



LAFAYETTE SQUARE RESTORATION COMMITTEE

February 9, 2021 via Zoom

CALL TO ORDER 7:01pm

Tom Murphy (President@lafayettesquare.org)

Welcome New Residents: Steve Bonney (Missouri Ave), moved here in December

Review and approve January 12, 2020 Minutes: Motion by George Boulware, 2nd by Dave Visintainer

ALDERMAN REPORTS

6th Ward

Christine Ingrassia (ingrassiac@stlouis-mo.gov)

- Not present.

7th Ward

Jack Coatar (coatarj@stlouis-mo.gov)

- COVID vaccine: The vaccine rollout is going abysmally throughout the state, including the city/county. The city has given out every dose it can. We've vaccinated all first responders and frontline city workers. Now in phase 1B. Sign up with the hospital system lists. State now has a list to register as well and is holding mass vaccination events (hours away from the city).
- COVID numbers are looking better. The cases are not rising at the alarming rates they were during the holidays.
- Money appropriated for rent and utility assistance via HR133 through previous administration. The state of Missouri has a pot of about 324 million allocated by house/senate, distributed through Missouri Housing Development Commission. Money is available for renters as well as landlords.
- Cold Weather: Roads are being treated. Shovel sidewalks. Homeless assistance/shelters: There are two city rec centers open (Tandy center on north side and Cherokee rec center on south side); get to 13th and Chestnut downtown where there is a warming center and intake for the rec centers. They are open at night as well as during the day.
- Board of Alderman: Went on recess Friday 2/5 and will come back as soon as Congress passes new COVID relief in order to appropriate that money.
- Justice Center: There was a riot at the jail with a variety of factors at play. There are people that have been there far longer than they should be without their cases are being addressed (or *not* addressed). The judges are going to lengths so that people who are not a danger to the community being released during the pandemic and not held in jail. SLU Law Dean and former judge Michael Wolf will be heading up a committee to make needed changes to the Justice Center.
- Question: Why haven't the courts figured out how to hold jury trials and other work during COVID?
Response: The pandemic does present unique challenges...even if jury duty was happening, people likely wouldn't want to show up. Criminal cases need to have an in-person jury trial; we are approaching a year without jury trials, which is really a problem for criminal cases.

POLICE REPORT

3rd District

Captain Joe Morici (jamorici@slmpd.org)

- Captain Morici is the new captain for the 3rd district (as of the last four months). He's been with the department for 27 years, including: SWAT unit, Sergeant in district 9, narcotics division, commander of violent offender unit, intelligence.
- Resident Question: On SLMPD website, crime reporting stats have been non-existent since early December. When might it come back up? Response: We are using a new system "Swift Protect." Currently we cannot

compare this year's stats to last year's. The way we're reporting crime will be different (guidance coming from FBI). Will keep neighborhood posted.

- **Crime for last 30 days:** Doing very well re: violent crime (no incidents). Several burglaries and larcenies (Walgreens). The catalytic converter thefts have gone way up. Please be vigilant if you see people late at night, under cars, driving pickup trucks slowly—usually 11pm-3pm. They use a saws-all to cut off the converters.
- **Resident Question:** What are officers doing re: law enforcement for speeding? **Response:** I play overtime for officers doing traffic enforcement. What times are people speeding? **Resident:** Mostly in evenings (11pm-1am), weekends....flashing stop signs may be helpful. **Response:** I will offer my officers overtime to write tickets on Lafayette, Park, Choteau between Jefferson and Truman. **Resident:** If there is more possibility for people to see the police, it might help. **Response:** This is definitely a citywide problem, but we'll do our best to address it starting tomorrow.
- **Question:** There are so many expired tags on vehicles. Do we really need to renew our tags? **Response:** Yes...for many, the risk of getting your car ticketed for an expired tag is worth it to people versus proper registration and paying taxes.

GUEST SPEAKERS

St Louis Mayoral Candidate

Lewis Reed

- <https://www.reedforstlouis.com>, 314-900-2002
- Mr. Reed started as alderman of the 6th ward for 7 years in 1999; current President of the Board of Alderman.
- Mr. Reed discussed his involvement in the first TIFF and Lafayette Square's Urban Plan, stabilization of park, fencing, saving buildings (e.g. M Lofts).
- We can do the same kinds of things citywide with stabilization of neighborhoods. St Louis city does a lot of planning. Mr. Reed passed an ordinance for equitable economic development framework (400 pages) in order to stabilize population, schools, business community, neighborhoods, etc.
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- **Question:** How will LafSq be impacted by a reduction of Board of Alderman? **Response:** Ultimately....LafSq will have one alderman.
- **Question:** About airport privatization, have you researched how many privatizations have been successful? The record is horribly poor. If the current Board cannot run the airport, giving it to a private company is crazy, how about assembling a Board than can turn a profit? **Response:** Our airport system is in STL COUNTY, not city. Millions of dollars are going to the county while the city has millions in debt. Airports across the country are built with PPP—Public Private Partnership. We can't do that in the city because the airport sits in the county. Private companies spend about \$5 million to just research the project; we should at least hear them out so we can find out what the plans would be....[further commentary]

Alderman Candidate

Jack Coatar

- <https://www.jackcoatar.com/>
- Day job is attorney; lives in Soulard with his wife. Ran for Alderman in 2015 and now running for re-election.
- Got involved in local politics as a prosecutor for the city. During that time, volunteered to go out to communities to talk about crime, collaborate with residents, and let them know that they are seen and heard.
- Mr. Coatar works closely with committees in Lafayette Square such as Problem Properties, Capital Improvements, etc. Was involved in bringing LPA to the neighborhood.
- Mr. Coatar wants to work on issues such as traffic calming (even more important having a school in the neighborhood); we need to shrink the large intersections, which is expensive work
- **Question:** What can be done about the sidewalks on a large scale, that could perhaps leverage funds from people living in those areas? **Response:** The city has programs to fund improvements on sidewalks

in front of residents' properties (i.e. from tree root damage). The programs will not fund brick sidewalks, but anyone who wants to participate as a homeowner for improvements can email Jack. For example, the city can come take care of the tree roots, and then the resident (or neighborhood association?) can fund the bricklaying.

- Thanks for having me tonight. I can be reached at coatarj@stlouis-mo.gov or on my cell at 314-374-0691 if you need me. Lastly, if anyone wants a yard sign, please let me know at jack@jackcoatar.com

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION UPDATES

Barr Branch

Tonnya Joy (tjoy@slpl.org)

- Not present. (Working on bimonthly/quarterly updates)

Lafayette Preparatory Academy

Gail Buffington

- Not present.

Lafayette Park Conservancy (LPC)

Michael Bushur (Mjbushur@gmail.com)

- <http://lafayettepark.org/>
- Fence repair at SE corner near Park House (for test section repairing footings): Main contract went through an ownership change and experienced significant delays. Have signed a new contract with new terms. That section should go back in the next few months.
- Expediting repairs on the Cook Pavilion (open-sided pavilion near the Grotto): refinishing and exploring possibility of replacing the roof. The actual base and metal columns are historic, but the roof is modern.
- Anyone who is not a member, please consider joining and/or making a donation.

Lafayette Square Arts Council

Donna Korando

- We have contracts with bands for the summer, but they are contingent upon what the city allows.
- The Arts Council was planning a "Valentine" in the park on Sunday (!) if you want to brave the weather and walk in the park on Sunday.

NEW AND ON-GOING BUSINESS

VP/President Elect Vacancy: Nominations

Tom Murphy

- We need candidate(s) for this elected position (determined by by-laws).
- The VP would have an extended term, not becoming president until October 2022.
- Send an email to Tom at president@lafayettesquare.org or to Christina at membership@lafayettesquare.org.

Committee Opening: Fundraising

Tom Murphy

- We are very much in need of having a committee, headed by a board-level position, for fundraising. There is a strong group that has done an admirable pivot planning a virtual house tour. We need someone with a passion to lead/coordinate a group of people and working with the board. You'd have lots of support from people who have experience with fundraising and working on the house tours. It's a great opportunity to create and tailor the position!

House Tour Update

Jill Peckinpugh/Suzanne Sessions

- Within the next week or so there will be information on the website, social media, etc. to save the date for May 29-31 (Memorial Day weekend). There will be a two-day virtual tour and three days of the auction.
- Looking at having five "houses" open for in-person garden tours that weekend.
- The tour will include 3 houses filmed at the holidays plus an additional 5 houses (filming starting this month); 4 of these homes have never been on a tour before.
- There will be a modest admission (\$5 or \$10) that will include a raffle ticket. There may be an additional modest fee for people to do the garden tour. The income will come from sponsorships and auction income. (Working on verbiage for how the money is specifically used.)
- Auction: Items are from Lafayette Square or feel like they could be or originate from a business in the Square. Some of the items will be featured in the tour footage (which will be noted) or will be featured in business throughout the Square. **If you have anything you want to donate, contact Suzanne!**

- This year’s virtual tour will likely have a long-term impact of making the holiday tour become a “Light Up the Square” event and having a Spring in-person tour when feasible again.
- As we get closer to May, please share it WIDELY with friends near and far! This is no longer just a local event! This is a chance for Lafayette Square to shine and get on the map!
- We will be able to use the professional footage in the future, as well, such as for marketing purposes.

Police Substation Update

Bev Murphy (murphycrna@gmail.com or 708.254.9670)

- Volunteers have been working hard to improve the station in appearance as well as useability. The officers go to the substation to use the bathroom, grab a snack, file reports, take a break, etc.
- The larger front room has been painted and has new blinds, furniture rearranged, etc.
- The smaller room needs to be done and the bathroom needs a lot of work.
- Maintenance: Always in need of donations of food (individually wrapped salty/sweet snacks) and beverages or monetary donations. We also need volunteers to take 15 minutes every few weeks and wipe down the eating area and bathroom, restock, and take trash on way out. (All materials provided.)
- Specially in need of a dining table, buffet, or sideboard—something that can display and also has storage. In addition, the light fixtures need to be replaced but...the wiring is “scary.” We need an electrician to come in and evaluate what we can and can’t do.

Community Garden

Kim Peterson

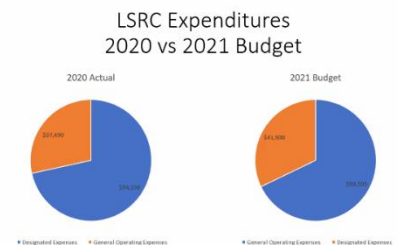
- The garden is open to anyone in the community to walk through and enjoy.
- New leadership this year: Phil Lamczyk and Leda Riley.
- All beds are reserved for 2021.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Treasurer’s Report

Tom Murphy for Sheri Mistretta (treasurer@lafayettesquare.org)

- Sheri is out of town; Tom shared 2021 Budget.
- Bottom Line: \$125K in revenue , \$88K expenses.
- Projected balanced budget!
- Motion to Approve: Matt Negri; 2nd: Jeff Baird



Business Affairs

Bethany Budde

- Not present.

Development

Suzanne Sessions

- SqWires Awnings: would run length of Park Ave frontage on their property
- Request from McAvoy for new walkway at Unity Church and porch → approved.
- Please contact the Development Committee to discuss projects BEFORE going to the city where problems might ensue.
- Still waiting for Cultural Resources for Historic Code (modest) update regarding infill in NW Quadrant.
- Question: How come there are so many NEW concrete sidewalks, not code?? Response: People are not always coming to the Development Committee. When people go to the city to get a permit, there are times when the project is not presented to Cultural Resources, and after it is installed, there is little we can do about it.
- Problem Properties: lsrcproblemproperties@gmail.com

Beautification

Linda Weiner (linderweiner@gmail.com)

- No updates.

Communications/Community Affairs Committee

Jeff Baird (communications@lafayettesquare.org)

- The new website is still a work in progress.
- Merchandise is still available at SqWires...running low on inventory—a good problem!
- Working on an option to purchase merchandise on the website.

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Membership

Christina Ryan (membership@lafayettesquare.org)

- Christina sent letters via email to members who are Preservationist, Marquis Circle, and Lafayette Society levels for tax purposes.
- We have about 250 memberships.
- Question: Why do I have to create an account to get a membership? Response from Jeff: Not sure...that shouldn't happen. We will definitely look into it. The website is definitely secure—the company ran every type of logistics on it.

Capital Improvements

Ian McCormack (ian.mccormack@mccormackbaron.com)

- Columns on Rutger...still waiting and anticipating installation at end of March.
- Looking forward...we're proud of having a balanced budget so we won't be doing many capital improvements projects. However, we will be ramping up the historic signage program; looking into where signs could be added or replaced, purchasing additional historic poles. (Dependent on revenue for the year)

Block Captains/Safety

Glenn Eckert

- Safety includes block captains, traffic concerns, maintaining the police substation.
- Shout-out to Tom and Bev Murphy who have put a lot of volunteer hours into the substation who have transformed it from "a dump" to respectable!
- In need of Block Captains; streets in need were posted in the Marquis. Contact lsrc@lafayettesquare.org.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/OTHER BUSINESS

Next LSRC Board Meeting: March 2, 2021 @7pm

Next LSRC General Membership Meeting: March 9, 2021 @7pm

ADJOURN @ 8:46pm Motion by Suzanne Sessions; 2nd: Donna Korando