

Memories from Lafitte

Over the past few months, residents have been sharing stories and memories of their experiences at Lafitte. Here are a few of the things we've heard so far...

- “The neighborhood was great because it was family oriented.”
- “Neighbors knew and looked out for each other. It was like a family.”
- “The location was perfect – we had the Superstore, bus stations.”
- “We loved the community center – holiday parties, summer camp, movie day.”
- “It was the best project. There was less crime than the others.”
- “Change came when Desire closed and the projects were mixed – that’s when the problems started.”
- “We didn’t have to call the police in the old days – people used to sleep on the porch or with their doors open.”
- “At Mardi Gras, people would come from around town to the Zulu Parade.”
- “People got a butt whuppin’ by the neighbors when they were acting up and then at home too. Things changed when you couldn’t discipline other people’s kids”.
- “The Carver Show was \$1 on Wednesdays, 10¢ on Thursdays, and 3 Pepsi tops on Saturdays.”

If you'd like to share another memory with us, please use the space below. Feel free to photocopy the page or use additional pages of blank paper if you need more space. If you have kids, please encourage them to submit a drawing.

Name:
Street address:
Zip code:
Phone number:
When did you live at Lafitte (please insert year, or years):

My Lafitte Story:

Please tear off this page and mail (or email) your story to Rebekah Simon at the Sojourner Truth Community Center:

Rebekah Simon
Sojourner Truth Community Center
2200 Laffite Street, NOLA 70119

Email: rsimon@archdiocese-no.org
 Or phone Rebekah with any questions at (504) 827-9734.



Work is Underway on the Lafitte Site!

Work has started on the first phase of the Lafitte Redevelopment Plan. Over 265 people turned out to celebrate the groundbreaking on Thursday, August 27th, including residents, members of the Residents Council, representatives from Providence and Enterprise, the Catholic Charities team working at the Sojourner Truth Community Center, HUD and HANO, our committed partners including Capital One, L&M Development Partners, the Louisiana Housing Finance Agency, the Louisiana Recovery Authority, the City of New Orleans, and many others.

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- Starting to think about Lafitte Re-Occupancy
- Update on programs at Sojourner Truth Community Center

When finished, the Homebuilding Plan will feature 1500 new homes and apartments in the Tremé/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier neighborhoods: a one-for-one replacement of all 900 subsidized rental apartments previously at Lafitte and an additional 600 new homes for sale to working families and first-time homeowners.

Just over a year from now (by December 2010), the first 134 new, affordable rental apartments will be built and ready for occupancy on the former Lafitte site. A few months later (by March 2011), the first 47 on-site affordable homes will be completed.



Photo by Harry Connolly



Photo by David Grunfeld/The Times Picayune



Photo by Harry Connolly

Lafitte residents are our first priority!



Photo by Sojourner Truth Staff Team

The vast majority of Lafitte residents have always said that they want to come back to the redeveloped Lafitte. The team at Providence and Enterprise has always agreed – Lafitte residents are the highest priority for re-occupancy of the new homes and apartments.

Work is underway to understand the re-occupancy criteria required by HUD and HANO regulations and to see how these fit with the priorities we've heard from Lafitte residents. Discussions about re-occupancy date back to February 2007. Many Lafitte residents told us they wanted a strong screening process and strong enforcement to ensure that public housing standards are met. Other suggestions raised by residents to date include: giving first priority to former Lafitte residents, giving next priority to seniors and disabled residents (age is more important than seniority in the public housing system), and giving priority to families.

The Property Manager for the redeveloped Lafitte is Interstate Realty Management. They are discussing the re-occupancy process with Providence, Enterprise, and the Lafitte Resident Council. The Catholic Charities team at the Sojourner Truth Community Center is also working hard to offer programs that can help Lafitte families meet re-occupancy criteria – especially those related to the credit checks and criminal background checks.

We will continue to provide updates on the re-occupancy process to Lafitte residents at monthly meetings (the second Wednesday of every month at the Sojourner Truth Community Center) and through these newsletters. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to give us a call at the Sojourner Truth Community Center (call Rebekah at (504) 827-9734).

What's happening at Sojourner Truth?

Sojourner Truth Community Center is now Sojourner Truth Neighborhood Center!

Sojourner Truth Neighborhood Center (STNC), a hub for community building, offers family stabilization and family strengthening services and serves as a space for residents and communities to gather.

Here are some highlights as to what's going on now at STNC!

- We have launched the Saturday Youth Club (SYC), a youth program providing recreational, cultural, and educational activities for kids ages 7-18 on Saturday mornings, featuring *The Truth Youth* with activities in the arts, social skills groups, science club, gardening, tutoring and more!
- Our Family Wealth Development Specialist Claudette Austin joined the team at STNC this month, assisting individuals and families in building their wealth through financial literacy, employment services, and small business training.
- Section 3 is up & running with the first Lafitte Redevelopment Pre-Employment Orientation and the first Pre-Bid Workshop being held in recent months.
- We have Patrena Ester of Integrity Resource Services providing credit counseling and action plans onsite, in addition to homeownership training!
- We have 20 active senior citizens coming twice a month to participate in the Senior Day Club Socials hosted by the Lafitte Resident Council. These events feature bingo, door prizes, health seminars, lunch and much fun!
- We continue to have our monthly health seminars featuring topics such as diabetes, flu prevention, men's cancer prevention, hypertension, and eating your way to good health.
- We continue to host the Job Seekers' Roundtable the last Tuesday of every month featuring speakers and topics to assist job seekers in learning new skills and strategies for getting ahead in finding good jobs.
- Our Community Technology Learning Lab features computer and technology access and is available to community residents and small businesses.
- We welcome Carolyn Wells & Greg Favret with CCANO's Alternative Staffing Organization (ASO) to STNC.
- Many more programs and services to come!!!



Photo by Sojourner Truth Staff Team

Sojourner Truth Neighborhood Center

- Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 am to 5:30 pm
Saturday 10:00 am to 3:00 pm
- Contact: Rebekah Simon
- Phone: (504) 827-9734
- Email: rsimon@archdiocese-no.org
- Address: 2200 Laffite Street, NOLA 70119



Photo by Sojourner Truth Staff Team



Photo by Sojourner Truth Staff Team

Meet our Staff – We are here to serve you!

MAIN PHONE NUMBER: 504-827-9963

- Ext. 212 Carol Carter (Executive Director)
- Ext. 213 D'Ana Smith (Director of Social and Human Services)
- Ext. 210 Sombra Davis Williams (Section 3 Coordinator)
- Ext. 211 Jessica Kennington (Program Coordinator)
- Ext. TBA Claudette Austin (Family Wealth Development Specialist)
- Ext. 220 Rebekah Simon (Office Manager)
- Ext. 209 Kedra Green (Service Coordinator)
- Ext. 226 Karen Hebert (Service Coordinator)
- Ext. 225 Kyra Watson (Service Coordinator)
- Ext. 200 Linda King (Receptionist)
- Ext. 200 Jacqueline Griffin (Receptionist)
- Ext. 221 Lafitte Resident Council
- Ext. 218 Carolyn Wells (ASO Employment Coordinator)
- Ext. 227 Greg Favret (ASO Manager)

Community Information & Announcements

Monthly Meetings with Lafitte Residents take place on the second Wednesday of every month in New Orleans, 6:00 – 8:00 pm at Sojourner Truth Community Center. Meetings are facilitated by the Lafitte Resident Council, and include dinner and door prizes! Future meeting dates include:

- Wednesday, November 11, 2009
- Wednesday, December 9, 2009
- Wednesday, January 13, 2010
- Wednesday, February 10, 2010

Having legal problems? Contact Southeast Louisiana Legal Services, Sarah Marcello, at (504) 274-0443.

Are you interested in getting in touch with the Lafitte Resident Council? If so, please contact Emelda Paul at paulemelda@bellsouth.net or (504) 367-4724.

Have a community announcement you want posted here in our next newsletter? Contact Rebekah Simon at (504) 827-9734 or email at rsimon@archdiocese-no.org.