

ERTCA Board Meeting. Minutes- February

Esplanade Ridge/Treme Civic Association
Board Meeting
February 10, 2010

Meeting called to order by Michele Braden in Bill Edwards' residence on Esplanade Avenue at 6:42 p.m.

Board Members present: Bill Edwards, Matt Norton, Michele Braden, Gregory Douglas, Hilda Young, (Raymond Young), L.T. Thomas and Rhodesia Douglas.

Not Present: Marva Arceneaux and Steve Goulet

Agenda Items:

1. **New Stationary.** Michele had David Shafer design some new stationary with a color logo and mission statement at bottom. Rhodesia suggested decreasing the type size of ERTCA under the Logo so it fit completely underneath it. Other than that all board members approved of the new design.
2. **Meeting with Paul May and Elliot Perkins.** Michele and Gregory went to City Hall to meet with Paul May with Planning and Zoning and Elliot Perkins with HDLC about 1614 Esplanade and 2535 Esplanade. They discussed many complaints from neighbors over large all night parties held at 1614. Paul said no permits had come out of his office and he would investigate the use of the building since its zoning precludes the group home or rooming house use for which it seems to be being used. The large music festival 1614 was planning for Mardi Gras weekend has already received a cease and desist order. For Elliot the main problem is exterior signage at 1614 which does not comply with HDLC regulations.
For 2535 Esplanade, they have applied for a variance on parking which will be voted on at the March 8th BZA meeting. They are asking to use street parking to provide 17 of their required off-street parking spaces. It is important ERTCA get as many members as possible to the March 8th meeting. Should this not be stopped at BZA, ERTCA will move to the City Council and will use preservation attorneys. Gregory spoke about the inundation of rehab facilities in the neighborhood and the Board felt that would be a good point to make at the BZA with back-up information. Elliot Perkins told Michele the fight against this was not through the HDLC. Several board members thought it would be a good idea to meet with Susan Guidry and Jay Batt to get them to come out against this.
3. **New Media Committee.** Michele pointed out that there is no officer position for "New Media" in the by-laws and so proposed that Rhodesia serve as head of a New Media/Marketing Committee rather than be an officer on the Board. Rhodesia agreed and Board voted unanimously to do so.

- 4. Monthly Meetings.** Michele asked about going to General Membership Meetings every other month instead of every month. There is nothing in by-laws against this and this would give an opportunity for better planned meetings and may lead to lower insurance costs. Board agreed and voted all in favor except Rhodesia who felt this may lead to losing some members and abstained. It was also decided that Board meetings should remain at 6:30 pm on the first Wednesday of each month.
- 5. Gayerre Park & Felicia's Tree.** Michele proposed finding a landscape architect and launching a more ambitious replanting of Gayerre Park, something like the planting at the Joan of Arc statue in French Quarter. Board agreed generally and Michele will explore getting pro-bono landscape design services, Parkway Partner trees and added funding to combine with the Entergy grant. Felicia's tree is ready for planting and Bill stated he is just waiting for better weather for dedication and planting.
- 6. Full HDLC control** - The Board felt this is an ambitious goal but one worth looking into. It was generally felt that if ERTCA did propose this we should be willing to provide assistance and classes in complying with HDLC regulations to low-income home owners. Matt, Gregory and Hilda agreed to work on a position paper to submit to PRC's Preservation in Print and also meet with Kristin Palmer on her position.
- 7. Demo by Neglect-** ERTCA's position was discussed. ERTCA has voted in the past to oppose all demolition in the neighborhood of buildings older than 50 years. Board agreed to maintain this position
- 8. Meeting with PRC-** Michele asked about the need to meet with PRC to discuss our problems and challenges and discuss their assistance. Board agreed and Michele will contact Patty Gaye to set a meeting and also ask about status of Operation Comeback in our neighborhood.
- 9. Membership Drive-** Michele brought up her plan for a membership drive focused on Businesses. ERTCA would ask for support from \$75 to \$500. To do this ERTCA needs to first develop a letter stating our members' patronization of those businesses, projects we have underway and what they get for their support. Next addresses need to be compiled and a mailing done. Rhodesia agreed to draft the letter and develop a brochure and propose what we could offer the contributors. She will also work on a longer-term effort of producing a brochure selling the neighborhood. Board agreed unanimously to proceed with this membership drive plan. Rhodesia will report back at next Board meeting.
- 10. Possible Projects-** Michele brought up a list of possible projects ERTCA should commit to. They include scouting sites for pocket parks and fountain and statuary locations, widening the median for Esplanade between Miro and Broad, installing

signage for the neighborhood at main roadways into it, installing Christmas decorations on Esplanade, providing a Thanksgiving luncheon for John McDonough Seniors, organizing a rally against 2535 Esplanade Plans. All these will take money so membership drive is crucial. Board was enthusiastic about all the proposed projects. Michele would like to discuss seeking assistance on grant proposal writing and on meeting with new District A and C councilmen at future Board meetings.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:24 pm.