

DDD Commission Meeting  
July 14, 2015, 8:00 a.m.  
Holiday Inn Express, 400 North Blvd.

Attending: Scott Hensgens, Fran Gladden, Ric Kearny,  
Cheryl McCormick, Melanie Montanaro, Sevetri Wilson

Absent: Gordon LeBlanc

Others in Attendance: Joe Anthony, Jo Landry Bagwell, Alicia Baron, Tom Bergman, Greg Bivin, Gary Black, Ben Blackwell, Shannon Blakeman, Timothy Boone, Robert Boudreaux, Michael Brassett, Chelsea Brasted, Zach Broussard, Kevin Broussard, Neva Butkas, Rex Cabaniss, Gayle Carnahan, Johnathan Cary, Jay Celar, Andre Chapoy, Norman Chenevert, Oren Conner, Whitney Cooper, Craig Davidson, Tom Dawson, Michael Day, Angela deGravelles, Eric Dexter, Kristen Diehl, Elaine Disher, Liz Eure, Heather Fatzinger, Christine Forsman, Judy Foust, Anthony Frabbiele, Lisa Freeman, Elizabeth Gibert, Brian Goad, Matt Harrison, John O Hearin, Daniel Hernandez, Ryan Holcomb, Tom Holden, Courtney Hunt, Rebecca Jacobs, Melody Joachin, Mary Johnson, Bliss Kelley, Douglas Kennedy, Nicole Kennelly, Tara Kistler, Ashley LaBorde, Carol LaCour, Michael Lang, Lori Lasseigne, Steven LeBlanc, Beverly LeBeau, Ron LeBouef, Justin Lemoine, Marisa Lingoni, Jason Lockhart, Diane Losavio, Lisa Lymuel, Vic Mallory, Staci Manning, Lauralyn Maranto, Mary Jane Marcantel, Fr. Pat Mascarella, Tony Matherne, Patrick Michaels, Carolyn McNight, Ryan McKnight, BJ Militello, Debbie Mire, Brandon Morgan, Jennifer Myer, Mikela Nagura, Lisa Nice, Chris Nichols, Shawn Nolan, Amy Norval, Nic Odekirk, Donna Odom, Mary Olinde, Tamara Palmer, Pete Patel, Melissa Parmelee, Sgt. Joel Pattison, Michael Petty, Lluvia Peveto, Duane Pierce, Andy Pino, Eric Poche, Skipper Post, Tina Rance, Margaret Read, Eric Relle, Leif Remo, Davis Rhorer, Stephanie Riegel, Lakeisha Robichaux, Bob Schmidt, Ray Scriber, Larry Selders, Casey Sessums, Darlene Shingleur, James Slaton, Lisa Smith, Shannon Smith, Karen Stagg, Craig Stevens, J.T. Sukits, Emily Sulzer, Casey Tate, Ben Taylor, Jeremy Theriot, Boo Thomas, Jude Trahan, Mark Trahan, Veach Tucker, Tyelise Vavasseur, Clark Vega, Gabe Vicknair, Sadler Ward, Rosie Washington, Jr., Quinn Welsch, Councilwoman Tara Wicker

1. Mrs. Fran Gladden called the meeting to order.
2. Mrs. Fran Gladden declared a quorum.
3. Mr. Ric Kearny moved to approve the agenda, Mrs. Melanie Montanaro seconded and the agenda was approved.
4. Mrs. Melanie Montanaro moved to approve the May 12, 2015 minutes, Mr. Ric Kearny seconded and the minutes were approved.

Mrs. Fran Gladden thanked Holiday Inn Express for hosting the meeting. Ms. Donna Odom, Director of Sales, welcomed everyone and encouraged them to tour the hotel after the meeting. Ms. Odom also informed the Commission that the ribbon cutting ceremony will be held this afternoon from 3pm – 5pm. Mr. Pete Patel, owner, expressed his excitement to be part of the development downtown.

**5. Board Action – There was no board action.**

**6a. Governmental Issues – Courtyard by Marriott** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the rendering for the Courtyard by Marriott. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the Courtyard by Marriott has applied for Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and the Metropolitan Council will be voting on the TIF Wednesday, July 22, 2015. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the following information from the white paper included in their packets and to be submitted to the Metropolitan Council upon Commission approval:

- Inclusion is a critical component for the downtown hotel market to be able to attract larger events.
- In 2001 Downtown did not have enough hotel rooms to host large scale events at the River Center.
- A KPMG study found that in order to attract large events and escalate Downtown Baton Rouge in the competitive market a total of 1,200-1,400 hotel rooms within walking distance to the River Center would be needed.
- The announcement of the Watermark and the Courtyard by Marriott brings the total number of Downtown hotel rooms to 1,179, just below the recommended KPMG total of 1,200 – 1,400 hotel rooms.
- The hotels complete four contiguous blocks of urban streetscape and complement the current diversity of the historic Third Street corridor.
- These hotels create a cohesive urban streetscape and attract retail opportunities to hotel patrons as well as Downtown workers, residents, and guests

Mr. Rhorer asked the Commission to go on record supporting the TIF.

**Mr. Scott Hensgens moved that the Downtown Development District go on record supporting the Tax Increment Financing District for the Courtyard by Marriott, Mr. Ric Kearny seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.**

**6b. Development Initiatives – Holiday Inn Express** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of the building and photographs of the interior. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the Holiday Inn Express consists of 88 rooms and is the newest hotel downtown and a recipient of the TIF. The hotel is another testament to incentives and making projects work.

**Dupree Apartments** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of the buildings. Mr. Rhorer encouraged everyone to attend the Open House to showcase the historic Dupree Apartments in Spanish Town next Saturday, July 18 from 10:00 a.m. to noon.

**Downtown Parking Study** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of downtown. Each Commissioner received a copy of the Executive Summary. Mr. Bob Schmidt, AECOM, informed the Commission that the study is an update to the previous study conducted in 2005. Mr. Schmidt briefed the Commission on the process used to obtain information for the study and the results of the study.

The conclusion of the study states the following:

- Supply sufficient to accommodate existing and planned development
- However, existing supply not efficiently allocated
- On-Street parking is over-utilized, establishing perception of overall scarcity

Following are the policy recommendations:

- Increase effective supply of on-street parking through strategic pricing and enforcement
- Reducing or even eliminating off-street parking requirements for the DDD. This would enable the market to efficiently price and allocate current and future capacity
- In-lieu fees to finance strategically located public parking structures and trolley expansion. The fee should be in line with cost of providing an asphalt surface space.
- Develop a shared parking concept
  - Limit reserved parking for individuals and groups;
  - Plan for and integrate peak demand land uses; and
  - Define special event parking strategies.

Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Traffic Engineering confirmed they will be installing parking meters along Third Street.

**Commerce Building** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of the building and photographs of the current construction. Mr. Michael Lang informed the Commission that the 1955 building has been stripped to the concrete and steel beams. 93 residential units will occupy the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> floors. The top floor will house a roof top garden restaurant, work out room and pool. A European style café will be located on the first floor on the corner of Third and Laurel St. Pre-leasing of the residential will begin in approximately 90 – 120 days with anticipated move in January 2016.

**Third Street Development** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, images of Third Street Development. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the diversity of Third Street. With the hotels planned at the corner of Third and Convention and Third and Florida it will make 4 contiguous blocks complete.

**Onyx Residences** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of the buildings. Mrs. Tina Rance, Commercial Properties, informed the Commission that the following tenants will be housed in the Onyx building which is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2015:

- IberiaBank
- Kean's
- Regal Nails

Ms. Tamara Palmer, IberiaBank, informed the Commission that this location will be the 9<sup>th</sup> in Baton Rouge. The concept for the bank will be “Bank of the Future” with customers no longer waiting in teller lines but sitting down at the desk with the teller. The bank will also include an ATM, upscale technology and a collapsible wall for enlarged meeting space.

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Proposed opening date for the bank is early 2016. Ms. Tina Rance also announced that the IBM currently has 7,000 sq. ft. of office space available for lease and 525 Lafayette residential will have a model open late August 2015.

**Rotary Centennial Project Update** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the project site, Rotary logo, photographs of examples of art pieces and timeline. Mr. Skipper Post informed the Commission that they have narrowed the proposals down to the top 7. There is a meeting Thursday, July 16 to narrow down to 3 final proposals. The 3 finalists will be brought to Baton Rouge to present the proposals and the finalist will be chosen by July 20, 2015. The goal is to make the structure interactive and noticeable day and night.

**Yazoo Plaza** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the current construction. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that the project is nearing completion with the following items to be addressed:

- Lighting of the oak tree and benches
- Panels in the arches
- Irrigation
- Power

The ribbon cutting for this project and the riverfront gateway will be held during the summer 2015.

**City Hall Plaza** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, images of the renderings of the conceptual design for City Hall Plaza and before and after. Mr. Gabe Vicknair informed the Commission that Reed Hilderbrand has been hired to design the lighting for the Crest Sculpture at Galvez Plaza. \$3.9 million from state sales tax rebate funding has officially been requested to administration for construction of City Hall Plaza.

**Riverfront Improvements** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the proposed signage. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the DDD is working on updating the pedestrian wayfinding signage on the riverfront and installing 15 maps. The DDD will introduce the Levee Loop, a .5 mile and 1.5 mile loop that can be used by walkers, joggers and bicyclists. The loop is completely lit and incorporates the top of the levee from Florida Street to South Blvd. and the new pathway along River Rd.

**Downtown Maintenance Committee** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the previous Maintenance committee meeting. Ms. Whitney Cooper informed the Commission that the individual subcommittees will continue to meet before the next full Maintenance Committee meeting scheduled for Thursday, August 27, 2015. The subcommittees are working on the following issues:

Enforcement Committee – Received the report / 311 has been updated and improved  
Ordinance Committee – Reviewing the ordinance and updating  
Education Committee – Working on a streetscape flyer / secret sanitation campaign

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Volunteer / Funding Committee – Looking at different possibilities of funding options for Ambassador like program.

**Downtown Greenway Update** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, renderings of proposed improvements. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that East Blvd. is currently under design and North Blvd is 75% complete construction documentation phase. Design consultants are currently finalizing signage and construction is expected begin early 2016.

**Myrtle Street** – Currently installing the 8’ pathway on Myrtle Street that links to Expressway Park. Seven bike racks adjacent to Lincoln Theatre and Public Museum of Art are included in the project.

**Downtown Bike Racks / EPA Bike Share Program** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the previous meeting. Ms. Whitney Cooper informed the Commission that the Bike Share committee is completing a self-assessment for EPA and consultants to utilize for the plan. The public workshop is planned for July 28, 6:30 p.m. at the LASM. The Request for Proposals has been released for the 71 bike racks with a bid deadline of July 23, 2015.

**New Businesses – 1010 Nic** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the exterior of the building. Ms. Carol LaCour informed the Commission that she purchased the building at 1010 Nicholson and has been working on the project for 1 ½ years. Plans are to open August 2015 with the following tenants:

- The Front Door
- Monochrome
- Contemporain
- Denicola’s
- Noelie Harmon
- Jeannie Frey Rhodes Photography
- Mercer Supply Company

**Ruffin’s Downtown Daiquiri** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of the building. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the lounge is now open at 602 Main Street.

**Events** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, the logos for the following events. Each Commissioner received flyers on the events. Mr. Casey Tate briefed the Commission on the following events.

- Glen Big Baby Davis Foundation – July 17
- Live After Five Fall Line-Up Reveal Party – July 24
- Art Melt / Divine Protection Service – July 25
- LA Marathon Halfway to Geaux – July 28
- Hump Day 2 mile – August 5
- Foundation for Historical Louisiana/Old Governor’s Mansion
- Manship Theatre / LSU MOA
- Old State Capitol
- River Center Events

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- BRSO
- LASM
- USS Kidd

**7. Strategic Plan – Plan Baton Rouge II** – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of the PBR II cover. The DDD continues to implement the plan with Third Street development.

**8. Ongoing Projects – CPEX** – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, an image of the CPEX logo. Ms. Boo Thomas informed the Commission that the Louisiana Smart Growth Summit is scheduled for November 3 – 5, 2015. Everyone was encouraged to visit [www.summit.cplex.org](http://www.summit.cplex.org) for more information.

**BREADA** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the BREADA logo. Ms. Emily Sulzer briefed on the Commission the upcoming Fresh Fest events.

**Downtown Business Association (DBA)** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the DBA logo. Mrs. Alicia Baron briefed the Commission on the following events:

- July 24 – Live After Five Reveal Party
- September 3 – DBA Social – Draft House
- September 4 – Live After Five begins

**8. Correspondence** – There was no correspondence.

**9. Public Comment** – Councilwoman Tara Wicker commended everyone involved in the development downtown.

Ms. Melody Joachin briefed the Commission on the upcoming “Booking it with Baby” events. Everyone was encouraged to visit the web site at [www.gbbdf.org](http://www.gbbdf.org).

Mr. Shannon Blakeman encouraged everyone to attend the meeting regarding the LSU Lakes at the LOD Cook tonight at 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Rhonda White informed the Commission that she will be opening “Cordon Rouge Bistro” in the 300 block of Third Street in approximately 3 weeks.

Ms. Chris Nichols encouraged everyone to support the TIF for the Courtyard by Marriott.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.**