

# French Quarter MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## Notes Livability Committee Meeting

Wednesday 1 July 2020  
2:10 to 3:10pm

Via Teleconference:

<https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1480973862>

Video:

<https://meetings.ringcentral.com/personallink.html>

Audio:

+1 (469) 445 0100

Meeting ID: 148 097 3862

- I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 2:16 pm and Introduction of Attendees

LIVABILITY COMMITTEE			
First Name	Last Name	Present	Absent
Christian	Pendleton	X	
Gail	Cavett		X
Beverly	Fulk		X
Brittany	McGovern	X	
Kim	Rosenberg		X
Adrienne	Thomas		X
Dave	Jorgensen	X	
Lee	Tucker		X

GUESTS		
First Name	Last Name	Role
Karley	Frankic	Executive Director
Juliet	Laughlin	Commissioner
Bob	Simms	Resident
Erin	Holmes	VCPOA
Elna	Stokes	Business Owner
Dave	Jorgensen	Resident
Robin	Weiss	REsidnet

- II. Adoption of June 2020 meeting notes  
Without a quorum the committee could not approved the previous meeting notes.
- III. Phase 1 & 2 Reopening of the French Quarter impact on Quality of Life
  - a. Pedestrianization concepts from the City

Ms. Frankic reported that the article in the newspaper did not cover all of the concepts put forth by the City to increase pedestrianization in the French Quarter. Some of the concepts have merit such as reducing speed limits, additional pedestrian safety measures on N. Rampart and St. Peters/Decatur, allowing parklets for expanded outdoor seating for restaurants, and idea of closing French Market Place right of way to allow more spacing between market vendors. There are concepts that are challenging in the proposal, such as the City's civic spine concept that would close Orleans Street between Armstrong Park and Jackson Square to become a pedestrian mall. The concept seems to benefit tourists instead of the primarily residential property owners on that street. Other concerns include closing the streets in the upper quarter after 5:00 pm as there are a great deal of parking lots and garages in that area. The lots contribute to a surge of rush hour traffic and the garages service not only hospitality workers, but also the hotels derive a good deal on income from those garages. Another concern is the quality of life issues, such as sound management, making sure that businesses have an equitable stake in the programming, and making sure that there is coordination with the security efforts in the French Quarter. As we are looking at security changes, the lack of funding, the potential decrease in post certified officers to

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patrol. With little foot patrols in the French Quarter, closing streets can impact the ability of respond to calls for service. There are a number of issues that have directed to the Tiger Team that did not make it into the newspaper article. As an external working team we have respected the City's request that we keep the slide deck in house so that when it does go to the public, it is refined by stakeholder feedback. With this article today it seems that this slide deck was shared with the newspaper and so she would like feedback from the committee on the issues she brought up today.

Mr. Pendleton said that a couple of things that have been discussed, though likely not insurmountable, there are real issues that need to be considered ADA compliance including concerns from LRA that the restaurants may have guests with handicaps and need to be dropped off how will that be navigated? This will likely also impact the hotels. The initial concern with what the City is talking about is the theme that there is a cluster of residents and businesses in this area and their concerns include the demographic of the elderly locals that patronize these restaurants. And residents should not have to drive a convoluted route to get their homes. Ms. Frankic noted that ADA compliance is a big concern especially as it relates to the condition of the sidewalks. She reported that the City believes its \$2M to fix the sidewalks in the French Quarter. Additionally, if they are going to have people eating in the streets, how does that meet ADA compliance?

Mr. Pendleton said that if there is an emergency on Royal Street, how will emergency vehicles supposed to move around the Quarter if there is stuff in the street. We don't want this to have unintended consequences to emergency response. Ms. McGovern noted that this was evident during a recent fire on Chartres Street and the City has not yet addressed this but she will bring it up again. Mr. Simms added that he was trying to get home and St. Ann and Conti are closed and there was an AT&T truck blocking the street and had nowhere to go and the AT&T driver told him to go the wrong way down the street. Traffic in the Quarter is normally not great. Imagine what it will be like when we have regular traffic in the Quarter again. If you're going to increase the pedestrianization you are going to have to address the 17 entry points to the Quarter. You're going to have to have an active measure in place like London that make it difficult for people to come in unless you're a delivery truck or whatever it might be. Have to think through the entire plan. As for ADA the streets are in worse condition than the sidewalks so it is not good to have people walking there instead of the sidewalks.

Ms. Frankic noted that they have recommended to the City that the means for applying for a residential parking pass need to be streamlined. And that there is a need to make sure that delivery trucks are in compliance. Especially as FQMD has lost funding to keep the dedicated traffic detail on patrol.

Mr. Pendleton said that the team is working well by FQMD with its stakeholders need to stay diligent on this issue. He appreciates that the City is trying to strike while the iron is hot on a number of issues, but a thing as well intended as this could do more harm than benefit if some of these things are not figured out before this plan is put into place.

Ms. Frankic said that the working group is not just the executive directors of the French Quarter, but includes Stay Local that has been helping represent businesses and VCC to insure that the historic buildings are considered as well.

Ms. Holmes raised the concern that Orleans has 109 address points that would be immediately impacted. And one block alone had 7 active driveways and a total of 16 driveways that would be

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directly impacted. There are only 2 businesses on that street. She counted 13 parking garages in the upper quarter slated for closure. She is wondering if it is possible to get an inventory of the cars for these parking garages. Because these garages are used not only by residents on condos but also industry workers and owners, they're used not only by visitors but also those in the entertainment industry so they can lock up their vehicles for their equipment. So there are a lot of user groups utilizing these garages. She asked if the committee could collaborate on gathering this information for an inventory. Ms. Frankic noted that she had a call with the general manager of one of the hotels and their garage is a \$1M business for them so they are concerned about losing that income especially when 35% of their guests arrive by personal vehicle. She is happy to work on gathering the information because data is the best tool to demonstrate the reality on the ground. Ms. Holmes noted that the timing of the article has unleashed a flurry of reactions. And this is understandable as the article indicated that the residences and businesses would no longer be accessible by car. It is going to take a lot of communication with the stakeholders. Mr. Simms noted that it was implied that the City shared the information with the newspaper. So can Ms. Frankic share the document. Ms. Frankic said she will look into how to do that.

Mr. Pendleton wants to assure that NOPD and EMS has weighed into this and that their ability to quickly respond and retain the quality of their service in this plan. He wants to make sure that all the right parties are involved.

b. Sanitation services

Ms. Frankic asked for feedback from the committee on how things went through phase 1 and now going into phase 2 reopening how things are going to relation to sanitation services. So far, the only changes to the contract with Empire has been to eliminate the evening residential pickup. Matt Torri at Department of Sanitation that there are no further changes to the contract currently pending.

Mr. Simms noted that he lives on a mixed-use street and its quiet but well-traveled and so far sanitation has been doing the hand sweeping. There is less trash because there are less tourists. He has not had trouble with garbage pick up. However, his sidewalk is supposed to be pressure washed three times a week, but it only happens sporadically. The last time it happened was probably two months or more ago. In the last few years you could count it on one hand and they're supposed be coming by multiple times a week. Ms. Frankic noted that the challenge with the pressure washing is that unless we have evidence that the work isn't being done, the Department of Sanitation cannot take the complaint seriously. It is a deep dive, but could Mr. Simms review his security camera footage to prove that Empire is not pressure washing the sidewalk according to the contract terms? Mr. Simms indicated that it would be a big file but maybe he could do that for a week. Ms. Frankic noted that Sanitation tells us that if we don't have proof there's nothing they can do. Mr. Simms noted that normally it happens between 7am-12pm. Mr. Pendleton said that what he and Mr. Bilbe did was they reviewed their cameras and sent a note to Sanitation to Mr. Torri that they had reviewed 7 days of footage and there is no point that they cleaned the streets and invited him to come view the footage and that seemed to suffice. Mr. Simms said he could do that for sure.

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Mr. Pendleton said that the other issue with pressure washing is the technique of the service. It is intended to be cleaning not sweeping with water. In the next sanitation contract, we need to spell out what pressure washing means.

Mr. Simms noted that rodent control has gotten better. He has not seen the number of rats late at night like he normally did. There are bait traps all over the Quarter. With places starting to reopen we should keep an eye on it.

Ms. Stokes is concerned about garbage cans that stay out on the street all day. She thinks we should go back to using bags instead. The quarter was a lot cleaner and if the garbage companies came quickly to collect it we wouldn't have to worry about rodents. We should divide the French quarter into districts and the garbage companies would have to come quickly and be efficient and we would not have to have the garbage cans stored out on the street. We also need to get rid of the sandwich signs that are blocking the sidewalks.

Ms. Frankic that the commercial contracts are private and not picked up by Empire. There are supposed to be no garbage carts out between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm. Ms. Stokes noted that it is no enforced on her block.

c. Keep the Quarter Clean Campaign

At the last board meeting the Board approved the rollout of the Keep the Quarter Clean campaign. The goal of the program is to build a sense of ownership around keeping the Quarter clean building on the work that was done by the property owners during the lockdown to clean up and refresh their properties. We have put together a cool logo that we will be pushing out on social media and other posts. There is also a flyer that is downloadable that lays out the laws that people are to abide by and a color-coded map and list of services provided by the City contract with Empire. The first thing we are doing is working on a social media campaign. We now own [keepthequarterclean.org](http://keepthequarterclean.org) and [keepthequarterclean.com](http://keepthequarterclean.com) that redirect to our website. The website includes other sanitation, vehicle sizes, mule droppings PSAs that have been done in the past. We already have a sponsor to pay for the billboard at N. Rampart and Esplanade. We are working on fund raising for lamp post banners on N. Peters/Decatur and in coordinated with FQMA on N. Rampart. We will also to stickers for shop windows, bumper stickers/car magnets, and 3'x5' banners to be hung from balconies that will only be \$50. We have gotten great feedback from agencies outside of our appointing entities who will partner on their social media platforms. We need help with fundraising as this is supposed to privately funded and not out of our general operating budget. Any ideas the committee has for other fundraising opportunities please contact her outside the meeting.

IV. Update on Sidewalk Assessment

Mr. Jorgensen reported on the update of the progress being made on the sidewalk survey. Bourbon street is complete and they still have about five streets left to do. He has assigned values to the repairs. Bourbon street ended up with quite a bit on minor repair in the area of had recently been completed with the new bricks. But hey made some simple errors that are going to need some repair if we are going to keep it from dissembling on us. But down to the residential end of Bourbon there is some major subsidence under the sidewalk that is going to require the Sewerage & Water Board to get in

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and work on their drainage and sewer and water pipes that are apparently failing and causing the subsidence. As we make progress on this assessment we will need to have a conversation with the City and or SWB about the program for what they have in their budget moving forward so that we are not assessing areas that will be torn up for repair. They have not done any of the river to lake roads like St Ann or Conti that are under conditions of complete repair. We don't want to waste time assessing streets that will be ripped up. Ms. Frankic noted that Sarah Porteous at the City would have that information. We can find out if there are additional streets beyond St. Ann & Conti that are scheduled for full reconstruction. Mr. Jorgenson noted that a lot of the infrastructure under the Quarter needs to be redone. Mr. Jorgensen noted that \$2M estimate will be unlikely to deal with the underlying issues, the survey looks at the superficial damage. We have pictures of the damage we are reviewing and assessing the costs of doing the repairs. These estimates are subjective, and we will need to have a third party that is doing the work to give a more accurate cost. Mr. Jorgensen said that Ms. Rosenberg has been very aggressive in getting the field work done. Mr. Jorgensen noted that he would be back in town at the end of the month and will be able to focus on completing the work. Mr. Simms noted that Mr. Jorgensen does himself an injustice to the quality of his estimates. He continued that we need a map of the French Quarter and what streets are going to be really torn up for a number of topics, like the pedestrianization concept. Knowing the cost of what it takes to fix the streets will be essential. Mr. Jorgensen said we don't want to spend money fixing sidewalks that are going to be torn up. There is a complexity with the utility companies damaging these sidewalks as we plan on fixing these sidewalks. Ms. Weiss asked if taking a video instead of pictures would be more efficient for looking at the situation of the damages? Mr. Jorgensen noted that this is a good point. Perhaps we could use the google app Ms. Frankic created so that the files could live in the cloud so as not to take up so much storage space. Ms. Cavett came up with the system we are using now and it's a good one. It gives us pretty good story as we walk down the sidewalks in the French Quarter. Eventually someone will need to be able to use the google system but that requires skills that we are lacking right now. The current system is sufficient to coordinate with the City and prioritize the ADA impacts on the businesses and residents. Mr. Pendleton thanked Mr. Jorgensen for his time and effort. Ms. Stokes noted that the garbage trucks are not good for our sidewalks and that is while we need to limit the number that are going up and down our streets tearing up our sewer lines and Entergy lines.

## V. Update on 4G and 5G small cell tower installations

Ms. Frankic reported that we are still working with the City to try and get a public meeting scheduled. It will likely be in the next couple of weeks. Verizon has put in an application to put in these lamp post style towers that are about 20' tall. We are working with VCPORA, FQBA and VCC Foundation to provide feedback to Toro Blanco. Still trying to push to see if we can get the posts shorter. It is her understanding that VCC is rejecting the Section 106 application from Verizon as being incomplete. The City has said it will either require all of the carriers to use the Toro Blanco poles or use Toro Blanco to manage the process so that all the carriers are coordinating on their positions. It is the City's position that there will be a no net increase in poles in the Quarter. It should be noted that the majority of

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Verizon's application would be pole replacements. There is very little overlap between the FQIF poles and these poles but where they are they can relocate those poles where lighting is needed.

Ms. Simms noted that they have been installing a new 4G pole and Iberville and Bourbon. They are bigger and taller than the old 4G poles. Ms. Frankic noted that the working group has pushed on the director of utilities and the mayor's office to enforce that the 4G poles need to go through the Section 106 process as required by court decision. Ms. Holmes was going to send an email to SHPO to inquire why these poles were going in without review. So far we haven't received a lot of support from the City on this issue. Ms. Holmes confirmed that this is concerning as we were made to understand that if the 4G poles were being replaced they would also have to go through Section 106 review. It is the responsibility of the state or the city to pressure the carriers to comply. She understand that the City is working on a programmatic agreement that all the wireless carriers so that we don't have to look at this piecemeal over the span of the next 5-6years or until the next generation is rolled out.

Ms. Wiess inquired how many poles this will total? Ms. Frankic noted that this is a moving target. At one point here was a count of up to 400 poles if they had put in the initial 35' monolith poles. That was how this conversation got started when the director of utilities brough this to us. That would have been giant poles on every corner. That is when Toro Blanco came into the conversation claiming that they could do better with these FQ style plan posts. As a way to declutter the sidewalk right of way, they could replace the crown castle poles and improve lighting by using these poles. The carriers focus was that it is based on surge usage i.e. the tourist hot spots like Bourbon street and the areas of FQ Fest. The thing is that 5G is for exterior use as it doesn't penetrate walls like 4G does. This is the most films area in the City we need to preserve the tout ensemble. Ms. Wiess was concerned about the enormous quantity of poles. Ms. Frankic noted that colocation is not possible with the lamp post poles but there is a possibility to have improved lighting.

Mr. Pendleton noted that we have learned that each carrier wants their own poles. So that is why the working group has been working to consolidate designs so that we don't' have one on every corner. Mr. Sims noted that Crown Castle is just a host for the carriers so this could be done with all the carriers. Ms. Frankic said that she understands that Crown Castle that would purchase the pole for hosting the carriers. There was a conversation in the last committee meeting about maintenance of the poles because it is important to us that the lights work. She has pushed on the City to establish a performance clause with the poles with a steep daily penalty if the lights are not working.

- VI. New business  
No new business was discussed
- VII. Next Meeting Date: August 5<sup>th</sup>
- VIII. Adjournment at 3:21 pm