

Lafayette Square Area Coalition Meeting

Date: August 28, 2007

Time: 5:30 PM

Location: Westview Healthplex Sports Club

Meeting called by:	Mary Clark	Type of meeting:	Coalition Committee Meeting
Facilitator:	Mary Clark	Recording Secretary:	Sue Ann Silva

Guest Speakers: Sarah Grain, Keep Indianapolis Beautiful Mike Scott, Macy's General Manager

Agenda

Call to Order: **Mary Clark**

Discussion: Mary Clark called the meeting to order by asking everyone to support the Lafayette Square Area.

Action items:	Person responsible: All	Deadline:
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Business Spotlight – Desert Moon: **Sahara Williams**

Discussion: The Desert Moon Equine Academy is located at 3902 Moller Road on 2½ acres. They are an established equestrian learning center providing riding lessons for all ages, therapeutic riding lessons, pony rides and roping. In addition to these services, the facility offers customized programs for corporate outings, team-building, birthday parties and family reunions. But their real passion is working with children and horses.

The academy is working with Purdue University regarding their 4-H Program. They have a Saturday program for children to learn about horses (including careers working with horses) at a cost of \$10.00. An after school program is currently in the works. These programs have a profound impact on children. Interaction with the horses teaches children patience. The children learn how to communicate with the horses, which hones their life skills in general.

In addition to her speech, Ms. Williams displayed beautiful pictures of the facility that included the various fun activities available on the grounds. Among them were pictures of the volleyball court, basketball court, BBQ Pit and bonfire pit.

Everyone was invited to visit the facility, which is “located in the community to have an impact on the community”. Academy hours are 11:00 AM until 6:00 PM on Saturday and Sunday. Or you may call for an appointment. Their phone number is (317) 924-9008.

Action items:	Person responsible:	Deadline:
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Business Spotlight – Georgetown **Carmen Worlds** 14Cinema

Discussion: Ms. Worlds was not able to be present to spotlight Georgetown 14 Cinemas

Action items:	Person responsible:	Deadline:
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GINI Imagine Grants:**Sarah Grain**

Discussion: Ms. Grain introduced herself as the Director of Community Outreach and, as such, spoke to the Coalition regarding the GINI Imagine Grants. Imagine is a part of the Great Indy Neighborhoods Initiative. The Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center, the City of Indianapolis and other community partners have come together to support neighborhoods. They assist Indianapolis neighborhoods with organizing themselves, strategic planning and, in general, addressing their needs. The idea is to help them envision their neighborhood and then backing them up with technical support. In many cases this will include grant money to help them implement their visions. Last year there were six neighborhoods chosen to be part of this process to the full extent. For those who were not chosen, the Imagine Grants project was created. Imagine Grants are engagement grants awarded at \$5,000 for each project and there is not a limit on the number of projects. The primary purpose of these grants is to support and promote activities that increase engagement in your community. The intention is to get more people involved and sustain that involvement over a long period of time. There are lots of ways that can happen through beautification projects, events, training projects, etc. There are no stipulations on the types of projects that are awarded. Increase engagement in your community is the only criteria or stipulation for the grant. So when deciding upon your project you must think about how many residents, businesses, organizations, etc. you can get involved. Then you want to have a plan to sustain that involvement. Please remember the GINI 11 Principles of Healthy Neighborhoods: Leadership, Vision, Collaboration, Services, Education, Culture, Safety, Environment, Housing, Business Diversity and Economy/Jobs.

The grants are awarded throughout the year, but there are a couple of deadlines. The next deadline is 9/19/07 and the last one for 2007 is 11/21/07. If you don't feel that you are ready to apply this year, there is a plan in the works to have these grants available for next year.

If you are interested in applying for a grant, a Technical Grant Workshop is available on Tuesday, September 11 at the Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center, which is located at 1802 North Illinois. The workshop will last from 6:00 PM until 8:00 PM. There will be plenty of ideas on what works and what does not from various groups.

Ms. Grain also works with the volunteers at Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, which offers many programs including, but not limited to, tree planting projects. Information is available on the information table. Anyone interested in the programs for their group may contact her, as the point person, at 317-264-7555 Ext. 106 or at www.kibi.org.

Action items:

Person responsible:

Deadline:

Macy's Shop for a Cause Project:**Mike Scott**

Discussion: Macy's General Manager, Mike Scott spoke about Macy's and its goal to bring business into the Lafayette Square Area. One of the ways they will do this is by hosting "Shop for a Cause". This project is one of Macy's annual events. In general, not-for-profit organizations sell the \$10.00 coupons to the event and get to keep \$5.00 of each coupon sell for their organization. The coupon purchaser will get a discount and a \$10.00 coupon toward a single purchase on the day of the event. The event, which includes all the businesses at Lafayette Square Mall, is scheduled for October 13th.

Last year they were not as successful with the number of organizations participating, but they still brought over \$90,000 into the store. There are currently 22 organizations selling tickets and over 1,000 tickets have been sold in the Lafayette Square area. They are asking for our support with contacting other organizations to participate as well as purchasing coupons. One of their competitors, the Castleton Square store, already has 72 organizations signed up for the event.

For those who are interested or know of an organization that might want to participate, Mary Clark has an electronic/email application for any organization that would like one.

Board President, Mary Clark asked everyone to support this event and integrated that we must support our "own". Ms. Clark said she would send a reminder to LSAC members to shop Macy's on the 13th of October. She asked Board Secretary, Sue Ann Silva to send her a bullet note regarding the reminder.

Action items: 1) Send Mary Clark a bullet note regarding this event. 2) Remind Coalition membership to shop Macy's on October 13, 2007.

Person responsible: Sue Ann Silva, Mary Clark

Deadline: ASAP

Bar Location/License Issue:**Attorney Bob Frye**

Discussion: Bob Frye, an attorney with the law firm of Stewart and Irwin, P.C. represents Fashion Square LP, which is home to Fat Cat Bar. Fat Cat Bar is located off Lafayette Road and 38th Street behind Indiana Lighting. It has been in that location since 1968. A zoning issue has arisen after almost 40 years. The south 1/3 is zoned residential. The building was built pursuant to the variances granted in 1968 and is legally established. The northern 2/3's of the property are properly zoned C-4 for retail uses. It is not clear why the other 1/3 of the parcel was not rezoned back in 1968. What they plan to do is just rezone the south 1/3 of the parcel to C-4. We intend to do nothing different as far as use of the property. Along with the Fat Cat Bar, there is an alteration shop, dry cleaners, nail salon and some vacancies.

Providing background information as to how the rezoning issue came about, Mr. Frye stated that the variance back in 1968 allowed a restaurant serving beer. Another variance allowed a restaurant serving alcohol. Overtime the restaurant morphed into a bar. Basically, no one noticed and the bar continued to receive its liquor licenses from the City. There is even documentation stating that the area is zoned C-4, when it is actually C-5. So they are trying to fix the zoning issue by rezoning that 1/3 to C-4. There are companion variances that they need to address such as the Fat Cat Bar is within 100 feet of residences located in Wayne Township. Other variances regarding coin-operated amusement equipment, dumpsters and parking are needed.

Board President, Mary Clark stated the façade of the building is a great concern. It is one of the worse looking strip malls in the area. Ms. Clark asked what he could do to improve its appearance. She asked that he support the Coalition's vision through his contact with the property owner.

Mr. Frye recognized that there are indeed issues that need to be addressed outside of the zoning issue. The whole property needs to be addressed. He has made certain requests of the owner already and the owner is committed to fixing up the property. The following items are on the lists of possible upgrades (depending on the zoning hearing): privacy fence, more parking spaces, repave parking lot, address some signage issues, façade painting. He also noted that they are committed to not having another bar in the strip mall. However, a restaurant serving alcohol is a possibility as the alcohol is secondary to the food.

As a result of wanting to speak to the Coalition and talk to other neighbors, the law firm requested a hearing continuance regarding the zoning. A continuance was granted and issued. The hearing will take place on the 2nd floor of the City County Building on Thursday, October 25, 2007 at 1:00 PM.

Action items:	Person responsible: All	Deadline:
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Land Use:**Mary Chalmers**

Discussion: In the absence of Cynthia Bowen, the Land Use update was given by Mary Chalmers. The committee discussed the old plan and divided it up by sections. They have committed to go through the plan again, review the goals and objectives and revise them as needed. The targeted time for completion of the review is at the next Land Use Committee Meeting, which will be held at 7:00 AM, Wednesday, September 18th at Le Peeps Restaurant. They plan to be able to present the goals at the September LSAC Meeting on September 25th.

Eventually the plan has to go back to the City of Indianapolis for approval. Once the City approves the plan, then things can actually start to happen.

Action items: 1) Review the Land Use Plan. 2) Present the Land Use Plan.	Person responsible: Land Use Committee, Cynthia Bowen	Deadline: 9/18/07 9/25/07
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Bylaws:**Mary Chalmers**

Discussion: Ms. Chalmers reported that she and Bob Snelling are meeting to review and revise as needed the current bylaws. That includes reviewing the original bylaws, revised bylaws and any comments of concern or suggestions that they have received. If you have any additional input, please make sure that you email her immediately. Once finished, the bylaws will be presented to the Board of Directors. After the bylaws are approved by the Board of Directors, Mary Clark will request that Mark Killgo add the finalized bylaws to the LSAC website.

If you would like a copy of the bylaws, the following people have an electronic copy that they can send to you by email: Mary Clark, Judy Donner, Mary Chalmers and Joyce Sutton.

Action items: 1) Review and revise bylaws as needed. 2) Place request to have finalized bylaws added to website.

Person responsible: Mary Chalmers and Bob Snelling, Mary Clark

Deadline: ASAP

Events:**Mary Chalmers**

Discussion: The Events Committee met at the Georgetown Market yesterday to discuss possible events to bring people into the area for one day. Ideally, they would like to have a 2 for 1 discount card day involving area businesses and restaurants. There would be a brochure to list all of the participants. Another possibility is to have a kickoff day and have the discounts somewhat bigger for that day. The discounts could continue into the next year. It is too big of an idea to launch right now.

The Events Committee has discussed doing something around the restaurants and eateries only. It is a smaller concept and something that people like to do. So it might be the quickest way to bring people in to the community. Presumably, once people are in the area, they will want to shop and do other activities as well. This is an event idea taken from "Devour Downtown" where there is a set menu that you purchase your meal from at a cost of \$30.00. Their menus included appetizers, main course and dessert. For this area, we would have to adjust the cost of the coupons to possibly \$10.00. Or we might look into a Tuesday or Wednesday dinner/lunch type event for \$5.00 to \$7.00. While you don't get choices, you do get a chance to try out something new.

To see if there is any interest in the event, the committee will have to survey the restaurants in the area. Lisa Patterson of Georgetown Market formatted a survey for that purpose. If they receive enough interest, Mary Chalmers would like to see the event take place before the weather gets too cold.

If anyone would like a copy of the survey, she can email you a copy. Please let her know, if you would like to commit to contacting certain restaurants. If you are a restaurant owner and would like to fill out the survey, please let her know. Any help in promoting this event would be appreciated.

Board President, Mary Clark commented that we really need to let people know about the great restaurants we have in the Lafayette Square area. We need to promote our different ethnic restaurants and through that our diversity. Mary Chalmers stated a possible name for the event could be "Taste the Difference, Explore the Cultural Eateries of the Lafayette Square Area".

The idea would be to create a map with a list of the participating restaurants and eateries. A brief description of the restaurant might be included. In addition, there is a need to create posters and flyers to post in the windows of area businesses.

Action items:

Person responsible:

Deadline:

Additional Topic: Jerry Munson		
Discussion: Jerry Munson invited everyone to attend a presentation on public transportation by the Metropolitan Planning Organization. Please come to Lafayette Square Mall tomorrow night, Wednesday, August 29 th . The presentation will be held from 6:00 PM until 8:00 PM in the food court area. They will address the public on possible opportunities and what needs to be accomplished. They will also be at the Arts Garden on Thursday night.		
Mary Clark asked that members attend this presentation so that LSAC opinions can be heard. It is an opportune time for us to be involved. Transportation in the area is an important issue.		
Action items: Please attend this informational presentation so our opinions can be heard.	Person responsible: Everyone	Deadline: August 29th
Business Spotlight Name Drawing: Mary Clark		
Discussion: During the Business Spotlight Name Drawing, two cards were pulled from the basket. The winners were the Marion County Health Department and Sandor Development. No representative names were given at the time of the drawing. However, each organization may choose a representative to speak for two minutes at the September Lafayette Square Area Coalition Meeting		
Action items:	Person responsible:	Deadline:
LSAC September Meeting: Mary Clark		
Discussion: The September LSAC Meeting will be held on Thursday, September 25, 2007 at 5:30 PM		
Action items:	Person responsible:	Deadline:

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:37 PM