

## **OANA General Meeting Minutes 11-20-2024**

[Note: there are no September General Meeting minutes as the meeting was canceled due to unforeseen circumstances]

The November General Meeting was held on 11/20 at the Community Center of St. Bernard, 7143 St. Claude Ave. Around 60 people attended, and the meeting was called to order at 6:13 pm.

The first guest speaker was David Code, who introduced himself as a lifelong Arabi resident who owns several properties in the neighborhood. He is currently clearing land on Aycock Street to develop a single-family subdivision, with a plan for 31 lots, most of which will be 70' x 137.5', with some larger. The streets will be laid out with neutral grounds, and the existing open canals will be covered, with a retention pond installed at the back end of the project. As yet there are no fixed plans or solutions to various details, one of which is proper drainage on the property; these will be worked out with the Parish to fully comply with regulations. The Zoning will be R1, and will require a change. Mr. Code had looked at other tracts and originally planned for smaller lots, but opted for this higher-end concept. He promised to update us on the plans at a future meeting.

It was pointed out that the drainage project currently in progress in Old Arabi should alleviate a lot of drainage problems. However, there are no funds allocated to expand the drainage improvements to Community and Center Streets. An audience member asked if all the truck traffic on Aycock will be gone.

The next guest speaker was our District A Councilperson Patrice Cusimano, who reported that the new access road to Allied Terminals and the St. Bernard Port is finally under construction. Domino is also supposed to be serviced by this road, but is having some issues with the project. Once truck traffic is diverted to the new road, she pledges to move for Council approval to close all Old Arabi streets to truck traffic and install more prominent signage. She is very supportive of Mr. Code's development, which should increase property values in the neighborhood. The railroad work underway on St. Claude is connected to the Alabo Street wharf grain transfer warehouse being built in Holy Cross. That neighborhood is fighting the Alabo project and the St. Claude bridge expansion.

The annual holiday decorations cannot go up on the St. Claude neutral ground this year, due to the railroad work that has the area torn up. Marie Cossé will reach out for volunteers; decorations may be installed at the Barn, where Community Caroling will take place (date and time TBA). An audience member asked about the old pre-Katrina metal decor — it rusted from water damage in storage and had to be discarded.

There will be a recap of fall events — Sugar Fest and Sippin' — at the January General Meeting. The Holiday Party will be planned soon, so members should watch for an invite.

In the neighborhood:

- Old Arabi Marketplace's Christmas Party is December 5th at 5 pm
- St. Bernard Parish Schools will host a Nutcracker Tea for kids on December 8th, with 2 sittings at the Maumus Center, to benefit the School Board Employees Lions Club
- Lighthouse Records & Books has many events, including poetry, music and open mic, with specials for Black Friday and Shop Small St. Bernard
- Art Conscious is open 9-5 M-F with a current show, and will host an art market with live band on December 14th
- Prospect 6 is open at the Ford Plant through February

There were so many great Halloween decorations this year, that besides the Yard-of-the-Month, which was awarded to Jon Maddox and Billy Seeser at 340 Angela, two honorable mentions went to Vic Cerise & Toby Domangue at 530 Friscoville, and Kevin & Jennifer Reichert at 232 Angela. A December award will go to best Holiday decor, with the possibility of more honorable mentions.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 pm, when everyone was invited to enjoy the cookie swap, where samples and recipes were offered to all.