

OANA General Meeting Minutes — 4/13/17

Around 40 people attended the General Meeting held at the Maumus Center on April 13th. OANA President Mike Pechon called the meeting to order just after 7 p.m., and led the attendees in the pledge of allegiance.

The first guest speakers were David and Andre Code, owners of The Front in Arabi, a new retail development emerging at the old Bopp complex site. Their presentation included several architectural drawing slides of the plans, designed by Waggoner and Ball. The new name, "The Front", is historical, pre-dating the Bopp name. The Codes emphasized that they're committed to having a grocery store as the main anchor, with a number of other retail spaces available; they'd love to see a restaurant, and studio spaces would also be possible. There will be a pedestrian area behind the complex, plus more walkways, landscaping and bike racks on the street side. No tenants were mentioned yet, and rents are still to be determined, expected to be in line with going rates in the area.

The second speaker was Danielle Martin, who together with Julie Stierwald Meyer, runs the Old Arabi Community Garden at 626 Mehle St. The property is owned by the Covenant United Methodist Church in Chalmette, and the garden was established to grow produce for its members and needy families. It is now in its sixth season as a Community Garden, with the produce going to volunteers. They are working to have future excesses go to the food pantry at the St. Bernard Community Center. Danielle showed several slides outlining a 3-phase development plan; they are now in Phase 2, which includes planting fruit trees, installing new fencing around the property, and replacing the cinderblocks surrounding the raised beds with wood. They are currently looking for funding, and especially people to volunteer. Help is needed for lawn and bed maintenance: grass mowing and edging, weeding and pulling up old plants. They will also be hosting volunteer "Second Sundays" on the second Sunday of each month at 5 p.m. Information at: oldarabiccommunitygarden@gmail.com.

OANA Secretary Linda Van Aman then gave a brief outline of the election process and deadlines. The election of four Officers and five additional Board Members will take place at a general meeting scheduled for May 25th. Only paid members, who must be residents of Old Arabi, are eligible to nominate, run and vote, and members must be current with their 2017 dues by April 30th in order to vote in May. The floor was opened for Officer nominations, and slips were provided for Board nominations, which must be made in writing per the Association's Bylaws. Nominations at this meeting were:

- for President, Barry Lemoine
- for Vice President, Charlie LeSage

- for Treasurer, Alison Barrios
- for Secretary, Linda Van Aman

Additional nominations may be made through May 10th, by email (oldarabi@gmail.com), through the OANA website oldarabi.org, or in a box that will be placed at Arabi Food Store, through May 10th.

Shirley Pechon put out a call for volunteers for the Kiwanis beer booth at JazzFest. There are openings on both weekends; anyone interested can contact Patrice Cusimano (patricecusimano60@gmail.com) for shift information.

Door prizes of plants donated by the Community Garden were awarded, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.