

DDD Commission Meeting  
May 14, 2013, 8:00 a.m.  
Capitol Park Museum

Attending: Norman Chenevert, Derrell Cohoon Fran Gladden, Verni Howard, Van Mayhall, Jr., Chris Nichols

Others in Attendance: Laura Acord, Tom Adamek, Cooper Alvarez, Ben Anderson, Gary Anderson, Ben Babin, Jo Landry Bagwell, Jeremy Baker, Joy Banks, Alicia Baron, Jeffrey Beck, Matt Beeson, Kathryn Belanger, Cory Belder, Carolyn Bennett, Debbie Bennett, Charles Bennett, France Bennett, Susannah Bing, Gary Black, Virginia Black, Shannon Blakeman, Suzanne Blanchard, Taylor Blanche, Chip Boyles, Benjamin Bradford, Jim Brandt, Chelsea Brasted, Kevin Broussard, Mike Bruce, Gary Burkett, Jimmy Burland, Chad Calder, Gayle Carnahan, Margaret Chappuis, Cosimo Clements, Whitney Cooper, James Corry, Sara Courtney, Suzette Crocker, Ron Crum, Scott D'Agostino, Lynn Daigle, Sandra Daire, Melissa Daly, Patrick Danna, Nedra Davis, Tom Dawson, Angela deGravelles, Genny Denton, Caroline Domecq, Jason Diu, Erin Ducote, Terri Dugas, Pat Duncan, Kendrick Ebanks, Kirk Elgin, Terry Elmore, Gwen Emick, Mark Entrekim, Randy Faucheux, Peyton Feigley, Heather Folks, Clayton Forbes, Mac Freeman, Rob Gann, Aaron Glaser, Selena Grant, Lisa Gray, Ashanti Green, Hunter Hall, Jennifer Hall, Brandon Hargrave, Angela Harms, Debra Harris, Stephen Hazel, Daniel Hawthorne, Emily Hebert, Jan L. Herrington, Ben Heroman, Justin Hewitt, Quincy Hodges, Ryan Holcomb, Pam Hotard, Courtney Hunt, Fairleigh Jackson, Stacy Jamieson, Jennifer Jenkins, Martin Johnson, Teresa Johnston, Claire Juneau, Ric Kearney, Danielle Kelley, Bridget Kender, Julia Kennedy, Janet Ketcham, Hannah King, Tara Kistler, Irene Kotval, Joe Labbe, Ashley LaBorde, Mathew Laborde, Robert Lacinak, Morgan Landry, Andee Lanier Lori Lasseigne, Beverly LeBeau, Gordon LeBlanc, Donna LeBlanc, Anna Long, Lauralyn Maranto, Nicole Marshall, Fr. Pat Mascarella, Eunice McCarney, Murray McCullough, Trey McCowan, Ferris McDaniel, Joseph Michaels, Jason Miller, Ashley Montagnino, Rebecca Moses, Shawn Nolan, Amy Norval, Lucio Nunez, Mary Olinde, Ashley Ortego, Maestro Billy Overton, Vertina Overton, Renee Payton, Garland Pennison, Andrew Perry, Casey Phillips, Ashley Pierce, Andy Pine, Eric Poche, John Price, Lee Prieto, Jere Quinn, Margaret Read, Dan Reed, Bill Reich, Eric Relle, Leif Remo, Davis Rhorer, Jason Richards, Jessica Richardson, Susan Ringwald, Tina Righteous, Tanya Roberson, Jenny Rozas, LeAnn Russo, Stephen Rust, Robyn Ryan, Diana Samuels, Larry Selders, Casey Sessums, Shay Schilling, Darlene Shingleur, Katie McKay Simpson, Brian Sleeth, Jared Smith, John Smith, Lisa Smith, Anna Snyder, Tyler Spears, Karen Stagg, Jennifer Stenhouse, Peter Summerlin, Jan Sumrall, Cherry Talbert, Justin Tassin, Casey Tate, Ben Taylor, Clark Vega, Mitch Verma, Gabe Vicknair, Karen Vingiello, Ladonna Ward, Shane Warren, Pam Welsh, Emily Wharton, Councilwoman Tara Wicker

1. Ms. Chris Nichols called the meeting to order.
2. Ms. Chris Nichols declared a quorum.
3. Mr. Van Mayhall, Jr. moved to approve the agenda, Mr. Derrell Cohoon seconded and the agenda was approved.
4. Mrs. Fran Gladden moved to approve the April 9, 2013 minutes, Mr. Van Mayhall, Jr. seconded and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Rhorer thanked the Capitol Park Museum for hosting the DDD board meeting.

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

**6a. Governmental Issues – Legislation items status** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the legislation. Each Commissioner received a copy of the legislation. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the legislative items that affect downtown and reviewed downtown achievements made possible by the tax credits such as the Hilton and Kress.

SB 208 - Extends the tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic structures and provides for the applicability of such credit.

SB 197 - Extends income tax credits for the rehabilitation of certain owner occupied residential structures.

HB 283 - Provides relative to tax credits for state-certified musical or theatrical productions and state-certified infrastructure projects

HB 630 - Provides for the transferability of the income tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic commercial structures

Mr. Rhorer thanked Mr. Derrell Cohoon for monitoring the legislation that affects downtown.

**6b. Development Initiatives – Hampton Inn Update** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the exterior and interior of the Hampton Inn. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the hotel is open and encouraged everyone to visit the facility. Mr. Rhorer will be meeting with hotel management, Hospitality America, to discuss Lafayette Street issues.

**Commerce Building Update** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the proposed rendering of the Commerce building. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the project is proceeding.

**Downtown Greenway Update** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, renderings of the proposed greenway. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the schematic design has been approved and the consultants are making the final changes. Ms. Whitney Cooper reviewed the proposed renderings and expressed that the DDD continues to work with BREC. Davis Rhorer commended Whitney Cooper and Gabe Vicknair for their work on the \$100,000 grants for Lincoln Theater and Expressway Park. Ms. Angela Harms, BREC, informed the Commission that the public comments have been used to create the conceptual plan and they continue moving forward in partnership with DDD and the downtown Greenway Project. Mr. Van Mayhall, Jr. asked if the Wards Creek trail project would have the potential to link to the Downtown Greenway. Discussion ensued of the potential to connect. BREC is working with DOTD on additional lighting for Expressway Park at Interstate 10 and Interstate 110. The BREC public input survey will be distributed digitally to DDD email list.

**Florida Street Levee Access / River Road Path** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, renderings of the proposed improvements. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that bids for the proposed \$1.1 million project will open June 22, 2013. The project will allow access to the levee at Florida and River Rd. for bikes and pedestrian and a pathway to the LASM. Susan Turner and Associates is currently in the process of designing a new plaza for LASM that will link to NBTS Phase II and Repentance Park.

**Downtown Grocery** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the ribbon cutting ceremony. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the ribbon cutting ceremony was well attended and commended the DDD staff for their work on this project.

**Convention Street Park Sculpture**– The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the sculptures. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Gabe Vicknair informed the Commission that he has been working with sculptor JoJo Jilbert to install some of his pieces in the downtown area. BREC agreed to install two of the sculptures at Convention Street Park.

**Downtown Residential Checklist** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of a home in Beauregard Town. Ms. Chris Nichols informed the Commission that the committee is in the process of obtaining information and will report next month. Ms. Nichols requested that anyone with utility or public work issues to contact her.

**Literary Committee** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the Louisiana Book Festival. Mr. Van Mayhall, Jr. informed the Commission that this is not the first effort for Baton Rouge to become a literary city. There is a platform to build upon and the effort seems to be transmitting information that exists. The committee is working on the following initiatives:

- Web site portal linked to the DDD web site containing information regarding the literary history
- Online book club template
- Inventory of local resources

A meeting with the Louisiana Center for the Book has been scheduled to discuss the expansion of the Louisiana Book Festival.

**North Blvd. Town Square (NBTS) Anniversary** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the event held at North Blvd. Town Square (NBTS). Mr. Rhorer announced that April marks the one year anniversary for the completion of North Blvd. Town Square (NBTS). The NBTS has hosted over 150 events to date. The Commission viewed a video celebrating the 1 year anniversary of NBTS. Mr. Gabe Vicknair informed the Commission that the City of Baton Rouge has entered into a contract with MayerIT to expand the technical abilities of the beacon using specialized software.

**Spanish Town Market** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the interior of the grocery store. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Taylor Blanche informed the Commission that he and two business partners have purchased the business. Plans are to offer breakfast, lunch and dinner as well as delivery of grocery items. The store will be undergoing improvements such as handicap entrance etc.

**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.

- Spring Fitness Series
- Storybook Ball – May 18
- Belle of Baton Rouge Concerts – May 24, June 7, 14, 21
- Live After Five – May 17, 24
- South Central Shrine Association Parade – May 18
- Sunday in the Park / AIDS Candlelight Memorial – May 19
- City Year Graduation / Small Business Trade Show – May 23
- Run for the Children Walk / Run – May 25
- USS Kidd Memorial Day Memorial Service – May 27

- “Indigo Green: Electronics Recycling Day” Event / FUMC Movie Night – May 29
- B. R. Arts Market / McMains 5K /WHYR Fundraiser – June 1
- Night at the Louisiana State Museum – June 8
- FUMC Cambodia Craft Sale – June 9
- Foundation for Historical Louisiana/Old Governor's Mansion
- Manship Theatre Events / LSU MOA
- River Center Events
- LASM

**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.

**8. Ongoing Projects – CPEX** – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, an image of the CPEX logo and photographs of the Better Block BR demonstration. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles Ms. Jennifer Stenhouse informed the Commission that Better Block Baton Rouge was a successful event. They are working on the report to submit to the Mayor’s office. Ms. Stenhouse thanked everyone involved with the project.

**BREDA** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the of BREDA logo. Mrs. Copper Alvarez encouraged everyone to continue to support the market and briefed them on the following:

- May is Garden month
- Farm to Table Tops Program ([tabletopsbr.org](http://tabletopsbr.org))
- Online Auction for existing tables – June – July 2013
- Major gifts campaign
- Mobile Red Stick Farmers Market

**8. Correspondence** – Mr. Rhorer will send correspondence to Mr. George congratulating him on his purchase and encourage him to relocate The Advocate downtown.

**9. Public Comment** – Mrs. Frances Bennett briefed the Commission on the Louisiana State Museum fundraiser “A Night at the Louisiana State Museum” scheduled for Saturday, June 8 from 7pm – 10pm.

Ms. Wendy Overton briefed the Commission on the “Storybook Ball”, a fund raising gala to support Family Road of Greater Baton Rouge. The event is scheduled for May 18<sup>th</sup> at the River Center.

Mr. Jimmy Burland commended everyone who supported the Greek Festival, Saturday, May 11, 2013.

Ms. Eunice McCarney briefed the Commission on the McMains Children’s Development Center 5K Run, Walk and Roll scheduled for Saturday, June 1. Ms. McCarney thanked the DDD for their assistance. Mr. Rhorer announced that the number of the runs downtown have increased by 40%.

Mr. Gabe Vicknair informed the Commission that the DDD is working on creating a dog trail for downtown. The trail will indicate dog bag dispensers, and dog friendly establishments. He asked dog friendly interested businesses to contact him to be included on the trail.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:00am.**