

French Quarter MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Notes

Livability Committee Meeting

Wednesday 7 April 2021
4:10 pm

Via Teleconference:
<https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/2047589217>
 Meeting ID:
 204 758 9217

Video:
<https://meetings.ringcentral.com/personallink.html>
 Audio:
 +1 (469) 445 0100

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 2:10 pm and the agenda was read into the record.

ROLL CALL: COMMITTEE MEMBERS				VOTES
First Name	Last Name	Present	Absent	Approve Notes
David	Bilbe		X	
Mamie	Gasperecz	X		Yes
Erin	Holmes	X		Yes
Dave	Jorgensen	X		Yes
Brittany	Mulla McGovern	X		Yes
Christian	Pendleton		X	
Frank	Perez	X		Yes

INTRODUCTION OF ATTENDEES: GUESTS		
First Name	Last Name	Role
Robert	Watters	Commissioner
Jane	Cooper	Commissioner
Micah	Lowenthal	
Linda	Nowak	
Ethan	Ellestad	MaCCNO
Allen	John	Faubourg Marigny Improvement Association
Chris	Young	French Quarter Business League
Brook	Tesler	VCC Foundation
Alex	Fein	French Quarter Business League
Chad	Pellerin	
Eric	Smith	City of New Orleans: CAO Analyst
Ann	Kesler	
Lee	Tucker	
WDSU		Media
Jeff		

2. Public Comment
No written public comment was received.
3. Approval of previous meeting notes
Ms. Mulla McGovern motioned to approve the previous meeting note. Mr. Jorgensen seconded the motion, and it was approved.
4. Committee Chair Comments
Chair thanked Ms. Mulla McGovern for technical assistance during Ms. Frankic's well deserved vacation.

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- a. Update on Tulane Internship Program: Tulane approved Livability interns for Summer 2021 session. Recruiting begins now.
 - b. Downtown Development District Storefront Art Installation
 - i. DDD dialogue beneficial to FQMD and DDD.
 - ii. Announced DDD partnership w Arts Council re art installation in CBD.
 - iii. DDD advising on 100 blocks Livability initiative.
 - iv. Partnering on Sanitation Contract.
 - v. Monthly meetings w DDD staff and board.
5. Update on the Mayor's Slow Quarter Concept Charette for "Reimagining the French Quarter" by Erin Holmes
Mrs. Holmes reported on the slow quarter charette held March 8th. See attached presentation from the charette.
- a. Reversal of traffic direction on the 700 block of Burgundy and 300 block of Dauphine Streets to reduce cut through traffic was the concept that drew the most criticism. It was perceived as increasing congestion.
 - b. Alternating on street parking on every other block for traffic calming sightline improvement and turning improvement. The alternating of parking was thought to be dangerous for cyclists that avoid getting doored by drivers exiting vehicles. And this would push cyclist to weave from side to side.
 - c. Gateway treatments at 15 entrances that could include raised crosswalks, planters or bollards, road narrowing to reduce speeds. Generally, the additional signage could be used to reduce oversize vehicles, limit other heavy vehicles. Some noted that garbage trucks are too heavy and often damage street, sidewalks and the adjacent historic buildings added bumps could exacerbate this damage. Another concern raised was the maintenance of bollards and planters. But generally, consensus was that this was a concept that merited further exploration.
 - d. Other feedback included:
 - i. General enforcement of existing laws
 1. Enforcement would generate revenue to the City
 - ii. A more holistic approach to reducing vehicles in the French Quarter rather than attempts to make the streets unnavigable.
 - iii. Equitable public transit that gets people to the French Quarter without a personal vehicle
 - iv. Alternatives for those who must drive, such as perimeter parking lots
 - v. Reduced speed limits
 1. The City Council has already approved a reduction of the speed limit on interior street. Those signs are going up currently.
 2. There is interest in reducing speed limits on N. Rampart and Esplanade
 - vi. Installing stop signs at all intersections.
 - vii. Oversize vehicles, including setting weight limits, should be prioritized.

The next concept that will have a public charette will be the Safer Rampart Street concept, which will likely happen in May.

6. Discussion of The City Planning Commission's Live Outdoor Entertainment Study
Mrs. Holmes reported that the Study was initiated in 2019 by the City Health Department. In January 2020 study was completed and sent to CPC. Due to COVID-19, no action and no timeline for action is currently in place. A 110 page summary is available.
7. Discussion of Sound Ordinance and Bourbon Street related Sound
Mr. Loewenthal reported that he has convened a number of meetings at his home with city leaders regarding residents' quality of life issues. He recently was surprised to learn that the 8th District has five (5) Quality of Life Officers and has now met with all of them. He has committed and solicited his neighbors to purchasing, among other items, a camera car, radar guns and decibel meters for the District.

He also met with Councilperson Palmer and her Chief of Staff Andrew Sullivan to specifically discuss noise. He expressed frustration with three-wheeled cars with speakers and large tour groups as well as Bourbon Street noise and safety issues. He also discussed the damage to buildings suffered as a result of loud and heavy vehicles. Mr. Loewenthal offered his

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assistance to the committee, invitations to his meetings and open communication with the committee.

Public comment by Ethan Ellestad: Concern that the committee is not diverse and does not represent musicians, venue owners or service industry workers. Ms. Gasperecz invited Mr. Ellestad to attend the meetings and also encouraged him to extend meeting invitations to any interested party to further expand our group.

Public comment by Ms. Pellerin: Concern that the 15 foot buffer is not sufficient to minimize sound impact to residents.

Public comment by Commissioner Watters: The noise ordinance has a long standing, difficult history at FQMD. He stated that the committee should cease engagement on this issue immediately as it would have a grave, divisive impact and could possibly end the work of the Commission. Ms. Gasperecz countered that the goals of the committee were vetted and approved by the Commission in early 2021. Noise has not yet been the subject of any committee work year-to-date; after four meetings, this is the first-time noise has been an agenda item. The committee is simply listening to our constituents at this time.

8. Discussion of Proliferation of Graffiti and Programming for Remediation

Mr. Perez reported an increase in graffiti throughout the French Quarter in recent months and requested that the committee consider adding this issue to our goals. He outlined the Downtown Development District process for reporting public and private property incidents. VCPORA and French Quarter Business Association have led remediation efforts in past but pandemic and weather conditions have hampered recent plans. Ms. Gasperecz outlined the VCC permitting process which is focused on avoiding further damaging historic property in graffiti removal and reported that the Vieux Carré Commission Foundation and Executive Director Brook Tesler have committed to a Quarterly Care Workshop on graffiti removal in late 2021. Ms. Mulla McGovern committed to reporting back to committee on the status of FQBA's partnership with the 8th District and the possibility of a May clean-up.

9. New Business

- a. Ms. Gasperecz outlined the Katrina/Rita Infrastructure Funding pre-application for CBDG funding for proposed circulator shuttle. Pre-app will be presented to FQMD Commission on 4/12/2021 after committee discussion/consideration. Noted no out of pocket costs to FQMD. No questions/comments other than a general positive reception.
- b. Linda Nowak, owner of Starlight Lounge on St Louis Street, expressed frustration with increasing crime at Bourbon and St Louis Streets. Ms. Nowak addressed the committee, expressed her frustration with a lack of enforcement and impact to business owners in the area. She also reported that she had not received any response to her emailed plea for assistance to Council, the Mayor's Office and other city leaders other than Capt. Caprera. Ms. Gasperecz asked for her to follow up after her meeting w Capt. Caprera and Officer Brumfield, indicated that the Security & Enforcement Committee might be a better forum for her issues but committed to continued communication until a transition is complete. Ms. Gasperecz thanked Commissioner Cooper for bringing our constituent's concerns to FQMD.

10. Next meeting date

The next scheduled meeting of the committee is Wednesday, 5 May 2021, at 2:10pm

11. Adjournment

Mr. Perez motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Jorgensen seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm