

CRNA Board Meeting – Minutes March 16, 2011

Attending Board Members: Marilyn Barbera, Pax Bobrow, Betty DiMarco, Ariel Wallick Dorfman, Andreas Hoffman, Anne Nicolay, Liz Reed, Jerry Speir and Rick Wilkof.

Absent Board Members: Barry Brantley, Kevin Brown, Camilla Franklin, Byron Johnson, and Brad Wilkins

Residents/Guests: Sylvia Cabiran, Pauline Cotelte, Mary DeWitt Dukes, Hilary Gayle, Sabree Hill, Martin Huber, Colby Johnson, Linda Marchand, Cindy Morse, H.V. Nagendra, David Ozmore, Charlene Walvoord, Sherri Wilder, and Min Yang

Guests

--**David Ozmore**, President and CEO of the YMCA of New Orleans, reported on the organization's efforts to "re-birth the YMCA in New Orleans." Many changes happened around the time of Hurricane Katrina, including the closing of the Lee Circle YMCA. But the organization currently has five facilities and is building three new ones.

One of the new facilities will be in Algiers and will open this fall. A second is expected on the site of the former St. Bernard housing project in Gentilly. And the third is planned for our general part of town. Sites being considered include: the former Mercy Hospital site, the former Coca-Cola plant on Jeff. Davis, and some of the land on Carrollton Avenue across from the archdiocese complex. It is hoped that this latter facility can open in 2014.

The organization is not just about swimming, a gym, and fitness anymore. Its mission now includes: youth development (e.g., after-school child care programs), healthy living, and social responsibility (e.g., adult literacy programs).

More information, including volunteer opportunities, is available at <http://www.ymcaneworleans.org/>

--**Sherri Wilder**, the new Community Liaison for Councilperson Guidry, introduced herself and expressed her desire to be involved in our neighborhood issues as they relate to City Hall. She can be reached at skwilder@nola.gov And she lives in the neighborhood!

Oak Street News

Min Yang, owner of the former White Pillars Emporium property at the corner of Oak and Dante, reported that he is negotiating with a potential lessee to bring a new restaurant to that space. Though no agreement has yet been signed, he noted that he had already heard a "buzz on the street" about the project and wanted to let CRNA know and to address any concerns about the project. He indicated that he and the prospective lessee are aware of our good neighbor agreements regarding alcohol licenses and our concerns about parking and traffic issues on Oak in the evening. He expressed a desire to work with us toward addressing all reasonable concerns.

Committee reports:

--Blight

Martin Huber presented the completed, draft version of the property conditions map that was developed with a lot of volunteer assistance over the last few months. Corrections to the map are to be coordinated with Jason Stopa of the Beacon of Hope staff.

Jerry Speir reported that there would be three demolitions near Harrell Park on Saturday, March 19, in conjunction with the Fight the Blight Day at the park (organized by the Mayor's office.) All were encouraged to participate in the event, beginning at 10 a.m. in the parking lot by the swimming pool.

--Communications

Pax Bobrow is seeking a partner to help with all aspects of newspaper production, from writing and editing, to ad sales and formatting, to print production and distribution. Interested persons may contact her at paxbobrow@yahoo.com

--Education

Ariel Wallick Dorfman and Mary DeWitt Dukes reported on activities at Johnson School, including a major garden-build day scheduled for Saturday, March 26, 9 a.m. til noon. Shovels, rakes, wheelbarrows, and muscle power are needed. Work that day will building above-ground beds, building bases for rain barrels, and constructing the rain barrels themselves.

--Priestley School Site

No real change. Betty Dimarco noted that we have to stay on top of the issue if we are going to see anything positive happen there.

--Sustainability

Andreas Hoffmann reported that his committee has a neighbor, John Fleming, interested in building a community garden on his property near Willow and Cambronne. A meeting will be established soon for those interested in being involved.

He also noted that individuals need to sign up for the city recycling program so that recycling bins can be delivered. Sherri Wilder observed that it is easy to sign-up on the city's website. Hopefully, the program will begin some time this spring.

--Zoning/Land Use

Marilyn Barbera reported on drainage issues in some parts of the neighborhood, in which sewerage odors are emanating from storm drains. She noted that health code enforcement actions may be appropriate in the vicinity of some restaurants suspected of dumping grease into the storm drains.

Community Center

--Betty Dimarco reported on the latest developments with the proposed community center on Leonidas. There is a shortage of funds, largely due to construction costs increases after Hurricane Katrina (buildings must be elevated, etc.) A small group is beginning to meet to see what can be done to keep the project moving. Betty can be reached at dimarco_bl@bellsouth.net

Board Nominations

--Cindy Morse, Liz Reed and Rick Wilkof, our Nominating Committee, reported that they have begun the process of polling board members on their continuing willingness to serve and identifying new candidates.

Goals and Annual Meeting

--Ariel Wallick Dorfman and Andreas Hoffmann raised questions about the goals and ambitions of the organization.

--Jerry Speir noted the need to plan for our upcoming, April general meeting.

The group agreed by consensus to meet at Jerry's house on Tuesday, March 22, at 6:30 p.m. to address both those general issues.

Minutes by Jerry Speir