



## LAFAYETTE SQUARE RESTORATION COMMITTEE

June 9, 2020 via Zoom

**CALL TO ORDER 7:02 pm**

**Matt Negri, President**

**Welcome New Residents:** Gail Buffington; Gail is a new resident and on LPA PTO (married to Michael Visintainer who grew up in the Square 😊)

**Reviewed and approved May 2020 Minutes**

### ALDERMAN REPORTS

**6<sup>th</sup> Ward**

**Christine Ingrassia**

- Not Present

**7<sup>th</sup> Ward**

**Jack Coatar**

- Curfew was in place from 6/2-6/8; there was unrest citywide and majority downtown. Businesses have been cleaning up. Tragically lost a retired police officer. There were 4 detectives who were shot. The board of aldermen are not letting these tragedies overshadow the need for discussion and reform of policing. The vast majority of people in the 7<sup>th</sup> Ward would like to see more policing and better response times. There need to be reforms as well as getting what we pay for re: responding.
- Traffic issues on Lafayette Avenue: Jack has asked traffic division to help with the issue. Four-way stops have been added at Park/Missouri and Lafayette/Missouri. We'll continue monitoring; it will take time to change people's behavior.
- There is an issue brewing regarding short-term rentals in The Bordeaux apartments. Jack says that what was supported was long-term rentals; subsidies were even given with the agreement that there would be long-term residents. Jack has a call set up with the owner of the building.
- Board and committees are continuing to meet remotely.
  - Jack and Christine are working on legislation to expand the port authority (14 miles of riverfront) to take in the site of the MLS stadium because one of the funding mechanisms is a 1% tax on that site.
  - Also introducing legislation to make permanent the relaxing of regulations for to-go drink sales; the state and city authorized restaurants to sell drinks to-go during the pandemic shutdown. This has worked out just fine, and liquor sales are a big part of income for bars and restaurants. Customers would still have to have food with the order. This will take a change in state regulation. It enjoys wide support.
  - Fiber Internet Expansion: tweak gross receipt tax to allow more internet providers in the city to increase competition. That got tabled but now pushing it forward again.
- Question regarding getting permits for concerts later in the summer: At this point, Jack does not know. If larger gatherings are permitted, then concerts will get permitted, but there is no clear timeline for gatherings over 10 people.

### GUEST SPEAKER

**Candidate for MO Senate 5th District**

**Michelle Sherrod**

- Michelle is a CPA and Attorney. Michelle is a small business owner; she took care of her aging parents, and she recently lost her husband. She feels called to continue her passion and run for the State Senate. She worked for Senator McCaskill.
- 5<sup>th</sup> district encompasses Kingshighway to the River and north of the city down to River de Peres. Covers parts of 24 wards.
- The primary is August 4.

- From Michelle: *Thank you so much for the opportunity to attend the meeting tonight. I appreciate all that you are doing for your neighborhood. It is always a joy to hear what individuals are doing in our neighborhoods. Please call me at 314.749.5606, if you have any questions. You can also visit my website at: michelleforstlouis.com*

## **POLICE REPORT**

### **3rd District**

**Officer Sherdon Douglas**

#### May Crimes:

- Aggravated assault—road rage at Jefferson/44. Suspect shot victim. Detectives are following up.
- Burglary on Preston Place: suspect entered garage and didn't take anything.
- Larceny in 2300 block of Rutger, stolen bike
- Larceny in 1900 block of Park, suspect asked for water and took tip jar at Park Ave Coffee.

#### June 1-8 Crimes:

- 1 robbery on 6/1 at Jefferson/Lafayette; victim and friend coming back from protesting, suspect produced a gun and took victim's bookbag, which contained car keys. Car was stolen and later found. Detectives following up.
- 1600 block of S Jefferson at Boost Mobile, vandalism and looting during protests.
- 2300 block of Lafayette larceny; victim dropped off clothing for donation at City Church, and her purse was stolen from front seat of her car.

#### Other:

- Officer Douglas has requested increased surveillance at new stop signs. However, people sometimes don't realize that there is a change. There will be a shell car at Park/Missouri.
- Question re: enforcing speed on Choteau from Jefferson to Truman especially at commuting times. Answer: Traffic division has been put on hold right now. Officer Douglas will put out request for monitoring on Choteau during various police shifts.

## **NEW AND ON-GOING BUSINESS**

### **LSRC Outreach Efforts**

**Sheri Mistretta**

- Throughout May we launched drives for:
  - Lifewise STL (formerly Kingdom House)—over \$1k in cash and 20 bags of groceries
  - LPA--\$100 in cash and 30 bags of groceries
  - Four Muddy Paws Pet Food Pantry—several hundred dollars collected.
- Can continue to drop monetary donations in the Park House mailslot, and Sheri will deliver.

### **Strategic Plan Update**

**Linda Weiner**

- The draft of the plan was released at the beginning of June and comment period open. Several members will do posts to encourage people more to get involved and provide feedback.
- Fleshing out several aspects of the plan such as welcoming new neighbors.
- Working on gathering the 9 members for the implementation committee, which will have representation from the LSRC, LPA, Arts Council, homeowners, renters, etc. These 9 people will "own" the plan and be the communicators to all the organizations and the neighborhood in general. Everyone has wishes and wants and needs, and this committee will make sure that we figure out how to fundraise to get things accomplished. 5 of 9 members have committed.
- Been in contact with the Jefferson Room...very tentatively there's a Sunday in October for the launch, but it will also be done remotely.

### **Membership Drive**

**Christina Ryan**

- The drive has so far brought in ~\$6,000 in new and upgraded memberships! Thank you to everyone who has been able to financially contribute.
- The postcard mailing will go out within a week to all addresses that have been listed in the most recent directory. Several hundred additional postcards will be placed at businesses. The postcard letter is to a wider

audience that includes visitors that enjoy the square, and it includes information about how to make a donation as well as become a member.

#### **Website RFP**

**Dixie Gillaspie**

- We are at the point of taking bids for the RFP for the website. Please share, especially with people within the neighborhood. The deadline is June 15 for initial bids.
- The RFP was aligned to the needs and objectives laid out in the strategic plan.
- We want to make the website much more self-sufficient so that many people can add content, such as blog posts, which will optimize search engines and simply keep the website updated.

#### **Lafayette Prep Intro and Update**

**Gail Buffington**

- There is not a lot of firm information to report at this time because we are not sure when school will start back. There is a committee working on details/protocols for opening back up.
- LPA has been doing food drives for LPA community members that are in need. Many thanks to the neighborhood drive contributions.
- There is another drive this weekend in the LPA parking lot from 10:30am-12pm on Saturday. Please put items in trunk or back seat so volunteers can take the items out while socially distancing. Most in need of: milk, bread, produce (tomatoes, lettuce), peanut-free meal ingredients, toilet paper, paper towels, beans.
- If you are a Field's Foods customer and never cash them in, this is a great way to use them!

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Treasurer's Report**

**Clark Affholder**

- Reports were not able to be sent in time for the meeting. Christina Ryan will send out.

#### **Lafayette Sq Business Association (LSBA)**

**Bethany Budde**

- LSBA met in early June with good attendance. Next month will meet in person and remotely. Members received an update re: safety, cameras, patrols that have been suspended since 5/2.
- All events have been cancelled or postponed for now.
- Discussed membership initiative for members, such as a passport. All businesses are completely on board with this idea! Would love to continue the dialogue and get this up and running as soon as possible. LSBA wants to open this up to all members who have paid dues, not just new members and draw in as many people as possible to get folks in their doors.
- Have decided to keep dues at \$150. Will wait until a month after the city has gone to Phase 2 (so we can have at least 50% occupancy in our businesses) before requiring dues to be paid.
- Have decided to restart monthly newsletter again, beginning in July, to let everyone know what businesses are up to and keep everyone engaged.

#### **Development**

**Suzanne Sessions**

- Choteau Project: Bill O'Dell will be submitting updated plans (with revisions to garages) to Cultural Resources, and then to Preservation Board...hopefully start in August! There are still some problems with utilities that have taken longer than anyone anticipated.
- Smaller individual projects are working on updated designs for Development Committee to approve and send to Cultural Resources.

#### **Beautification**

**Linda Weiner**

- So many volunteers have been helping with weeding, watering, etc. Thank you!
- Phase 1 of the redesign of the Plaza was accomplished! The second phase will be filling in the grassy area with a new garden—likely next year.
- The water will be on soon on Park Avenue so that hoses will not need to be dragged from the Community Garden...which is down to 1 hose because the others have disappeared. 😞
- Matt: Beautification did take a big cut in their budget, including a paid landscaper (\$6K expense) so it's very important for volunteers to help Linda whenever they can.

#### **Community Affairs**

**Dixie Gillaspie**

- No additional reports beyond the website RFP.

**Capital Improvements****Mary Visintainer**

- Rutger Entry east of Jefferson: This project I in 3 phases. The base was put in a while ago. The iron entrance features portion is ready to go up, and the columns are “perfected;” molds are made and materials ordered.
- Committee questioned whether to replace street poles/signs that have not received
- Plaza display and box came in over-budget so is currently tabled.
- Committee recommended to LSRC board to buy bricks for the plaza to honor several long-time volunteers, including John and Jennifer Weston, Linda and Steve Skinner, Michael Boyd, Ron Taylor, Officer Douglas.
- People are already putting in requests for capital improvements for next year! The committee welcomes additional neighbors to join the committee.

**SAFETY REPORTS****Block Captains/Safety****Glenn Eckert**

- Additional members of this committee are: Tom Murphy, Dave Visintainer, and Steve Wilde.
- On schedule (within 4-6 weeks) to have our first internal camera installed at the intersection of Park and Mississippi where there is a lot of foot traffic. (This was budgeted and planned for prior to 2020.)

**NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION UPDATES****Lafayette Park Conservancy (LPC)****Ward Buckner**

- Park Notes were mailed to the neighborhood this week. The pandemic has not slowed down the neighborhood gardeners!
- LPC will place two park benches in front of the Kern Pavilion across from the lake.
- Contractor has removed the crumpled section of fence on Lafayette near Missouri. Hopefully will be replaced within a few weeks.
- The parks department has been mowing the park much more regularly this summer.

**Lafayette Square Arts Council****Donna Korando**

- Unable to hold events until city permits given for gatherings greater than 10 people.

**Barr Branch**

- SLPS locations are reopening, but Barr branch is not on this list yet.

**ADJOURN: 8:14pm**