

Neighbors First For Bywater
General Meeting 12/6/17

Julie Jones called the meeting to order at 7:13

Valarie Bolton from the Neighborhood Engagement Office brought #ReadyYearRound 2018 calendars for all attendees. These calendars, produced by the City of New Orleans' emergency preparedness campaign, have a lot of useful and timely information for each month, and are available through that office. (ready.nola.gov)

She also shared some applications for a city wide grant being offered to the different neighborhoods for individualized tricentennial celebrations specific to your area. The grants are for \$1,000.00 each, and the proposed use should be inclusive as well as accessible to those in your neighborhood. More information can be found on the Neighborhood Management Office website (nola.gov/neighborhood-engagement/). The deadline to apply is January 8th.

Thanks Ms. Valarie!

Julie then reminded attendees about the NPP meeting being held tomorrow evening (Decemer 7th) from 6pm - 8pm at Bywater Bakery. The group that bought the truck farm (former site of Chaz fest) will be presenting their plans for The Sun Yard, a boutique hotel with pool they plan to develop on the site. Homes that are already in place may be used along with new construction in building out this site. They are currently seeking a commercial zoning change for the large back lot which backs up to neighboring homes on North Rampart. Near neighbors shared concerns about this for a couple of reasons. One was that once the zoning is changed, it stays with the property even if it is sold or plans change. Some feel that this group has used some questionable tactics in attempting to purchase additional abutting properties. The future land use change was filed by someone on the sellers' part who may have been unqualified to do so. All were encouraged to attend.

Mr. Jerard Ward then spoke about the new condo development at Burgundy and Bartholomew, called the Saxony, that he and his partner are developing on the site of the old Frey Meat Packing Plant. The old building has been entirely demolished and construction has begun. It is a

commercially zoned property, that included two parcels. It will be a concrete building with 75 1-3 bedroom condos and a pool on the second story. There will be 96 parking spaces on the first floor that are included in the purchase price of units. There will be an estimated 200 + residents. On the first floor there are 'artist's lofts' - which means they are smaller units (~380 sq. ft.) with large windows that open onto the street. They are marketing to "young professionals", and pre-sales have been "slower than he likes", mostly to "empty nesters". The lowest priced unit is \$189k. Mr. Ward was commended for the fact that no variances were necessary for the project.

A member suggested they alert neighbors when concrete trucks would start arriving.

When asked if he plans on including any affordable housing options Mr. Ward said that he feels \$500 per square foot is already affordable, especially in the current climate of rising property values in the neighborhood and whole homes being sold as commercial properties/full time STR rentals. He noted that there are special loan options being explored for doctors and medical personnel in training (none for teachers or service personnel yet).

Monitoring of sound and vibration levels during pile driving were under the legal maximum levels, and efforts were made to minimize potential damage to neighboring homes. Monitoring is conducted from the building across the street, the old police station, where Mr. Ward has his office. No plans have been made for that building yet, but they are looking to lease it out.

Mr. Ward said he is "not a fan" of STRs and repeated several times that they "will conform to any and all city regulations" regarding STRs, but would not be seeing any clauses in the buyers' agreements limiting or prohibiting them. Several attendees expressed their concerns and disappointment that he seems unwilling to protect the neighborhood in any way from any or all of these units being sold for use as STR's, even if it may help attract the kinds of buyers he says he is marketing to.

Once 80% of the development sells, as per state law, the governing body for how these condos are used and maintained will be turned over to the condo association.

A commercially zoned property can AirBnB/STR 365 days a year.

In closing it was noted that security is provided by a card key system at several points on the property.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:20