

DDD Commission Meeting
March 13, 2012, 8:00 a.m.
Kean Miller Conference Room, II City Plaza, 400 Convention St. #700

Attending: Norman Chenevert, Derrell Cohoon, Verni Howard, Chris Nichols

Absent: Fran Gladden, Van Mayhall, Danny Montelaro

Others in Attendance: Tom Adamek, Gary Anderson, Paul Arrigo, Jo Landry Bagwell, Jeffrey Beck, Matt Beeson, Cory Belden, Charles Bennett, Frances Bennett, Gary Black, Virginia Black, Ward Bond, Rebecca Bonnet, Mason Boswell, Marcelle Boudreaux, Steve Boutwell, Benjamin Bradford, Kristin Brinson, Kevin Broussard, Erin Brush, Gary Burkett, Jimmy Burland, Chad Calder, Gayle Carnahan, Stephanie Champagne, Erin Cocharn, Tim Cockerham, Amber Cook, Bay Compton, Ron Crum, Melissa Daly, William Daniel, Genny Denton, Rachel DiResto, Gary Dixon, Erin Ducote, Mary Durusau, Kendrick Ebanks, Danny Edwards, Jennifer Eller, Terry Elmore, , Alicia Enloe, Michele Ezell, Robert Fannin, Heather Fatzinger, Betsy Fazekas, Cassie Felder, Pete Ferrara, Derek Fitch, Clark Gernon, Aaron Glaser, Brian Goad, Krista Goodin, Ashanti Green, Melanie Hanley, Katie Harvey, Frankie Hebert, Caleb Heine, Emily Herrington, Elizabeth Hill, Ryan Holcomb, Marielle Howard, Nicole Huffstetier, Chris Hunte, Neal Johnson, Mary Terrell Joseph, Bridget Kerley, Jessica Keasler, Brent Key, Consuela Knight, Jackie Kreutzer, Ashley LaBorde, Leigh LaFargue, Lori Lasseigne, Beverly Lebeau, Jin Lee, Justin Lemoine, Tom Livesay, Jason Lockhart, Sarah Lomax, Joel Loots, Julie Love, Kyle Lynch, Fr. Pat Mascarella, Bob McCarron, Ryan McKnight, Johnny Mekari, Jeff Miche, Jason Miller, Rob Miller, B.J. Militello, Robyn Morrison, Gordon Nelson, Brent Nettles, Randy Nichols, Shawn Nolan, Mike Odom, Mary Olinde, Billy Overton, Vertina Overton, Wendy Overton, Melissa Parmelee, Gary Perilloux, Lisa Perron, Casey Phillips, Ashley Pierce, Michael Platte, Eric Poche, Sgt. Pointer, Skipper Post, George Ragsdale, Margaret Read, Davis Rhorer, Frank Rideaux, III, Jim Rigot, Susan Ringwald, Megan Roussel, Darlene Rowland, Jenny Rozas, Kerry Ruiz, Robyn Ryan, Larry Selders, Atri Sen, Casey Sessums, Shay Schillilng, Thomas Schulze, Joseph Scott, Ann Shaneyfelt, Darlene Shingleur, Michelle Shirley, Douglas Smith, John Smith, Karen Stagg, Jennifer Steinhouse, Lacy Strohschein, Kelly Stutes, Jan Sumrall, Cherry Talbert, Ryan Temple, Lisa Thibodaux, Boo Thomas, Kathryn Thorpe, Clark Vega, Mitch Verma, Gabe Vicknair, Kandace Walls, Jennifer Ward, Rosie Washington, Jr., Jordan Watts , Pam Welsh, Tom Willingham, Bubba Willis, 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. Verni Howard seconded and the agenda was approved.

4. Mr. Derrell Cohoon moved to approve the February 14, 2012 minutes, Mr. Norman Chenevert seconded and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Rhorer thanked Kean Miller for hosting the board meeting.

5. Board Action – No board action.

6a. Governmental Issues – Municipal Building Site – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the Municipal Building and rendering of proposed green space as recommended in PBR II plan. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. William Daniel, DPW Director, informed the Commission that the Sheriff's Office, currently located in the Municipal Building is proposing to relocate to a vacant building at the Metro Airport.

The proposal will be voted on by the Metropolitan Council on Tuesday, Feb. 15, 2012. The remaining staff of DPW and Purchasing which is also currently housed in the Municipal Building will be locating in the City Hall building. Long term plans are to demolish the existing building and convert property to green space. Currently there are no funds to demolish the building. Mr. Daniel expressed that the vacant land would be used to create central green space and construct a loading port for prisoners. Mr. Davis Rhorer mentioned that PBR II recommends using the space for central green. Mr. Daniel also informed the Commission that DPW Engineering will be relocating to old Baton Rouge Junior High building. Planning & Zoning will also be locating to the building.

Riverfront Landing Facility Improvements – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the proposed list of improvements and riverboat schedule. Each Commissioner received a list of the improvements and riverboat schedule. Mr. Eric Ducote, Department of Public Works (DPW), informed the Commission that DPW will begin to renovate, repair and paint the dock adjacent to the USS Kidd. The repairs will bring the structure up to code as well as provide an improved entrance for the arrival of riverboats that will be visiting Baton Rouge beginning in April 2012.

6b. Development Initiatives – Baton Rouge Walls Project – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the web page and map indicating location of buildings to be painted. The Commission viewed a promotional video for the proposed project. Entrepreneurs Mr. Casey Phillips & Ms. Kathryn Thorpe briefed the Commission on the project that will transform building walls into canvases for murals. The video will be launched on Kickstarter web site as part of the funding campaign as well as private donations and public events to raise funds. Following are the four buildings that have been selected downtown:

- Buzz Café
- Harrington's Café
- Boudreaux & Thibodeaux
- Mentorship Academy

Everyone was encouraged to support the project through www.brwallsproject.com and upcoming events. The mission is to have a successful campaign downtown and spread through the city.

North Boulevard Town Square Update (NBTS) – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of award ceremony and North Blvd. Town Square. Each Commissioner received a copy of the email. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the DDD office received the Good Growth award as well as the People's Choice Award for the North Boulevard Town Square. Mr. Rhorer thanked everyone involved in the project. Mr. Vicknair reported the following:

- Transit Component – Connected with Tiger Trails Transit GPS /Working with CATS to coordinate future GPS compatibility.
- Transit Kiosk – Will include the routes for Tiger Trails, CATS and the trolley. Signage will be installed this afternoon

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

- Currently installing drill shafts
- On schedule - 210 days for construction – Completion by Sept. 3, 2012

FUTUREBR – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the cover of FUTUREBR plan. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the DDD will be the lead agency on the bicycle and pedestrian Master Plan Program as well as support the housing component and any issues that relate to downtown. Ms. Boo Thomas expressed that FUTUREBR strategy is going well and it is encouraging and progressive way for EBR parish to be looking at its growth.

Tessier Building Update – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the interior and exterior of the building. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that renovations continue on the building. The residential units have been leased and the mixed used project was able to take advantage of several tax incentives Mr. Dyke Nelson will present an update at the April board meeting.

Residential Façade Program – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of a downtown home. The Downtown Development District has received approval from the Parish Attorney’s office and will launch the program in April 2012. The 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.

Clutter Removal Program Update – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the examples of clutter downtown. Mr. William Daniel reported that DPW has completed Phase I of the project and will be addressing phase II in the next few months. The DDD has received the list from Spanish Town neighborhood regarding clutter and items to be addressed, the list will be forwarded to DPW. The city is currently conducting a Parking study of downtown regarding the parking meter and parking garages. The goal is to have new meters downtown that will serve more than one space, therefore minimizing the number of meters.

New Business – Handmade at Homestead – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the Logo. Ms. Elizabeth Hill informed the Commission that the shop offers handmade bath and body products and is located inside Fleur Du Jour at 447 Third St. Plans are in the works to begin a lunch time event “Lets Get Crafty”. Ms. Hill expressed her excitement to be a part of the downtown growth and encouraged everyone to come by her shop.

Azteca’s – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the exterior and interior of the restaurant. Mr. Mekari reported that the restaurant is now open at 453 Lafayette St. and following are the current hours:

Monday – Wed 11:00 a.m. until 10pm
Thursday – Saturday 11:00 a.m. until 11pm

The restaurant will also open for special events downtown.

Mr. Rhorer congratulated Mr. Tom Livesay, LSU Museum of Art, on his retirement.

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.

- St. James Gumbo
- Mad Hatter tea
- Simmering in the Square
- Providence Corporate Cup
- Sunday in the Park
- B. R. Arts Market
- Old Governor’s Mansion Events

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- Capitol Park Museum Events
- 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. No information to report.

Mentioned central green above item – housing initiative – report on 438 Main St. in April

8. **Ongoing Projects – CPEX** – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of the CPEX logo. Mrs. Rachel DiResto encouraged everyone to attend a public lecture by national pedestrian and bicycling safety expert Mr. Dan Burden. Mr. Burden will present his findings from his "walking audit" of Government Street and shares his vision of an economically thriving, walkable, bikable corridor for Baton Rouge. The event will be held on Thursday, April 5, 5:30 p.m. at LASM.

Mrs. DiResto briefed the Commission on the following BR Transit Coalition update:

- Blue Ribbon committee recommended some governance changes and developed an amendment to the CATS enabling legislation & developed a local ordinance.
- 80% of the employees at the Hilton Hotel use transit on a daily basis
- The Metropolitan Council will publically hear the CATS tax proposal on Wednesday, March 28, 2012.

Mr. Rhorer expressed that the DDD will issue a press release regarding the CATS tax.

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:

- Spring crops are now available at the market
- Fresh from the Market cooking demonstrations continue and Ms. Rowland encouraged anyone interested in participating to contact the market.
- Main Street Market remains open during the rain and Red Stick Market locates inside the garage.
- Ms. Rowland congratulated Elizabeth with Handmade at Homestead for her success.

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

9. **Public Comment**

Mr. Rhorer recognized the DDD staff for their hard work. The April 10th board meeting will be held at the North Blvd. Town Square followed by the ribbon cutting ceremony at 12noon.

April is Louisiana Bike Month – April 16 – 20 bike week downtown

Johnny Mekari informed the Commission that the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs conference will be coming to downtown Baton Rouge February 2013.

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Jordan Watts, YMCA Wellness Director, briefed the Commission of the following events:

- Zumba classes Monday & Wednesday at the North Blvd. Town Square
- Organizing a 7th story Sunrise Yoga on garage top of LaSalle building
- Hired a new Body Pump instructor using Les Mills system
- X & Y 5K special weight loss program & 10 week 5K training program
- Rock the Roof Event – March 31, 2012

Mr. Kerry Ruiz informed the Commission that Live After Fives begins Friday, April 13 and continues for the following eight Fridays' until June 1.

Ms. Chris Nichols encouraged everyone to pick up an informational sheet from the table regarding the downtown Google group. Mr. Taylor will report on the issue next month.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00am.