



LAFAYETTE SQUARE RESTORATION COMMITTEE

September 8, 2020 via Zoom

CALL TO ORDER 7pm

Matt Negri, President (president@lafayettesquare.org)

- **Welcome New Residents:** None
- **Review and approve August 11, 2020 Minutes:** Motion by Bethany Budde, 2nd by Suzanne Sessions.

ALDERMAN REPORTS

6th Ward

Christine Ingrassia (ingrassiac@stlouis-mo.gov)

Call/Text: 314-541-4787

- On recess until 9/18 so not a lot of legislative updates.
- Question: Some restaurants have reached out re: panhandlers. Answer: Jonathan from Polite Society has been point-person to communicate with LSBA. "Queen Bee" is an individual who has been causing some non-violent problems in the business district, along with several other panhandlers. Have spoken directly to Captain Cousins w/3rd district, who sent an email last week saying that if "Queen Bee" was found in the Square committing any crimes, he should be arrested. (Has been arrested twice already.) Over the weekend, the officers who responded just told him to move on rather than arresting. There has been follow-up on that incident. Christine has also reached out to an organization that helps unhoused people.
- Question re: Speed Trailers on Choteau. Answer: Reached out to MODOT; response was an unfriendly, canned response. It might be helpful, if the neighborhood is willing, to send letters of concern and specific demands. Bill Odell with Praxair site is working with Christine on long-term solutions, but in the short-term, MODOT has not been responsive for the last year.

7th Ward

Jack Coatar (coatarj@stlouis-mo.gov)

- Not present.

POLICE REPORT

3rd District

Officer Sherdon Douglas (sdouglas@slmpd.org)

- Not present. (Returning from vacation.)

NEW AND ON-GOING BUSINESS

Concept for Virtual House Tour/Auction

Sheri Mistretta (sheri.mistretta@gmail.com)

- Matt Negri: Likely that we will not be having a Spring 2021 tour, as well as Holiday 2020 Tour. This doesn't just impact our bottom line but also impacts our ongoing marketing of the neighborhood. Fortunately, we have a reserve built up from previous house tours and membership dues, but we have been planning for how to make up lost revenue and keep our brand going.
- The Fundraising and House Tour Committees have had numerous meetings and conversations in the last four months about the "new brand" of house tours using online video format. We've been interviewing video companies, researching software, generating enthusiasm and volunteerism. We're going to build this event from the ground up in 3 months!
- Dec 6-7 Virtual House Tour and Auction Event. We want to be fiscally responsible; existing budget allows for up to \$10K in expenses. We're also building additional revenue generators. This will visually present the LafSq story and revitalize the economic position. The event will also have a philanthropic component, as well.
- The committee needs to hear your voice through chat box during call and email. We want to see how you want to be involved—house on virtual tour, donations, auction items, etc.

Website Update

Dixie Gillaspie

- Dixie not present, but everything is still on schedule for mid-September.
- Communications committee has been very pleased with the responses to the photo contest.

2020-2021 LSRC Board Elections

Steve Wilde

- Elections will be held during October general meeting.
- Membership should have received an email today outlining the process of how board members get elected and details of the various positions. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Secretary Kim Peterson for board membership or anyone on the board for volunteering on committees.
- Volunteers during meeting: Diana Gray for Member at Large (2 yrs), Brooke Gocken for Member at Large (1 yr), Jill Peckinpugh for Member at Large (2 yrs), Kelly Schlueter for any open position (has accounting experience), also George Boulware interested in board position now or next year.

Court Case Update

Steve Wilde

- The judge found in favor of plaintiffs. The LSRC is obligated to pay \$5k to the plaintiffs.
- We've always had an insurance policy for \$1 million coverage. (We do make a point of making that policy available to homeowners now if they are putting their home on tour.) Our insurance adjuster went to the home twice and denied the request both times; said it's a charitable event, and homeowner is liable. (We have since switched insurance companies.) It was a matter of the deck pulling away from the house. The homeowners requested a much larger repair than was offered. They waited 5 years to take it to court.

Strategic Plan Update

Linda Weiner

- We've developed a series of 10 questions/prompts to provide online feedback on the strategic plan re: financial impact, vision, etc. Signs will be posted along Park Ave and perimeter of park.
- Original launch was in May, and now it's October. Part of the plan was to put a new website in place...which we are accomplishing! 😊

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Treasurer's Report

Clark Affholder (treasurer@lafayettesquare.org)

- Clark will send out August financials upon return from being out of town, and Christine will share with members.

Lafayette Sq Business Association (LSBA)

Bethany Budde

- Bethany has a new grandchild! So...missed last week's LSBA meeting. 😊 Updates...
- There are some disturbances in the neighborhood. In addition to "Queen Bee," there is a guy who has a SqWires t-shirt and says he works there (he does not); he is panhandling at Fields, Walgreens, and Park Ave businesses. There is also a woman with a young child on a bike who panhandles often. Business owners are contacting police—as they have been directed to do.
- Dave Bailey is working hard on delivery schedule—the restaurants (about 80%). There will be an email coming through membership list with a link for sign-up for the schedule.
- Bethany will stay on as business rep, but committee has filled roles in membership, communications, security, and special events.

Development

Suzanne Sessions

- The big news is that the revisions in the historic standards are being presented to the Preservation Board on 9/28; aldermen and CRO have approved them. Only change is clarification of what is "infill," which needs to have a historic model example. This applies to Hickory Reserve project and the lot just south of Mississippi Walk.
- No new projects that have come up for the development committee to review. We usually have a Development Committee meeting on the 3rd Tuesday of every month. There is not one this month (September) because there is nothing to review. If we do have a meeting, we will announce it at the general meeting (on the 2nd Tuesday of the month).
- There was a hearing this past week re: Bill O'Dell and future apartment building on LaSalle (between Missouri and Mackay) concerning the density of that building, which was approved for a variance (128 units on 5 stories). Because of the slope of the land, it will appear to be 4 stories versus 5 stories.

- Question re: location. Answer: The front of the buildings will be facing Choteau (but they do NOT front on Choteau and are two lots back from Choteau); the back will be facing the alley on back of Hickory. *****This is part of the original plan.** The apartments range from studios to 2-bedroom apartments.
- Question re: materials. Answer: 22% that will be hardyboard, and the rest will be brick. We would have liked to have seen less hardyboard, but that's what was approved so that's what it will be. This most recent meeting was regarding the exterior finishes. The Development Committee has had nothing to do with this; it's been the city.

Beautification

Linda Weiner (linderweiner@gmail.com)

- We have not had much help from outside the neighborhood, and neighbors have overwhelmingly pitched in to keep landscaping looking pretty good! There are some issues with watering systems, which are old, and have overwatered and killed some bushes. Trying to figure out whether to replant the same bushes or pull them out. Also planning to fill in on medians with black-eyed susans, bulbs on order.
- Matt Negri: The city has been marking up Lafayette Ave in front of LPA. Project has been funded to install a median that mirrors median at 18th/Lafayette. This has been in the works for about a year to help with traffic issues near the school. (There will be breaks in the median for turning into alleys off of Lafayette, such as Preston Place.) This will be another area for beautification!

Communication Committee

Jeff Baird (communications@lafayettesquare.org)

- **Not present.**

Membership

Christina Ryan (membership@lafayettesquare.org)

- We have about 240 household memberships...awesome!
- Membership list will be October issue of Marquis. If you notice any errors, please email.
- Will be working with website developer to streamline membership process. Please be patient in the next month or two as Christina learns any new software.
- No Halloween Party and Parade in the park this year due to Covid. Please do it up with decorations to make it fun for the kids! We'll be organizing a modest contest for best-decorated house with gift cards from local restaurants as prizes. We'll also be sharing a sign you can put on your door or front gate to let families/kids know if Trick or Treating is available at your home. Wear your masks! 😊

Capital Improvements

Mary Visintainer

- Mary had audio problems. Steve Wilde says that the ironwork at the end of Rutger is in progress, but we are still waiting on the columns. Also, starting to look at historic lighting to see if it's possible to tackle that large project.
- Ian McCormack is on the ballot to be next year's VP of Capital Improvements.

SAFETY REPORTS

Block Captains/Safety

Glenn Eckert (glenneckert@gmail.com)

- The deposit has been made on the camera to be installed at the corner of Park/Mississippi. We're on their work schedule, but we don't have a date for installation. We'll be able to have 24/7 observation of that corner.
- Clubs are available for your car at \$10/each. Email Glenn for one.
- The October 6 National Night Out has been postponed until at least the spring of 2021.
- We have new Directories. We'll distribute them through Block Captains. Not all blocks have captains so just email Glenn if you need one. Jeff Fontenot and Kyle Keenan worked on updating to the best of their ability based on submissions from neighbors.

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION UPDATES

Lafayette Preparatory Academy

Gail Buffington (grbuff@gmail.com)

- LPA is virtual for the 1st quarter; evaluating whether to move to hybrid for 2nd quarter. The decision is made independently of SLPS.)
- LPA is coordinating a school supply drive. These are much easier to do when students are all in the same place. You can choose a K-4 or 5-8 "backpack" to donate supplies and drop off at LPA or have

shipped directly to LPA. You can always contact Gail if you have other items that you think would be useful to donate.

- Question: Where can neighbors find out more about LPA's plans? Answer: PTO page (off of main LPA page) is updated regularly, and Facebook page is also up-to-date.

Lafayette Park Conservancy (LPC)

Ward Buckner

- Not present.
- Matt Negri: LPC has a bandstand donor! This is great news for the neighborhood.

Lafayette Square Arts Council

Donna Korando

- Keep your eye on Nextdoor...there is an art activity coming up geared toward kids.
- Starting conversations about local artists sharing their work and neighbors being able to get out and see them.

Barr Branch

Tonnya Joy

- Not present/no updates.

Other Issues:

- Suzanne: Since we can't do live house tours, we have a chance to return to an old tradition of lighting up all homes, businesses, and the park, especially with candles in the windows. If we need to get some funds to help, we could probably do it. Let's light up the Square! Matt Negri: This is a great opportunity to get some photographs and video for future marketing and promotions.
- John Dedeke, Editor of the Marquis; Deadline is 9/14; send articles to marquis@lafayettesquare.org
- Question re: The Bordeaux and the short-term rental situation. Answer from Tom Murphy: The Bordeaux did put a schedule together in which they were going to draft a certain number of short-term rentals over three months. They were also putting in security desk personnel overnight. Tom will get an update for next month.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next LSRC Board Meeting Oct. 5th

Next LSRC General Membership Meeting and LSRC Board Elections Oct. 12

ADJOURN: Motion by Suzanne Sessions, 2nd by Sheri Mistretta, @8:25pm