encouraged. The editor reserves the right to reject submissions including editorial and advertising content.

Submissions must be received by the 7th of the month for inclusion in the next month's issue. Send contributions to:

FMIA Newsletter
2401 Burgundy St., Box 10
NOLA 70117

or editor@faubourgmarigny.org.

The newsletter is published each month except August and January. Back issues are available online at www.faubourgmarigny.org.

Design & Layout by GK Productions, Inc.
Printing by Printall, Inc.

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impose substantial monetary fines on violators and assign personnel to prosecute them.”

Read the article here:

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/jul/13/elizabeth-warren-airbnb-government-investigation#maincontent>

It is also important to note that so far, the numbers do not add up. The costs of applications will not finance proper inspection, no fines have been recommended that outstrip the profit margin. The entire proposal is an insult to zoning law which clearly separates residential neighborhoods from commercial activity. Speaking of zoning, the current proposal makes STRs “unlimited” in those areas zoned “Mixed Use.” Hmm, where would that be? Why, the Riverfront Overlay, of course.

Recently, the New Orleans Hotel Association weighed in with their opinion on how STR's have affected their profits (down 2-3% at Jazz Fest), they stand up for the Tourist Industry, and are against Short Term Rentals that affect their profit, and places to live for their service workers. FMIA agrees. Let's work together to reduce this scurrilous profit-machine that does not benefit the community to the

proper proportion. What's acceptable? Maximum of two units per block face, including Licensed Bed and Breakfasts, which is already a 100 percent expansion over what exists now. Let's have fines big enough to finance enforcement, and reduce the profit margin for “disruptors” to slim and none.

Let's work together to reduce this scurrilous profit-machine that does not benefit the community to the proper proportion.

Personally, I believe there should be a “bounty” for citizens who turn in unregistered STRs, that way it won't matter that the mega-companies hide their data. Neighbors, if there are any, will know.

More info can be found at:

<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-santa-monica-airbnb-conviction-20160713-snap-story.html>

Intangible Assets: Community, Culture and the Spirit of Place.

This is a mini documentary designed to educate people about how short-term rentals can harm our sense of community and quality of life.



Strangers Among Us

*New Orleans'
Short-Term Rental invasion*

Watch the video
Strangers Among Us
at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmJE1_MSbFA



Arts Estuary 1024 is a multi-tenant arts facility managed by the National Performance Network. It is located at 1024 Elysian Fields Ave. in a renovated beautifully historic building. The facility is available for rent including:

Long Term Parking

Meeting Rooms

Nonprofit Office Space

For more information, contact us at
www.npnweb.org/artsestuary1024, facility@nnpweb.org or
call 504-595-8008.

What's a Consent Decree?

By Lisa Suarez

There's an excellent description of the state of the New Orleans Police Department post-Katrina in the August 31, 2015 issue of The Atlantic, by Donovan X. Ramsey, which may catch you up to where we are now, almost a year later.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/08/katrina-blew-the-lid-off-the-nopd/402814/>

I know you've heard about it, because we've had it since 2013 already, but what does The Consent Decree do, exactly? It is what's helped the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) clean up its act, in moving towards a thing called "Constitutional Policing." The effect of the Consent Decree has kept the NOPD out of trouble in view of the recent events in Baton Rouge and Minnesota, mostly because its policies, especially in "Use of Force," but many other areas as well, is professional, state-of-the-art modern policing that trains in de-escalation and respect for all life.

Constitutional Policing is the Foundation of Community Policing, and Faubourg Marigny has played a part in helping our 8th and 5th Districts demonstrate that we are always receptive to Community Engagement, including attending New Orleans Neighbors & Police Anti-Crime Council (NONPACC) meetings. Yes, we express frustration with the fact that Quality of Life has had to be restructured, but on balance it has been for the better, especially with the constant depletion of officers.

Constitutional Policing is the Foundation of Community Policing

Faubourg Marigny consistently has turn outs of 30 to 50 people attending meetings (the highest in the 8th and 5th Districts, close second, St. Roch) where police officers can communicate directly with us. Most recently we discovered that Sgt. Luster of the 8th District attends our meetings on his own time. We sent a letter to Commander Walls praising him for this dedication.

As I understand it, Superintendent Michael Harrison has said he doesn't just want to improve the Police Department, the goal is to have the best Police Department in the country, and it's not cheap.

The Decree costs us 5 million dollars a year, and the recent reports given in each of all 8 Police Districts by Deputy Superintendent of Compliance Tim Averill explained in ninety minutes how well we really are getting our money's worth.

I'll attempt to give a short synopsis, but there's plenty more information on the net at:

<https://www.justice.gov/crt/consent-decree-monitor-reports>

<http://consentdecree-monitor.com/>

[http://www.nola.gov/getattachment/NOPD/NOPD-Consent-Decree/Community-Engagement-First-Quarter-Report-2016-\(1\).pdf/](http://www.nola.gov/getattachment/NOPD/NOPD-Consent-Decree/Community-Engagement-First-Quarter-Report-2016-(1).pdf/)

"Constitutional Policing," begins with focusing on everyone's constitutional rights of Equal Protection Under the law, which might not mean so much if you've never been suspected of a crime, but if more people with White Privilege tried, really tried, to imagine themselves in the shoes of being a person of color, we might not have had the powder kegs of Ferguson, Baltimore, Minnesota, and Baton Rouge.

Besides Equal Protection, the Consent Decree trains the NOPD to earn the public's trust by professionalism in their conduct with dignity, courtesy, and thoroughness, along with the community engagement I spoke of earlier, transparency, and accountability. Deputy Averill, who is a civilian and does not wear a uniform, continued explaining how the Decree works, using 17 areas of subject matter which are constantly reported on by "Monitors" who audit the activity, then report to U.S. District Judge Susie Morgan (of the U. S. District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana) and the U.S. Department of Justice. The next Public Court Hearing (open to the public) will be held August 18, 2016 at 1:30 p.m. in the United States Courthouse, 500 Poydras Street, New Orleans. The Office of the Consent Decree Monitor, the NOPD, and the United States will be present. Sounds exciting!

the Consent Decree trains the NOPD to earn the public's trust by professionalism in their conduct with dignity, courtesy, and thoroughness, along with community engagement

Deputy Averill went on to review policies covering body-worn camera usage, training and the Academy, supervision, the crisis intervention team program (CIT program addresses mental health), the K9 unit, dashboard cameras, Special victims (sex crimes), Domestic Violence, Illegal aliens (a Federal issue), in-service training for policy updates, early intervention management computer

Continued on page 5

Consent Decree continued from page 4

programs with improved IT capacity, tracking response efforts, four new discipline-related policies, increased hearings by the Public Integrity Bureau, and of course, Use of Force.

Most relevant to the behavior of Police Forces in the Modern Era (post Rodney King), Use of Force begins with the concept of Not Endangering the Public, and is detailed in the NOPD Operations manual, Chapter 1.3:

<http://www.nola.gov/getattachment/NOPD/NOPD-Consent-Decree/Chapter-1-3-Use-of-Force.pdf/>

It's important to know that there is a special team for investigation of almost all Uses of Force ("F.I.T."), plus two levels of internal review. District Commanders are justifiably proud of a lower arrest rate because there is no "Round up the usual suspects," but a targeted approach using proven methods that get criminals out of circulation. Here's a story from the May 31, 2016 New Orleans Advocate that gives a more complete picture of how the training has worked:

http://www.theadvocate.com/new_orleans/news/article_3c27f36c-68a6-5398-afdf-a9860835dd2a.html

Perhaps we can appreciate the use of all the monitoring, reviews, daily activity reports, audits, and data collection — which is what costs the 5 million a year — for modern data analysis. It's the "Moneyball" theory applied to Professional Policing, with the emphasis on Constitutional Ethics of course, that makes for our new lean (not mean!) policing team. At a recent Save Our Streets (SOS) meeting, Jason Williams said that the 60% of the current New Orleans City budget (360 million dollars) is spent on Public Safety, which includes funds for 150 more officers, and a 15 % raise to compete with Jefferson, St. Bernard, and St. Tammany parishes.

At a recent Save Our Streets (SOS) meeting, Jason Williams said that the 60% of the current New Orleans City budget (360 million dollars) is spent on Public Safety

Even with all the improvements, and there have been many, I still believe there are ways to improve local recruiting, using a type of Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) training with high-achieving students at the local High School level, who want a career in a noble profession.

Calendar of Events

August 2016

Board Meeting

August 3, 7 pm,
2509 Burgundy St.

Meet the Neighbors

August 10, 6:30 – 8:30 pm
Feelings Cafe, 2600 Chartres Street

General Meeting

August 15, 6:30 Pot Luck, 7:15 Meeting
St. Paul Lutheran Church, 2624 Burgundy Street

September 2016

Board Meeting

September 7, 7 pm,
2509 Burgundy St.

Meet the Neighbors

September 14, 6:30 – 8:30 pm
Magnolia Physical Therapy
in the Healing Center,
2372 St Claude Ave.

General Meeting

September 19, 6:30 Pot Luck, 7:15 Meeting
St. Paul Lutheran Church, 2624 Burgundy Street

NONPACC MEETINGS

*5th District — 2nd Wednesday, 6 pm,
3900 N. Claiborne*

*8th District — 4th Tuesday 6 pm,
location varies between 334 Royal
and the Healing Center*

*If you have an event for the calendar
please send it to
editor@faubourgmarigny.org*

FMIA Dues

Not sure when your FMIA dues were paid? The date you paid is conveniently located on the mailing label of your newsletter. Just one more service from your friendly neighborhood association.

The Logical Fallacy

By Mark Malouse, FMIA Board Member

I don't know who should get the credit for the origin of this joke, as it is all over the Internet. I simply added an introduction and epilogue. I never would have thought that a Boudreaux and Thibodeaux joke could be rhetorical, but this one seems just so:

Boudreaux and Thibodeaux are sitting at a bar, drinking beer. Thibodeaux turns to Boudreaux and says, "Man, you know, I'm tired of going tru life wit'out a education. Tomorrow I tink I'll go down the bayou to the community college and git me some classes."

Boudreaux says "Why, Thibodeaux, das a good idea."

The next day Thibodeaux gets in his pirogue and goes down to the college and meets the dean of admissions, who signs him up for the four basic classes: Math, English, History, and Logic.

Logic?" Thibodeaux says. "Wha's dat?"

The dean says, "I'll show you. Do you own a weed eater?"

"Why sho," replies Thibodeaux.

"Then logically, because you own a weed eater, I think that you would have a yard."

"Das true, I do have some land on da bayou."

"I'm not done," the dean says. "Because you have a yard, I think logically that you would have a house."

"Mah, yes, I do have a house."

"And because you have a house, I think that you might logically have a family."

"Mah, yes I have a family, too."

"I'm not done yet. Because you have a family, then logically you must have a wife."

"Yes, I do have a wife."

"And because you have a wife, then logically you must be a heterosexual."

"A hetero what?" Thibodeaux asks.

The dean explains the term to Thibodeaux and he says "Why, yes, I am a heterosexual. Das amazing, you were able to find out all dat because I have a weed eater."

Excited to take the class now, Thibodeaux shakes the dean's hand and later runs into Boudreaux at the bar.

He tells Boudreaux about his classes, how he is signed up for Math, English, History, and Logic.

"Logic?" Boudreaux says, "Wha's dat?"

Thibodeaux says, "I'll show you. Do you have a weed eater?"

"Mah, no."

"Then you're a queer."

This joke is a good example of the logical fallacy, "denying the antecedent" in general, and of opposition to many of FMIA's positions in particular. Because only a fraction of Faubourg Marigny's residents are members of the

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Discounted Neighbor Rates
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Logical Fallacy continued from page 6

FMIA, speculators who are trying to push through an agenda that usually goes against established zoning have historically cited the membership percentage to paint FMIA as representing the minority view, i.e. everybody else supports their cause.

The best method to fight this specious argument is simple. **Join and support the FMIA!** However, you might think that you have your disagreements with the association as well. Most of us do not agree with every single decision made. Still, I think that we are better off here and now due to the past efforts of the FMIA. If you want to tilt future decisions towards more of your way of thinking, the solution is to run for a seat on the board of directors. Chairing or working on a committee is also a good way to get involved and make your voice heard.

So, stop armchair quarterbacking, get in the game!

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Advertising: ads@faubourgmarigny.org

Blight: blight@faubourgmarigny.org

Marigny Green: marignygreen@faubourgmarigny.org

Newsletter: editor@faubourgmarigny.org

Caroling	Education	Volunteer
Community Outreach	Home Tour	Walking Tour
Crime Prevention	Hospitality	Washington Square Park
Development	Membership	Web Site
Frenchmen	Neighborhood	Zoning
Fundraising	Special Projects	

For comments — email info@faubourgmarigny.org

Do You Receive Our Weekly E-Blast?

FMIA sends out an email blast every Sunday with important news about what's happening in the Faubourg Marigny and surrounding area — news that you need to know! To sign up for this service, email secretary@faubourgmarigny.org to be put on the list.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You may need to change your email settings to allow news@faubourgmarigny.org as an approved sender or add it to your contact list.



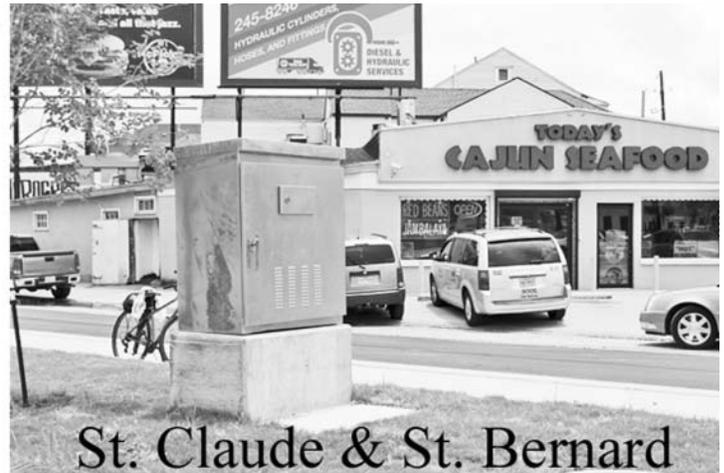
Did you ever wonder who these people are? ↑

Find out at the next Meet your Neighbors!

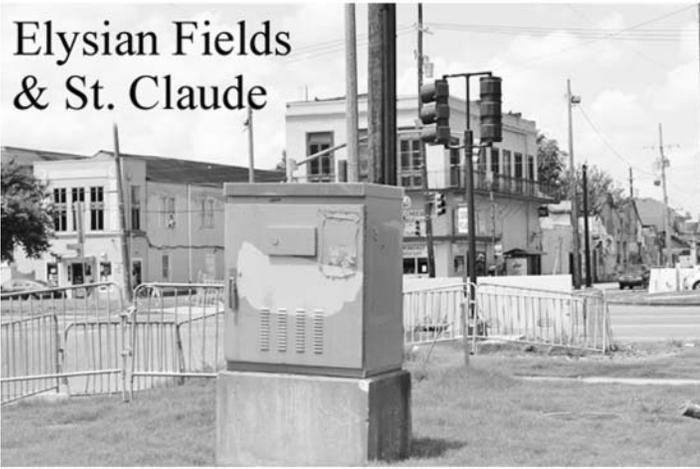
And if you have a favorite place in the neighborhood that you think would be interested in hosting an upcoming event, let us know by emailing secretary@faubourgmarigny.org.

Unpainted Utility Boxes in Marigny
 FMIA is looking for sponsors to have
 the boxes painted by local artists
 through the program
 “Community Visions Unlimited”
 (www.cvunola.org)

We believe this might help end some
 vandal tagging, be a better welcome
 to Marigny, and promote spirit.



St. Claude & St. Bernard



Elysian Fields
 & St. Claude



Elysian Fields
 & Dauphine
 2 views

**project
 lazarus** 
 Living in the Positive

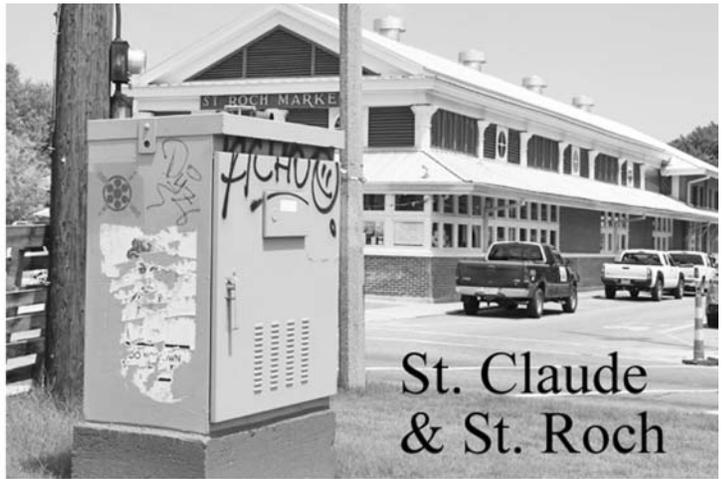
Offering **hope** and providing **opportunity**
 for those most in need.

*Project Lazarus helps heal and empower people living with HIV/AIDS by focusing on
 wellness, providing housing and offering important support services.*





Elysian Fields
& Royal ² views



St. Claude
& St. Roch



Esplanade
& Royal



Franklin
& Royal

Many of the utility boxes elsewhere in New Orleans have already been beautified.

Generally they are sponsored by realtors or other neighborhood businesses and benefactors. Several boxes can be seen on both Carrollton and Tulane avenues.

Even closer is the one on Esplanade at Decatur.



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Marigny Green

By Deborah Oppenheim

Sourcing Fresh, Local and Organic Food in New Orleans Any Day of the Week



Consumers are paying attention to what they eat, where the food comes from and what is in the food. Local food refers to food that is produced usually no more than 50 to 100 miles from the consumer's home. Farmers' Markets are one way local food can reach the consumer.

Another way is Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs). The consumer buys a share of a local farm harvest. The consumer pays for their share and in turn receives a box of fresh food delivered each week. Other sourcing would be pick-your-own crops and on-site farmers' stands.

The market for fresh and organic food has grown in New Orleans. Grocery stores are selling local produce. Some restaurants have their own farms. Below is a list of some places to shop for local and organic food.

1. New Orleans Food Co-Op - 2372 St. Claude at St Roch has a large selections of organic and local food.
2. Whole Food Company is part of a natural food supermarket chain. The Whole Foods Broad Street, 300 N. Broad anchors The ReFresh Project. This is a 60,000 square foot development is an innovative fresh food hub. On-site tenants include Whole Food Market, Liberty's Kitchen, Goldring Center for Culinary Medicine at Tulane, FirstLine Schools', Boystown, Sprout NOLA, Harambee Gardens of New Orleans and Faubourg Farms. The ReFresh Project provides access to fresh, high-quality food, affordable and health-related programs in the community.
3. The Fresh Market, 3338 St. Charles and 755 Veterans is a food market that sells premium quality local produce.
4. Crescent City Farmers' Markets: open year-round
 - Tuesday Farmers Market 9am to 1pm
200 Broadway at Leake Avenue
 - Wednesday Farmers Market will take a summer break from July 20th to October 12th
 - Wednesday Harrison Avenue Marketplace, 801 Harrison Ave every second Wednesday of the month, 5 to 8:30pm
 - Thursday Farmers Market, Mid-City at Orleans Ave at Bayou St. John in the American Can Parking Lot 3pm – 7pm

- Thursday Marketplace at Armstrong Park (seasonally) it is next to the entrance to Louis Armstrong Park at Rampart and St. Ann from 3pm – 7pm or 2pm – 6pm depending on Sunset
5. Breads on Oak, 8640 Oak Street Tuesday to Sunday is an organic artisan breads and breakfast pastries, vegan and gluten-free options.
 6. Dryades Public Market, 1307 O.C. Haley Blvd, Central City affordable fresh food emporium.
 7. Rouses, Robert's and Dorignac's Food sell local seasonal produce.
 8. Holly Grove Market and Farm 8301 Olive Street has a working urban farm and a cooperative store, open seven days a week. They also offer delivery service of their weekly CSA box of assorted produce.
 9. Sankofa Farmers' Market is on Saturday in the Lower Ninth Ward on St. Claude Ave 11 am – 2pm.

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Kajun's Pub
2256 St. Claude

777 Happy Hour
7am-7pm 7 days a week

Watch football and smoke at the same time on our patio!

Bloody Mary Bar
Only \$5! Fri-Sun 7am to 3pm

The advertisement includes a photograph of a bar counter with various bottles of beer and a glass of a Bloody Mary drink in the foreground.

10. Grow Dat Youth Farm located at City Park, 150 Zachary Taylor Drive (end of June from 9am to noon). There is a working farm at City Park.
11. Edible Schoolyard programs has launched a Saturday stand at the farm in City Park selling herbs, lettuces and other greens.
12. Cochon Butcher 930 Tchoupitoulas St. specializes in house made meats, terrines and sausages.
13. Cleaver & Co., 3917 Baronne St. is a locally-sourced, full-service butcher shop.
14. Clean Creation fresh food delivered to your door – custom meal <https://www.cleancreations.net/about-us/>
15. Audubon Nature Institute's sustainable seafood program has created a chef council to help Audubon develop a partnership with New Orleans restaurants. The Gulf United for Lasting Fisheries (GULF) was created in 2012 to assuring sustainable local fisheries. The outreach program is working on seafood certification for blue crab and oyster and examines the Gulf of Mexico fisheries regulations, harvesting and handling.
16. Growing Local NOLA, 1750 Carondelet St. is a project of Recirculating Farms Coalition, a community garden and farm. It offers low-cost locally grown produce, free community classes and sustainable growing resource to Central City and beyond. Order on-line and pick up the produce at the community garden.

There are many reasons to buy local and organic food.

- Supports your farmers' market, grocery stores, Food Co-Op and sustainable food programs.
- Locally grown food tastes and looks better.
- Local food is better for you. The shorter the time between farm to table means that nutrients won't be lost from fresh food.
- Local food preserves genetic diversity. In large-scale production, plant varieties are chosen for their ability to ripen uniformly.
- Buying at the farmers' market means that you get to know the farmer.

- Local food builds community with the farmer and other consumers.
- Local food helps preserve our working landscape. The farmer can get more for their produce and
- Local food keeps taxes down because the farms contribute more in taxes than in required service. Rabbits don't dial 911.
- Local food benefits the environment and wildlife.
- Local food is an investment in the future.
- Resources: Ozark Natural Foods, University of Vermont, www.sustainabletable.org, www.appropedia.org, www.localharvest.org and www.fairfarmsnow.org

MAGS 940

A friendly neighborhood bar

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MAGS 940

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every weekend.

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*Call 504-948-1888 to schedule your
holiday party with us, catering available*

*A Big Thanks to Becky Allen &
Gene Murman for wonderful shows at Mag's*

Meet the Neighbors



Next Meet the Neighbors will be at The all new Feelings Marigny Cafe and Courtyard Bar, 2600 Chartres Street on August 10.

May MTN

was at **Anna's Gastropub** at 1913 Royal Street at Touro.

They served up some terrific food at this newly-remodeled space on Royal Street. Thanks to hosts Catherine, Jean and Anna Ranguin

June MTN

was at the **New Orleans Food Co-op** in the Healing Center. Board members and staff were there to answer questions and provide delicious samples of their prepared foods — including their home made sweet potato pie - which you can order in the store!

If you have a suggestion for a future Meet the Neighbors venue, email us at secretary@faubourgmarigny.org.

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LEJ's Yours Truly in a Swamp Melanie Plesh and the Great Escape

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By Leonard Earl Johnson - www.LEJ.org

"Yours Truly" is a blog by Leonard Earl Johnson, a member of our Katrina Diaspora presently residing in Lafayette and spending much time in New Orleans. He is an FMIA member and planning to return to NOLA in the near future. His venue is the figurative Great Mother Swamp including Lafayette, New Orleans and adjacent areas. His column had been published in Les Amis for several years and we are glad to have him back where he belongs.

"Didn't She Ramble" ~ Kermit Ruffins

Melanie Plesh, teacher, writer, traveler, photographer, seeker. Lifelong resident of New Orleans. Died of cancer at sixty-three, May 18, 2016. Her passing cut a new wound, and opened the old one named Hurricane Katrina.

Melanie and I escaped together during The Storm's early first half. News of Melanie's death reached me on a day when Art Garfunkel was giving a \$120-ticket fundraiser at the Acadiana Center for the Arts ~ eleven years after Katrina. It was a traveling show billed by its promoters as Hurricane Katrina-inspired.

Its purpose was to raise funds for art and craft supplies. "Dream Boxes, for children displaced by disasters like Katrina."

Melanie and I met a few years before Katrina, on Bourbon Street, at a Tennessee Williams Festival party. She taught English at New Orleans Frederick Douglas High School, she told us, and lived on the North Shore.

Some of her Douglas High students loved her for bringing Shakespeare where never before the boards had been so trod, she said. "Mostly they ignore me, but I'm doing good anyway." Katrina washed Frederick Douglass away.

Melanie was easy to like. A do-gooder, who actually did good. A lovely spirit who left a comfortable North Shore school, where students drove nice cars, and came to Douglas... "Where they steal them!" L. A. Norma said, making us all laugh, that day.

By the time Katrina hit, Melanie had moved to Marigny Street, near the Friendly Bar, in Faubourg Marigny.

When hurricane people say a storm, "takes landfall," they are talking about the middle of the storm ~ the eye. Next comes the calm, then the second half of the storm, with winds coming from the opposite direction.

Katrina's landfall was early Monday, August 29, 2005. August 28 began as a Sunday calm, clear, and blue as the Lord ever gives. Though Katrina crept deceptively towards us like Carl Sandburg's little cat's paws, in a few hours She would be roaring down the street like pride on steroids.

Melanie's Son, Timothy Lachin, lived in Paris, where he taught English. He had been phoning across the Atlantic for days. "This is the big one, Ma," he would say, "you've gotta get out!"

But Melanie was one of those burned by the huge, slow evacuation of the year before, and vowed not to evacuate again. I, too, had foolishly decided to ride out this storm, because the year before I had been with other friends creeping along

continued on page 10

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Swamp continued from page 9

for twenty-four hours all the way up to Memphis before finding overpriced rooms.

By the time the error of my judgement hit me, Melanie was the only person I knew still in Town with more than two wheels. She was thinking it over.

By then, City Mayors and Parish Presidents from every town and parish around were pushing each other off the tv-podium to tell their citizens that if they planned on staying they should get an indelible marker and write their Social Security number on their arm.

Merde!

Norma had gone to California earlier, and NOLA was nearly a ghost town. Everything was boarded up. Anyone still here was boarded up, too. Armstrong International Airport and the Union Passenger Terminal no longer picked up the phone, and I was getting calls from all over promising shelter if I would just come join them.

But I could not. I did not drive, and Feather Bike was no match for a storm like Katrina.

Melanie to the rescue

We loaded her little red truck with supplies for a day or two, and her two feral cats, caged. Once Melanie chased these two cats with rocks and taunts, and then came to love them.

We would not leave without them. Melanie alone could touch these wild beasts. In an instant, as I held open a sturdy pillow case, Melanie dropped in the cat named Orange, who came ripping out the bottom and streaking across the kitchen linoleum like Katrina's pilot fish.

His partner, Red, stood frozen next to the stove, then joined the screeching race. Melanie brought up the rear.

By the time we left Town, The Storm was licking the wheels of our little red raft, and we skittered across the Rigolets, with the cats inside their cages fainting into the arms of catatonia.

The storm behind us was halfway up to its eye, and the bridges we were crossing were literally washing away behind us. Had we understood all this at the time, we likely would have fainted too.

We fled along the very path of The Storm, because a uniformed policeman told us we could only go East. "The West full?" Melanie asked the policeman, as rain sprayed him from every direction including up.

"Just the road to it," he said.

We landed on the North Shore, in Hammond, at the hearth of a kindly fallen monk. Weeks later we decamped to

Lafayette, Louisiana. "Where the English isn't English and the French isn't French," detractors say.

Somehow we communicated, lived well, and grew happy. "Not a bad outcome for a serendipitous old scribe like you," Norma says, when I tell this story.

"Not to mention," Melanie used to say, "all those train rides snaking in-and-out of Big Swamp City!"

Before leaving the kindly fallen monk's hearth we agreed that Melanie would be first to make her way back in to New Orleans, where she would retrieve select items from what she might find of Squalor Heights, my Faubourg Marigny garret apartment.

Melanie was a seeker ~ who would save my treasures ~ a brave journeyman on her way through Life.

For over twenty-years she co-directed the Southeastern Louisiana Writing Project, and in 1999, she traveled alone to Russia to visit the grave of Fyodor Dostoyevsky.

On my first trip back to New Orleans I found Melanie where we had arranged to meet, sitting, sipping beer in the window seat at Molly's on the Market, Decatur Street, one of two bars in the Quarter that did not close during The Storm.

This day, The City is mostly empty of all but military and a few folks like us.

"The army gives them ice," Melanie said, pointing her thumb back at the bar. I joined her.

She had my copy of the anthology, FRENCH QUARTER FICTION, signed by all contributing authors. And a silver medal given to me when a boy by Pope Pius, XII. Melanie Plesh, thank you for the ride out of Town. May you find among the billowing clouds Shakespeare, Voltaire, Dante, Goethe, and Dostoyevsky.

Your memory takes us once more round the floor.

Merci, mon amie!



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Property Tax Rolls for 2017

By Mark Malouse, FMIA Board Member

The property tax rolls for 2017's assessments opened on July 15, and will remain open through August 15. This period is the only opportunity for property-owning citizens to appeal the assessor's figures.

Under the old system, the property owner would go to the respective assessor's office per municipal district, in our case, the Third District. Since the consolidation of multiple assessors into one for Orleans parish, Erroll Williams administers assessments for the whole city. Although satellite offices are open for this period, my only experience is with City Hall, 4th floor, where my journey began last year at this time.

The Process

First stop is the front desk, where a nice receptionist will ask the purpose of your visit, taking nothing for granted. After responding that you would like to discuss the taxable assessment of your property(ies), you will then be given a number to wait your turn being called for the second step, which is being called to a clerk's desk. Your identity and address will be confirmed, then the clerk will retrieve your proposed assessment and give you a printed copy. The next, and probably last, wait will be to see one of the appraisers. At this point, you will be asked why you believe

your assessment to be too high. Reasons that I tried, unsuccessfully, include:

- Property values in the Marigny did not triple from one year to the next, and, even if they did, the assessor's office needs to fix this underassessment more gradually.
- The few vacant lots sales used as comps cannot be extrapolated to the vast majority of the rest of the neighborhood with existing houses (improvements).
- The HDLC restricts changes that can be made, visible from a public thoroughfare, to our historic housing stock, let alone virtually eliminating the possibility of tearing-down and rebuilding from scratch.
- Vacant lots can be built upon with new housing that includes every modern amenity, located in one of the most desirable neighborhoods in the city, amongst visually interesting historic buildings.

Given that the best and simplest way to assess a property is to set the value at the dollar figure that someone is willing to pay for it, recent sales are being skewed higher by potential absentee landlords whose intention is to create additional short-term rentals (STRs). As this use is, and has been, illegal for a long time, actual resident citizens are being adversely affected by artificially inflated values of recent real estate transactions. I could probably make a lot more money by storing toxic waste in my square footage, except such use is prohibited by zoning and other regulations. As an aside, this premise was the case in a silly Chevy Chase movie, *Fletch Lives*, set in Louisiana.

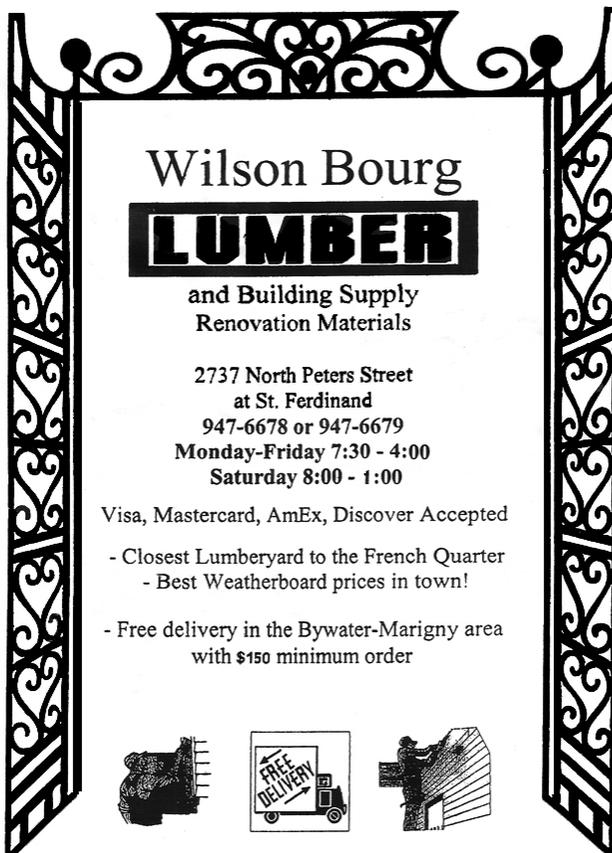
What Works

The three things that the appraiser said would work are:

1. An appraisal from a qualified third-party appraisal service, which costs a few hundred dollars.
2. A Comparative Market Analysis (CMA) from a realtor, which is usually free since it might lead to a listing.
3. The declaration page of your homeowner's insurance policy.

Having none of these at the time, and getting a concession that insurance coverage is not applicable to the land valuation I was contesting, I was dismissed and told not to come back without one of these three. However, appeal rights are then preserved for some period after August 15, so my trip was worth it. I believe that the online version would do likewise and save you a trip to City Hall, as you

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probably have perfectly good walls in your home, any one of which you could beat your head against to achieve the same level of satisfaction that a live visit will produce.

Given that the best and simplest way to assess a property is to set the value at the dollar figure that someone is willing to pay for it, recent sales are being skewed higher by potential absentee landlords whose intention is to create additional short-term rentals (STRs).

From that point forward, the assessor will render a final decision, which will be exactly the same as his proposed assessment, which must first be appealed to the assessor. Unless you can produce one of the three items to change his mind, this appeal will result in no change to your assessment. The next appeal will be to the state tax commission, where I finally found some relief. A state appraiser was sent out, who took measurements and observations, listened to my statement of house flaws, and eventually arrived at a lower figure for the

improvement assessment. Apparently, no entity is willing to budge on the land value tripling, but the ad valorem method of computing millage means that the property tax did not correspondingly triple. The final step in the appeal process is a hearing in Baton Rouge, where some compromise between the two disparate valuations should be decided, and property owners are invited to plead their individual cases. The tip here is that making the trip to Baton Rouge is unnecessary. Simply call the listed point-of-contact and state that you agree with the tax commission's assessment. Obtain the appropriate email address to repeat this statement, also explaining that you have nothing to add and, therefore, will not be attending the hearing. In my case, there was no compromise forged. The assessor evidently conceded entirely to the lower tax commission assessment.

The whole process lasted almost one year, just in time for open rolls season again. I expect to keep this assessment for at least 2017.

To access the assessor's website go to nolaassessor.com.



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Speaking Volumes

By Sara Jacobelli, Assistant Branch Manager, Alvar Library

The Summer Reading Program was a tremendous success! It's time for a new school year and cooler weather. We hope everyone enjoyed all of the wonderful events that we had at Alvar this summer including the Audubon Aquavan, Minecraft Stop-Motion Animation, Matthew Noel and his Magic Yo-yo, Zumba for Kids, Dancing Grounds, creating cool stuff with K'nex and more!

Back to School Bike Repair! Bring your bike to this hour and a half workshop where you'll learn how to bike with confidence, stay safe on the road, as well as the basic mechanics and maintenance of your bike. You'll leave knowing how to fix a flat tire, your rights while riding, and how to get the most fun out of cycling, whenever and wherever you ride! Plus an instructor will be on hand to answer any questions about your bike, biking, and biking in New Orleans. This event is in Partnership with Bike Easy. Open to All Ages. Door Prizes of Bike Accessories for those under 18. August 13th, 2:00 pm.

Check out NOPL's new website: nolalibrary.org

We still have Free Lunch for children and teens 18 years old and younger, provided by the Second Harvest Food Bank: Monday through Friday, 12:30-1:00 pm, until August 12th.

In the Garden Writers' Workshop: Writers of all levels of experience and all genres are welcome, including

Poetry, Fiction and Nonfiction Prose, and Plays. Local and visiting authors will periodically stop by to read their work and offer advice and encouragement. Participants will read their work at a public reading once or twice a year, either at Alvar Library or at a local venue.

We will meet the second Saturday of every month from 2:00-3:30 pm, from September through May. The first workshop will meet Saturday, September 10th. You may sign up at the Circulation Desk, or just come to the first session.



Ferris wheel kids made with K'nex!

Continued on page 20

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Local Author birthday for July: Tom Piazza was born July 8th, 1955 in Long Island, New York. A jazz lover, he wrote his first article for Downbeat Magazine when he was only sixteen. A staunch defender of New Orleans, he has written numerous books about his adopted home, including the nonfiction book, *Why New Orleans Matters* and the novel, *City of Refuge*. His other books include *A Free State*, *My Cold War*, *Blues Up and Down*, and *Blues and Trouble*. He

has also written for the HBO TV series *Treme*. He is the recipient of the 2015 Louisiana Writer Award.

Quote: "There was a gulf between those who had had their community smashed and their future thrown completely into question, and those for whom life still moved in an intelligible stream. It was not unlike the line that separated those who had come back from the war and those whose lives had been going on continuously while they had been away."

— Tom Piazza, *City of Refuge: A Novel*

References:

<http://tompiazza.com/bio/index.html>

Montoya, Maria. "Why Tom Piazza Matters." *The New Orleans Times-Picayune*. http://blog.nola.com/susanlarson/2008/08/city_of_refuge_tom_piazza.html

Piazza, Tom. "Why New Orleans Matters." *The Washington Post*: <http://tinyurl.com/6lms7>

Local Author birthday for August: Coleen Salley, noted story teller and children's book author, was born August 7th, 1929 in Ruston, Louisiana. Known for creating the adorable and entertaining character, *Epossumondas*, she went on to write more beloved children's books: *Why Epossumondas Has No Hair On His Tail?*, *Epossumondas Saves The Day*, *Epossumondas Plays Possum*, all illustrated by Janet Stevens (Harcourt Inc.) as well as *Who's That Tripping Over My Bridge?* illustrated by Amy Dixon (Pelican Publishing). She was professor of Children's Literature at the University of New Orleans for thirty years, a regular at the Children's Tent at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, and the Queen of the Krewe of Coleen. A bench in City Park's Storyland is dedicated to Coleen Salley. To honor Coleen and the many authors she brought to the Fay B. Kaigler Children's Book Festival at the University of Southern Mississippi, the University has established the Coleen Salley Endowment Fund to fund and promote the art of storytelling during the annual Book Festival.

Quote: "I don't want children to read just to perfect their reading. I want them to love books for the joy of it."

--Coleen Salley

References:

http://www.nola.com/books/index.ssf/2010/10/author_coleen_salleys_will_be.html

Stroup, Sheila. "Author Coleen Salley's memory will be forever honored at City Park's Storyland."

<http://www.coleensalley.com/about.htm>

<http://www.coleensalley.com/foundation.htm>

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FMIA Board Meeting Minutes: June 1, 2016

Members in attendance

Lisa Suarez, Allen Johnson, Gretchen Bomboy, Matt Del Vecchio, Gene Cizek, Troy Gant, Simone Cifuentes, Jeff Bromburger, Steve Halpern, guest

Emails

Lisa asks board to be mindful about email approvals, which are required for many actions.

Bishop Perry

Is interested in hosting our meetings in the Triangle. Lisa moves that we have a board meeting at Troy's, seconded. Passes unanimously. Discussion on other venues for meetings.

Groundworks

Lisa motions that Gretchen contact Barry about the watering of the landscaped triangle where the Franklin Avenue marker is, seconded. Passes unanimously.

Trash Palace

2121 Chartres is having their neighborhood participation meeting today. Developer is still working on proposals and city approval. There are complaints about its graffiti. Gene moves we write a letter to Gregor, seconded. Passes unanimously.

Community Visions Boxes

Steve talks about the program to paint the street utility boxes. Simone will look into getting something going for ours.

The Allen Report

Allen updates on meetings. Save Our Streets NOLA is an anti-crime group, seemed disorganized. PRC had a meeting. Short Term Rental Committee had a meeting.

Frenchmen Street Fest

Jeff is talking with businesses to try to organize a day fest on Frenchmen.

Warehouse House

2317 N. Rampart is a historic house surrounded by a warehouse. New owners are building condos inside it and there are concerns they demoed the house inside. Lisa motions we write a letter, seconded. Passes unanimously.

Elections Preparation

We're going to start prepping for next election. Sending out eblasts to ask for nominations.

Washington Square Park

Lisa motions we pay someone \$50 to move the stage out of the shed, seconded. Passes unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:22 PM.

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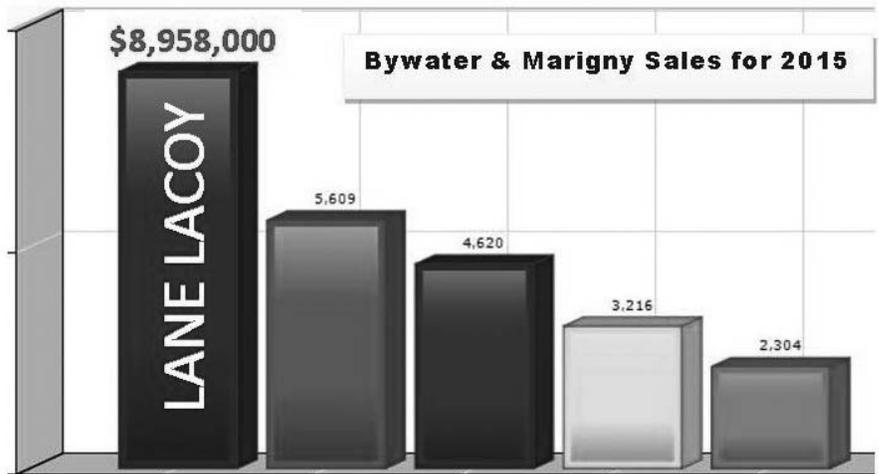


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FMIA Board Meeting Minutes: July 6, 2016

Meeting called to order at 7:06 PM

Members present: Allen, Troy, Gene, Jeff, Mark, Gretchen and Lisa
 Baker's Row discussion, many problems, trucks blocking everything, manhole covers left open, concrete poured in storm drain. Motion to write letter to owners, seconded by Allen, unanimous.

Lisa to write letter of condolence to 8th District.

STR discussion, ideas of what we can do. Hotels are finally speaking up. We need to work with them.

Big Daddy's is better, still watching them. Next step is alcohol board.

Bishop Perry discussion. Motion to distribute their survey. Unanimous.

French Market, blasting music at Tomato Festival against the noise ordinance. Jade Brown Russell ??? Write letter re their need to obey the law, also discussed the lack of action on the parking buildings that we were promised years ago.

Assessments, suggest article for newsletter about how to appeal. Mark will compose.

Mayor's budget does not have the parking buildings in it.

Master Plan amendments...Allen will compose one for us.

CPC will discuss STR's Aug. 8th. We need to rally the troops.

3090 on Frenchmen, supposedly a restaurant, wants another bar upstairs.

That would make it function as a bar which is what they are doing anyway.

Gene moved we approve the minutes from last month. Unanimous.
 Nominating committee is looking for new prospective Board Members.

WE need to advise Jeneice Black from the city, who has suggested that the shed in Washington Square Park will be renovated, that it has been emptied and is ready for remodel that the shed is empty and ready for the remodel. We should ask about raising the floor to prevent flooding.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM





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