



## LAFAYETTE SQUARE RESTORATION COMMITTEE

November 12, 2019 SqWires Annex

CALL TO ORDER 7:03pm

Matt Negri

- **Welcome New Residents:** George and Karen on Dolman
- Motion made and approval of October 2019 minutes

### ALDERMAN REPORTS

6<sup>th</sup> Ward

Christine Ingrassia (Not present)

7<sup>th</sup> Ward

Jack Coatar (Not present)

### POLICE REPORT

3rd District

Officer Sherdon Douglas (Not present—on vacation)

### GUEST SPEAKER

22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit Court

Katherine Ferrell/Madeline Connolly

- Katherine Fowler and Madeline Connolly are judges and also residents of Lafayette Square.
- KF: Governor appoints judges based on recommendations; Judges come with different backgrounds—prosecutor, public defender most common.
- MC—How cases move along: When criminal cases start, police investigate, and if police think there is enough information, they will go to the circuit attorney (Kim Gardner) to see if there is enough to charge and go to court. KG reviews ~10,000 cases and pursues ~3,000. Then it goes to the court system. A grand jury needs to return an indictment on a case, and if so, it goes to a circuit judge, and from there the defendant can plead guilty or go to trial.
- Question: Why are there so many less cases going to trial? Answer: Different reasons...prosecutor might decide there is not enough evidence, witness might back out for example; lately there have been more pleas and less cases.
- Question: Frustration on Nextdoor/social media on lack of prosecution on petty crimes (i.e. package theft, break-ins)...why does it seem that smaller crimes can happen over and over by same people without intervention? Answer: We hear you and experience the same petty crimes. We know what it does to a neighborhood and, on a larger scale, to the city. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE when neighbors come to the court case and participate; prosecutors take note. On a larger scale, why aren't there charges? Those are decisions made by the elected prosecutor.
- Question: The neighborhood used to be very active in pursuing impact statements and orders of protection. In the last few years, we have been able to get almost no information when there is a crime in this neighborhood that someone has been arrested and charged. Seeing it on the media and hearing a name is one of the few names. Kim Gardner stopped allowing neighborhoods to find information about the cases. How can we get more information? Answer: The best resource is the prosecutor's office...MC worked there when there was a good dialogue between prosecutor and the neighborhoods. Is there a good relationship with someone in the police department? That would be ideal. Whenever we have a statement from the

neighborhood, it heavily impacts the decision about bonds. KF: I was told that the prosecutor's office was re-considering neighborhood liaisons.

- Public Information Officer: Missouri Case Net online is a good resource, and the officer is happy to accept calls: [Thom Gross, 314-622-5685, TGross@courts.mo.gov](mailto:Thom.Gross@courts.mo.gov)
- **Question:** Has it gotten to the point where petty crimes are not being prosecuted? **Answer:** We can't speak to the decisions that Kim Gardner is making...whether it's political or financial. We don't know her reasoning, but don't think that cost is the entirety of it.
- **Question:** Is there any statistical data available for St Louis areas in which surveillance cameras have had a positive effect in the reduction of crime. **Answer:** The evidence from surveillance cameras is coming into play a lot. Your police officer would be better to talk to regarding the Real Time Crime Center (in midtown). It seems quite frequent that if there's a carjacking, a drive-by shooting, etc. that the suspect is picked up very quickly and near to the crime. They are having an impact on prosecutions. We don't have data, but the police might.
- **Question:** The neighborhood used to rally the troops and show up to the court hearings. I hear what you're saying about community involvement, but most of us have jobs so how else can we participate? **Answer:** Email, letters from individuals and/or the neighborhood. **Question:** How do we know where to send them? **Answer:** That would be the prosecutors office. KF will follow-up and find out if there is forward momentum on having neighborhood liaisons with the prosecutors office.
- **Question:** Can the jury system streamline the calling of jurors and let them know ahead a time if needed? **Answer:** We call jurors on Mondays and on Wednesdays. We need far fewer jurors on Wednesdays. Now there is an on-call response to jury duty....for Wednesdays. Hoping to improve this with technology...but it's slower in the court system.
- **Comment:** There is a lot of frustration with the prosecutor's office from the neighborhood. We appreciate your showing up!

## NEW AND ONGOING BUSINESS

### House Tour Update

Suzanne Sessions/Katherine Fowler

- 10 houses, including 2 units at The Bordeaux.
- Thank you to Katherine Ferrell who has taken over from Phil Lamczyk on volunteer signup. Volunteer sign-up will be live on Thursday. We'll need about 100 volunteers; we already have 35 because homeowners have been recruiting. PLEASE SIGN UP!
- **Comment:** Let's remember that it's a holiday house tour, not a Christmas tour, and efforts to keep the theme inclusive of the many festivals of lights at this time of year are appreciated.
- Capping at 1700 tickets for online sales.
- **Various Comments:** Perhaps we've reached a point for discussion about how we are going to raise money for the neighborhood. Currently there is NO ONE to chair the spring house tour. We will lose \$40K+ of projected revenue if there is no one to volunteer to chair AND another 10+ residents to put their houses on tour. The spring house tour raises more than the holiday tour because it's 2 days, and there is no cut-off for ticket sales. But it's easier to get houses and volunteers for the holiday tour because it's 1 day...perhaps go to 1 day for the spring tour? BUT THE POINT IS....WE NEED A CHAIR! 😊 Previous chairs (including Pat) and committee will mentor the new person.

### Strategic Plan Update

Linda Weiner

- Upcoming meeting/workshop on 11/17 in the Jefferson Room at Vin de Set.

- **Background:** 70-80% of the ideas that were in the 2001 Urban Plan have either been accomplished or are no longer valid. The LSRC, in partnership with the Arts Council and the Lafayette Park Conservancy, has had an advisory committee of 14 members working on this strategic plan for many months, and now in partnership with Shockey Consulting.
- The neighborhood is getting ready to change dramatically. The NW Quadrant is happening—it will add new residents, daytime workers; there will be a soccer stadium that will impact the borders of the neighborhood; businesses will be impacted. It's all very positive, but right now, being a historic district, we need to come up with solutions for how we are going to fund maintenance, capital improvements, the bandstand, historic lighting, etc.
- We're a needy neighborhood because we have a lot to take care of! The city is helpful, but they cannot do everything that is required to live in this neighborhood.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Treasurer's Report

**Clark Affholder**

- We're starting to spend a lot of money. We're down to \$217K. We have spent a sizeable amount on capital improvements (e.g. Carroll & Truman). We're not going to continue to have nice things in the neighborhood if we don't refill the piggy bank with house tours.
- **Question:** There is an item defined as "reserved cash." How long does that survive? Answer: Currently it's indefinite. It'll be there until we as a membership vote otherwise.
- [treasurer@lafayettesquare.org](mailto:treasurer@lafayettesquare.org)

### Development

**Suzanne Sessions**

- Commercial Projects:
  - Mop Factory/Bordeaux is about to open and is 75% leased. The owners are very interested in working with the neighborhood to make sure we are happy with them.
  - The Scientology Building is back on the market.
  - Digging in the NW Quadrant should start soon—before the end of the year?!
  - LaSalle Apartments (LaSalle/Missouri) are on hold, waiting to get more capital, but should start in December.

### Beautification

**Linda Weiner (not present)**

- Report: It's cold. Everything's dead. In the spring, there will be 1,000 tulip bulbs.

### Community Affairs

**Dixie Gillaspie (not present)**

- No report/update.

### Capital Improvements

**Mary Visintainer (not present)**

- A lot of cash being spent! 😊 Rutger entrance features are forthcoming. Everything has been approved and check has been cut to the city for columns to complete the historic district "signature." Carroll St at Truman will have new gates. (Mitch Hunt and Houston Smith helped with design work.) There will be landscaping.
- Lots of applause for new street signs! Every green sign will be replaced, but the process is slow.
- Question: Is there any update regarding safety around LPA and Lafayette/Mississippi traffic calming? Answer: There was a meeting with the school and Jack Coatar about doing something around LPA. The streets department head and finance people will need to be involved. There is discussion. We will *have to* do some traffic calming around the neighborhood, and the LSRC will probably have to invest in that.

### Membership

**Christina Ryan**

- Members should be receiving minutes and renewal reminders. If you are not, please email Christina [membership@lafayettesquare.org](mailto:membership@lafayettesquare.org)

**LSBA**

**Bethany Budde**

- Tree Lighting Ceremony 12/1 5-7 in Fountain Plaza. Crafts, Santa, cocoa, movie, etc. Would like volunteers to help.

**SAFETY REPORTS**

**Problem Properties**

**Kyle Keenan (not present)**

**Block Captains/Safety/Camera Program**

**Glenn Eckert**

- Steve Wilde/perimeter camera program: No updates. We still have \$20K in reserve for Truman/Jefferson/Choteau intersections. This has been going on for years....Jack Coatar has shown renewed interest, and we are continuing to press hard for them. HOW TO HELP: WRITE TO YOUR ANDERMAN/WOMAN!
- Tom Murphy/Substation: The substation is one of three left in the 3<sup>rd</sup> district. The good thing about having the substation is that it increases patrol cars in the neighborhood. It is in our best interest to keep it going. Looking for volunteers to help with upkeep (20 minutes/month), donate snacks.
- Dave Visintainer/Crime Stats: Since Officer Douglas was not here...in November there has only been 1 incident (minor theft) recorded. In October, there were 13 incidents. 2 were on I-44, and 1 in Peabody Darste Webbe. All seemed to be minor thefts. October 2019 versus October 2018: crime is down ~42%; 2019 versus 2018 stats, down ~30%.
- Comment: There are frequently dogs off leash in the park, and the signs in the park clearly say no dogs off leash, and there should be \$100 fine. Either take the signs down, which are deceptive, or ticket! Answer: We have discussed this at board meetings. The LSRC has no control over this and cannot ticket. Part of the strategic plan should really be a dog park; we're going to have a lot of new residents. The topic is on the radar, and many think it will have to be addressed.
- Clubs are available for \$10.
- Reminder: Turn on porch and alley lights.
- Thank you to neighbors who have been contributing details, photographs, etc. to [lsrcproblemproperties@gmail.com](mailto:lsrcproblemproperties@gmail.com).

**NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS**

**Lafayette Park Conservancy**

**Ward Buckner**

- Annual meeting was this past Sunday. Display of projects in the park.
- Missouri named Ward as the honoree for Sons of the Revolution.
- We have been opening/closing the restrooms...probably will close during the winter.
- Friends of the Trees: Linda Pallmann and friends have been removing trees in the park—which is very important. Volunteers are needed for upkeep in the park.

**Lafayette Square Arts Council**

**Sue Lindhardt (not present).**

- It's cold, it's dark, and there are no concerts. 😊

**ADJOURN: 8:24pm AFTER-MEETING SOCIAL: Thank you, Sqwires!**

- ❖ Next LSRC Board Meeting is Tuesday, December 3 at the Park House, 7pm
- ❖ Next LSRC General Meeting is Tuesday, December 10 at Sqwires Annex, 7pm