

DDD Commission Meeting
June 9, 2009, 8:00 a.m.
Old Governor's Mansion, 502 North Blvd.

Attending: Norman Chenevert, Derrell Cohoon,
Fran Gladden, Van Mayhall, Chris Nichols

Absent: Cheri Morial Ausberry

Others in Attendance: Lt. Raymond Alexander, Copper Alvarez, James Andermann, Joe Anthony, Stephen Arceneaux, Renee Areng, Jo Landry Bagwell, Ed Batson, Mary W. Baus, Kyle Beall, Danny Belanger, Charles Bennett, Frances Bennett, Carolyn Bennett, Jennifer Berniard, Susannah Bing, Gary Black, Brittany Bland, Danny Breaux, Dave Briggs, Nancy Broussard, Jeremy Broussard, Christina Bourg, Dana Brown, David Brown, Mike Bruce, Jimmy Burland, Jason Burns, Lacy Burris, Rex Cabaniss, Chad Calder, Gayle Carnahan, Nancy Carter, Ashley Casey, Lindsey Cavalier, Nancy Chesson, Chuck Cline, Tim Cockerham, Sonya Collins, Colleen Collins, Todd Cooper, Whitney Cooper, Melissa Daly, Chad Danos, Pete Darling, Andi DeJohn, Rachel DiResto, Lauren Dodds, Huey Dugas, Patricia Duncan, Lacey Dupre, Paul Dykes, Kendrick Ebanks, John Eblen, Bridger Eglin, Jon Elvert, Eric Engeman, Pauline Ewing, David Farrar, Derek Fitch, Carley Fleming, Steve Fuller, Joey Furr, Mike Futrell, Ed Gaskin, Cpl. Mike Gauthier, Bryan Gerace, Lydia Gikas, Carol Gikas, Debbie Gill, Brian Goad, Brace Godfrey, Krista Goodin, Jason Goodson, Mark Goodson, Derek Gordon, Gary Graham, Selena Grant, Francis Grayson, Jill Green, Melissa Guilbeau, Lauren Gutierrez, Jennifer Hall, Tyelise Harrison, John Hart, John O. Hearin, Michelle Hebert, Kristin Hebert, Caleb Heine, John Helm, Vida Henderson, Walker Higgins, Kim Hodgeson, Robert Hodges, Ryan Holcomb, Tom Holden, Jake Holinga, Helen Holland, Eric Holley, Capt. Virginia Holmes, Lael Holton, Danielle Honeycutt, John Hough, Kristi Howard, Alice Howe, Joe Hynes, David Jacobs, Lt. Stephenia M. Jackson, Staci Jamieson, Emma James, Ingrid Payne Johnson, Ernest Junius, Jason Keller, Lanny Keller, Billy Kelley, Patte Keogh, Eddie King, Chuck Kline, Joe Labbe, Dana LaFonta, Mark Landry, Lori Lasseigne, Debbie Lapeyrouse, Justin Lemoine, Stacey Levert, Eric Lewis, Tom Livesay, Terrence Lockett, Diane Losavio, Steven Lumpkin, David Madden, Katie Maloney, Nikki Essix, Manuel, Nicole Marshall, Rachel Marionneaux, Martinez, Katherine Mason, Kendall Matassa, Dee Mather, Al McDuff, Cheryl Miller, Jason Miller, BJ Militello, Donna Mitchell, Todd Mitchell, Sonia Morales, Micah Morgan, Penny Murray, Rose Mustain, Richard Neal, Dyke Nelson, Steven Noel, Rod Nunez, Jennifer Ocken, Mike Odom, Mary Olinde, Chard Ortte, Theresa Overby, Johnny Palazzotto, Greg Palmer, Melissa Parmelee, Tom Parsons, Gary Perilloux, Lisa Perron, Joel Phillips, Ashley Pierce, Eric Poche, Mitch Poche, Stuart Poulton, Mike Prejean, DeDe Preno, Vincent Price, Tina Rance, Bill Reich, Eric Relle, Daniel Rhodes, Davis Rhorer, Sage Roberts, George Robin, Emmett Robbins, Erin Rolfs, Darlene Rowland, Kerry Ruiz, Alison Saunders, Kristen Sanders, James Schafer, John Schneider, Ben Schultz, Joe Sciortino, Larry Selders, Lonnie Seals, Terry Serio, Casey Sessums, Tim Seymour, Katrina Shaw, Darlene Shingleur, Pam Sills, Lorraine Slade, David Slaughter, John Smith, John Snow, Kathleen Spencer, Karen Stagg, Bill Stark, Mary Stein, Jennifer Steinhouse, John Stewart, George Strain, John Streva, Kelly Stutes, John Sykes, Cherry Talbert, Todd Teepel, Ted Terrell, Anna Thibodeaux, Tyrus Thomas, Boo Thomas, Christopher Toombs, Clark Vega, Gabe Vicknair, Barry Walls, Adam Werth, Hampton West, Jay Westerfield, Emily Wharton, Tara Wicker, Matt Wilks, Bubba Willis, Seveti Wilson, Kate Wilson, Beau Wolfe, Erin Wood

1. Mr. Van Mayhall called the meeting to order.
2. Mr. Van Mayhall declared a quorum.
3. Mr. Derrell Cohoon moved to approve the agenda, Mr. Norman Chenevert seconded and the agenda was approved as amended.
4. Ms. Fran Gladden moved to approve the May 12, 2009 minutes, Mr. Norman Chenevert seconded and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Rhorer recognized and thanked Ms. Carolyn Bennett, Executive Director of FHL, for hosting the board meeting. Ms. Bennett introduced her staff and briefed the Commission on upcoming programs.

5. Board Action

6a. **Governmental Issues** – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a title slide.

Senate Bill 37 – Each Commissioner received a copy of the bill. The bill proposes that there be some restriction in rolling millages forward. The Metropolitan Council has previously supported rolling millage forward for the Downtown Development District.

Senate Bill 63 – Each Commissioner received a copy of the bill. The bill creates Thomas H. Delpit Special District. The original Bill's boundaries overlapped into downtown Baton Rouge including Beauregard Town, but has since been amended. The amended boundaries of the proposed district do not include downtown Baton Rouge.

House Bill 753 – Each Commissioner received a copy of the bill. The bill addresses state new market tax credits.

Mr. Jacob Holinga briefed the Commission on the following bills:

Senate Bill 37 – Bill was heard on Senate floor last week and moved to House floor later this week.

Senate Bill 63 – Currently in Senate and being revised.

House Bill 753 – Currently on Senate floor awaiting budget impact analysis. The bill is proposing to move the allocation date from January 1, 2010 to October 1, 2009. Doing so will mean that the tax credits would be allocated in 2009, but not utilized until 2010. Other amendments to the bill will be proposed once it moves to the House.

6b. Development Initiatives – River Park Under Pass Groundbreaking – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of the existing conditions and proposed rendering. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Rhorer encouraged everyone to attend the Groundbreaking ceremony for the River Park Under Pass this afternoon at 2:30 p.m.

Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the 36 acre site will include mixed use development that will include residential, retail and entertainment. The underpass will be constructed under the railroad track to allow accessibility to the casino and River Park. Mr. Rhorer thanked Mr. Pete Clements and Hollywood Casino.

Hotel King – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of the Hotel King. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the Metropolitan Council approved the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for the Hotel King. Mr. Jacob Holinga informed the Commission that the TIF will enable Hotel King and Cyntreniks exemptions from occupancy and sales tax for a total of up to 13% in exemptions.

North Blvd. Town Square – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, photographs of the open house public presentation. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles. Ms. Dana Brown informed the Commission that the North Blvd. Town Square final presentation was well attended. The project boundaries are North Blvd. from River Rd. to Fifth Street. A key component is the pedestrian and bicycle circulation. They developed a master plan from the comments received and briefed the Commission on the proposed concepts of the plan. Mr. Joey Furr presented a power point presentation of the proposed concepts of the plan.

South Blvd. Elementary Immersion Program – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of the school. Each Commissioner received a copy of the information sheet. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the EBR School Board voted to keep the school open. Ms. Cheryl Miller, the principal of South Boulevard Elementary, informed the Commission that the downtown school is located on the corner of Maximillian and Mayflower Streets. The school is an academic French and Spanish immersion magnet school where English speaking students learn French or Spanish through subject matter. The immersion program begins in Kindergarten and goes through the fifth grade. By the end of fifth grade the students are fluent in either French or Spanish. Everyone was encouraged to visit the unique school. Ms. Pauline Ewing, lead teacher, informed the Commission that the school has experienced an increase in enrollment from 215 students in 2008 to approximately 275 students. The School will begin accepting enrollment applications in October for the Program.

Downtown Improvements – DOTD Enhancement Funds – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of proposed improvements Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the Downtown Development District is applying for enhancement funds for the following projects:

- **Beautification under I-110** – Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Department of Public Works has cleaned the debris under I-110. The committee will be researching potential improvements to implement under the interstate such as landscaping and other beautifications under I-110 along Ninth Street.
- **North Blvd. Town Square** – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of proposed improvements. Additional funds would be used for landscaping beautifications within North Boulevard Town Square.

- **Extension of Levee-top Bike/Pedestrian Path** – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of existing levee-top bike/pedestrian path and the proposed expansion of the path. If awarded, the funds will be used to implement the extension of the levee-top bike/pedestrian path from Laurel Street to North Street. This extension will eventually connect the existing bike/pedestrian path to the Hollywood casino and the River Park development.
- **Riverfront Master Plan** – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of proposed improvements. The funds will be used to improve the landscape in and around the Riverfront Plaza.
- **Streetlight Improvements within the Arts & Entertainment District** – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of proposed improvements. Funding is being sought for streetlight improvements within the Arts & Entertainment District between the intersections.

Plan Baton Rouge Phase II Update – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, photographs of previous working meetings and matrix. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that they are in the final process of obtaining recommendations from the consultants. Mr. Rhorer reviewed the following initiatives in PBR II which will be used to strengthen the Arts & Entertainment District:

- Support additional Third Street activity with new mixed-use anchors.
- New major cultural anchor at Third and Main streets.
- New incentives to support activity between those anchors.
- Creation of the Central Green linking Old State Capitol grounds, River Center, & City Hall plaza.
- Creation of funding tools to catalyze housing development.
- Establishment of parking management entity to improve access to Arts & Entertainment District assets.
- Increased funding for Clean & Safe upgrades to improve streetscape character and attract further commercial interest and public attraction.
- Upgraded street tree program to improve streetscape character.

Mrs. Rachel DiResto informed the Commission that DDD will be receiving a draft review of PBR II document for them to review.

Downtown events Procedures and Guidelines Outline – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, the cover of the brochure. Each Commissioner received a copy of the brochure. Mr. Gabe Vicknair informed the Commission that the brochure is complete. It is available online or at the DDD office. Mr. Mayhall commended Mr. Vicknair on the creation of brochure.

LSU Shuttle to Downtown – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of the shuttle route. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article.

Mr. Gary Graham, Director of Parking and Transportation for LSU, informed the Commission that LSU is re-instituting the shuttle service from LSU to downtown. The service will run Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. – 5:30 pm. every twenty minutes and will begin August 2009. Currently the service is available only to students, but may become available to the public at a later date.

Spanish Town Announcement – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, an aerial photograph indicating the location of the proposed development and renderings. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that there is a proposed project in Spanish Town that requires zoning change from A-4 to A-5 in Spanish Town. Mr. David Slaughter informed the Commission that he is proposing the construction of Capitol Lofts in Spanish Town on N. 6th St. The proposed development requires a zoning change and will go before the Planning Commission on Tuesday, June 22. The project will consist of 115 units bringing approximately 160 residents to the downtown area. The development will capture the historic façade of Spanish Town. With approval, construction will commence by the end of 2009. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the project will also need approval from the neighborhood local historic preservation ordinance. Mr. David Brown, chairman of Spanish Town Civic Association, informed the Commission that the Spanish Town Civic Association board met and voted against the following:

- Change in re-zoning
- Change in land use
- Capitol Lofts project

The Spanish Town Civic Association board was in support of some development, but wants the development to stay within the existing zoning requirements and with respect to historic guidelines. Mr. Cohoon requested that the DDD Commission not take a position on this proposal.

Parking Permit Program – Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the proposed Parking Permit Program for Spanish Town will be introduced at the Metropolitan Council Wednesday, June 10th. Each address will qualify for 1 residential parking pass and 2 guest passes. The residential pass will cost \$5 each with a 12 month expiration period and the guest pass will be either 4 or 6 months. Mr. Rhorer expressed that he supported the program but it needed some modification. Mr. David Brown expressed that Spanish Town neighborhood is searching for a solution to the parking problem within the neighborhood. State employees use the neighborhood instead of utilizing the parking garage which saturates the neighborhoods with on street parking.

Welcome New Business – Wags on the Levee – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, photographs of the interior of the restaurant. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Ms. Colleen Collins informed the Commission that she has opened her restaurant at 324 Third St. The restaurant will feature southern classic food and is open for breakfast, lunch and late hours on weekends.

Tyrus Thomas, Inc. – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, photograph of the logo. Mr. Joey Furr introduced his new tenant at 635 Main St., Tyrus Thomas, Inc. Ms. Seveti Wilson informed the Commission that the organization is a non-profit organization geared at outreach, community development and support. The mission is to cultivate and improve the Baton Rouge area by implementing programs geared toward outreach and supporting other organizations with similar goals and initiatives.

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

- **Baton Rouge Irish Film Festival – Manship Theatre, June 13th**
- **Second Saturday's – Shaw Center, June 13th**
- **Pride of Place – Stories of Old South Baton Rouge, La State Museum – June 19th**
- **Juneteenth – June 20th**
- **USS Kidd Star Spangled Celebration**
- **Manship Theatre's Fifth Annual Fourth on the 4th**
- **Rouge, White & Blue MOA Fundraiser**
- **Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center 4th of July Celebration**
- **Baton Rouge Concert Band – July 4th**
- **Freedom Mile Run – July 4th**

7. **Ongoing – Center for Planning Excellence** – Ms. Elizabeth Thomas informed the Commission that the 4th Annual Summit on Smart Growth: Creating Complete Communities, is scheduled for August 27 & 28, 2009. Featured speaker is Andres Duany, Duany Plater-Zyberk Company.

BREADA – The Commission viewed, via power point, the BREADA logo. Ms. Darlene Rowland briefed the Commission on upcoming events:

Saturday's during June – A different fruit or vegetable will be featured as well as cooking demonstrations.

June 24th – As part of the Community 5% Days, Whole Foods will donate 5% of their proceeds to BREADA.

8. **Correspondence** – No information to report.

9. **Public Comment** – Councilwoman Tara Wicker informed the Commission that the District 10 Town Meeting will be held tonight at Metropolitan Council Chambers, 6:00 p.m. The topic will be Crime Eradication.

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Mr. Van Mayhall recognized and commended Gabe Vicknair for his work on the Downtown Events Procedures and Guidelines booklet.

Announcement

Meeting adjourned.