

DDD Commission Meeting
January 12, 2012, 8:00 a.m.
Springboard, 447 Third St., 2nd floor

Attending: Norman Chenevert, Derrell Cohoon,
Fran Gladden, Danny Montelaro, Chris Nichols

Absent: Van Mayhall

Others in Attendance: Tom Adamek, Gary Anderson, Matt Anderson, Renee Areng, Paul Arrigo, Cheri Ausberry, Jo Landry Bagwell, Jeffrey Beck, Matt Beeson, Cory Belden, Charles Bennett, Frances Bennett, Gary Black, Virginia Black, Shannon Blakeman, Ward Bond, Rebecca Bonnet, Kristin Brinson, Anne Broderick, Mike Bruce, Erin Brush, Gary Burkett, Jimmy Burland, Chad Calder, Gayle Carnahan, Sarah Casper, Stephanie Champagne, Renee Chatelain, Erin Cocharn, Tim Cockerham, Amber Cook, Bay Compton, Sandra Daire, Melissa Daly, Genny Denton, Rachel DiResto, Gary Dixon, Mary Durusau, Kendrick Ebanks, Jennifer Eller, Terry Elmore, Alicia Enloe, Robert Fannin, Heather Fatzinger, Betsy Fazekas, Cassie Felder, Pete Ferrara, Clark Gernon, Aaron Glaser, Brace Godfrey, III, Krista Goodin, , Francis Grayson, Ashanti Green, Lani Guilbeau, Melanie Hanley, Katie Harvey, Frankie Hebert, Robert Hebert, Caleb Heine, Emily Herrington, Marla Hill, Ryan Holcomb, Lael Holten, Nicole Huffstetier, Chris Hunte, Neal Johnson, Mary Terrell Joseph, Bridget Kerley, Jessica Keasler, Jenny Kornuta, Jackie Kreutzer, Ashley LaBorde, Leigh LaFargue, Melissa Landry, Lori Lasseigne, Beverly Lebeau, Jin Lee, Rosemary Leleaux, Justin Lemoine, Tom Livesay, Jason Lockhart, Sarah Lomax, Joel Loots, Julie Love, Mary Jane Marcantel, Fr. Pat Mascarella, Jeff Michie, Jason Miller, Rob Miller, B.J. Militello, Todd Mitchell, Robyn Morrison, Gordon Nelson, Brent Nettles, Randy Nichols, Lisa Nice, Mike Odom, Mary Olinde, Billy Overton, Vertina Overton, Wendy Overton, Greg Palmer, Melissa Parmelee, Gary Perilloux, Lisa Perron, Ashley Pierce, Michael Platte, Eric Poche, Taylor Rainey, George Ragsdale, Tina Rance, Margaret Read, Donna Reichman, Davis Rhorer, Reed Richard, Frank Rideaux, III, Susan Ringwald, Darlene Rowland, Jenny Rozas, Robyn Ryan, Samuel Sanders, Larry Selders, Atri Sen, Casey Sessums, Shay Schilling, John Schneider, Thomas Schulze, Joseph Scott, Ann Shaneyfelt, Darlene Shingleur, Michelle Shirley, Lorraine Slade, Douglas Smith, John Smith, Karen Stagg, Jennifer Steinhouse, Kelly Stutes, Jan Sumrall, Cherry Talbert, Ben Taylor, Ryan Temple, Lisa Thibodaux, Boo Thomas, Susie Thomas, Clark Vega, Mitch Verma, Gabe Vicknair, Kandace Walls, Jennifer Ward, Rosie Washington, Jr., Pam Welsh, Randy Wesley, Councilwoman Tara Wicker, Tom Willingham, Rob Wise, Molly Woodland

1. Ms. Chris Nichols called the meeting to order.
2. Ms. Chris Nichols declared a quorum.
3. Mr. Norman Chenevert moved to approve the agenda, Ms. Chris Nichols seconded and the agenda was approved.
4. Mr. Norman Chenevert moved to approve the December 13, 2011 minutes, Mr. Derrell Cohoon seconded and the minutes were approved.

Ms. Nichols thanked Springboard for hosting the meeting. Mr. Brace Godfrey, III, welcomed everyone to Springboard and commended everyone involved in the project. Springboard endeavor to assist in creating an entrepreneurial eco system within the state of Louisiana specifically in the capital region. Mr. Godfrey expressed that the project is the brain child of Mr. John Schneider and late Mr. Brace Godfrey Jr. Mr. Schneider expressed that the three year goal is to expand the entrepreneurial campus to 300,000 sq. ft. downtown and house 50 small emerging businesses. The campus will be an information center with resources available to assist entrepreneurs and small businesses.

5. Board Action – Nominating Committee – The Commission viewed, via power point, an image of the DDD logo. Ms. Chris Nichols requested that Mr. Norman Chenevert and Ms. Fran Gladden serve with her on the nominating committee for the recommendation of 2012 DDD officers. The recommendation of officers will be presented at the February 14, 2012 board meeting.

Draft Panhandling Ordinance – The Commission viewed, via power point, an image of the draft ordinance document. Each Commissioner received a copy of the draft ordinance and newspaper article. Mr. Joseph Scott, Parish Attorney’s office, informed the Commission that the Parish Attorney’s Office drafted an ordinance which emulates the ordinance that was adopted in New Orleans approximately one year and half ago. The ordinance increases the penalty for aggressive forms of panhandling. Discussion ensued. **Mr. Derrell Cohoon moved that the draft ordinance be forwarded to Councilwoman Tara Wicker’s office to introduce to the Metropolitan Council, Mr. Danny Montelaro seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.**

6a. Governmental Issues – FHWA TCSP – North Blvd. Promenade – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, images of the existing promenade. Each Commissioner received a copy of grant application. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that the DDD was awarded \$1.0 million from the expected \$1.9 million TEP grant. To assist with deficient of funding the DDD has applied for the FHWA grant to implement improvements to the North Blvd. promenade to connect to Greenway. This project and first phase of greenway will be planned together. Once the grant is awarded the project will be an 18month process including planning and construction.

6b. Development Initiatives – North Boulevard Town Square Update (NBTS) – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of Town Square. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles. Mr. Gabe Vicknair reported the following:

- Town Square is open to public
- Contractor is working on the punch list to be completed end of month
- Covalent Logic is finalizing the tourism portion and ambient piece of the beacon
- Transit shelter – complete by end of week
- Ribbon cutting ceremony end of February
- 48 moveable chairs available for use
- 13 tables to be delivered by end of February

Mr. Rhorer encouraged the public to use the litter getters that are on the trash receptacles to keep the town square clean. Pet waste stations have been ordered and will be installed in the town square within the next two weeks.

Repentance Park Update – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of proposed renderings. Mr. Vicknair briefed the Commission on the following time line:

- Notice to Proceed is in process
- Plan to begin construction by end of February 2012

Two-waying St. Phillip / St. Ferdinand – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, images indicating two-waying of St. Phillip & St. Ferdinand. Mr. Vicknair briefed the Commission on the following time line:

- Bids are scheduled to go out the first quarter of February
- Once bids are awarded - 8-9 months for completion

Mr. Rhorer reminded everyone that St. Louis Street is two way from North Blvd. to Louisiana Ave.

Baton Rouge Transit Coalition (BRTC) – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the Logo. Ms. Rachel DiResto informed the Commission that the Capital Area Transit board plan to move forward with an election on April 21, 2012 for a 10.6 property tax millage. The tax would create dedicated revenue for the transit system. Some of the dedicated fund components are as follows:

- Decrease wait time
- Increasing service
- Increasing the amount of peak buses running
- 3 new transit hubs

Ms. DiResto expressed that the BRTC is dedicated to supporting comprehensive transit reform. BRTC is also looking at other aspects such as governance issues of CATS and establishing criteria for future board members and monitoring system for the accountability factor. Ms. DiResto encouraged everyone to be an advocate for this issue and fill out a support pledge card. Ms. Nichols expressed that a large percent of the community depends on the transit system for transportation to their jobs.

BREC Convention Street Park– The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of existing land and images of proposed rendering. Mr. Reed Richard informed the Commission that BREC has decided to go with the proposed design that includes the semicircular path with the incorporation of a pergola. Mr. Reed briefed the Commission on the components of the park. Construction for the \$230,000 park is scheduled to commence March / April 2012 with a projected competition date of early fall 2012. Mr. Rhorer commended CPEX for their assistance in obtaining the property.

River Center Wi-Fi Expansion – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an aerial photograph indicating proposed wi-fi service. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the DDD is partnering with the Baton Rouge River Center in conjunction with their upgrade of wi-fi in the facility to include Repentance Park, Galvez Plaza and North Blvd. Town Square.

Residential Façade Program – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of a downtown home. The DDD has sent the outline of the program to neighborhood representatives Ms. Chris Nichols and Mr. Derrell Cohoon for their review. Façade improvement grants are available up to \$500.00 per property to be used toward eligible improvements with a required 50% match. There will be \$5,000 designated for each neighborhood.

Mr. Rhorer thanked Ms. Fran Gladden for her assistance in securing COX service for North Blvd. Town Square.

Belle of Baton Rouge Renovations – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of completed renovations. Each Commissioner received a copy of the renovation facts. Mr. Jeff Miche, general manager, informed the Commission that \$7 million dollars of renovations is complete. Mr. Miche reviewed the renovations and expressed that the renovation completions were perfect timing for the US Bowling Congress at the River Center and the opening of Pinnacle later this year. The ribbon cutting for the grand re-opening was held Wednesday, January 4th and was well attended.

2012 Baton Rouge Area Chamber Canvas trip – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the skyline of Louisville, Kentucky. Each Commissioner received a copy of the fact sheet for the Canvas trip. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the Baton Rouge Area Chamber Canvas trip will be studying Louisville Kentucky from March 25 – 27, 2012 and downtown Louisville will play an important component in the study.

Clutter Removal Program Update – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the graffiti downtown. Mr. Caleb Heine informed the Commission that the Department of Public Work is in the early stages of executing phase I of the program. Phase II is to identify problems in Spanish Town and Beauregard Town.

New Business – Agave Restaurant & Punchers’ Patio Addition – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the logo. Mr. Rhorer reported that owners will report at the February meeting.

MayerIT – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the logo. Mr. Robert Wise, COO introduced Mr. Robert Hebert, director of Marketing and expressed his excitement to be part of the downtown development. The company is located at 457 Louisiana Ave. and offers IT network services, application development, help desk services, IT phone systems and business consulting. The company has expanded from 5 to 16 employees since January 2011 and now has two offices.

Dragon Café – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the exterior and interior of the restaurant. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Dr. Hu has opened the Chinese restaurant at 431 Third Street.

Zolia Italian Bistro – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the interior of the restaurant. Mr. Matt Anderson informed the Commission that the restaurant is located in II City Plaza and has been open for three weeks. They are currently open for breakfast and lunch and will open for dinner beginning Monday, January 16th. Plans are to open weekends in the near future.

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

- Laurel Street Lollapalooza – January 13th
- Louisiana Marathon – January 14th & 15th
- MLK March – January 16th
- “Something Old Something New” – January 18th
- Red Stick Green Drinks / Foundation for Historical La. Lecture – January 19th
- Louisiana Life March – January 21st
- Appetite for Life – January 25th
- Mignon Faget / Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence – January 26th
- Mardi Gras Parades
- Manship Theatre Events / LSU MOA
- River Center Events
- Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra
- LASM

7. Strategic Plan – Plan Baton Rouge II – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of the PBR II cover. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that he has meet with attorney’s regarding the legislative issues and boundary expansion.

8. Ongoing Projects – CPEX – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of the CPEX logo. Reported under Baton Rouge Transit Coalition agenda item above.

BREADA – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of BREADA logo. Ms. Rowland encouraged everyone to continue to support the market. Ms. Rowland briefed the Commission of the following:

- Louisiana strawberry and citrus season
- Scheduling chefs for Fresh from the Market cooking demonstration for winter/spring 2012

8. Correspondence – There was no information.

9. Public Comment

Lani Guilbeau, Fleur du Jour, invited everyone to visit the new location of the floral / gift shop at 447 Third Street, Ste B. Everyone was encouraged to take advantage of early bird specials for Valentines Day.

Ms. Laila Britos, Little Village manager, questioned how the downtown Mardi Gras parade routes would affect the downtown restaurants. Mr. Rhorer informed Ms. Britos that the DDD will promote the parade routes for a better understanding for everyone to get around.

Ms. Donna Reichman, Baton Rouge Film Commission, reminded everyone that on Wednesday, January 25 from 11:30p.m. – 1:30 p.m. filming for MSN's Appetite for Life with Andrew Zimmern will take place at the North Blvd. Town Square. The event is also a fundraiser for Capital Area United Way.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00am.