

DDD Commission Meeting  
October 8, 2019, 8:00 a.m.  
First United Methodist church, 930 North Blvd.

Attending: Prescott Bailey, Madeline Brown, Eric Dexter, Scott Hensgens,  
Jude Melville, Melanie Montanaro

Absent: Fran Gladden

Others in Attendance: Rhonda Altazin, Gary Anderson, Paul Arrigo, Ben Balsler, Anita Begnaud, Gary Black, Ben Blackwell, Timothy Boone, Kevin Broussard, Rick Brown, Mysti Byrnes, Gayle Carnahan, Renee Chatelain, Mark DaSilva, Joey David, Ed Doyle, Lamar Drummonds, Noah Dugas, Laura Ferguson, Judy Foust, Brooke Goodrich, Cpt. Murial Hall, Hank Henagan, Ryan Holcomb, Taylor Jacobsen, Sam Karlin, John Kaufman, John Kelton, David Kors, Jason Langlois, Theresa Langlois, Danae Leake, Gordon LeBlanc, Ron LeBouef, Justin Lemoine, Jeannie Magdefrau, Lauralyn Maranto, Mary Jane Marcantel, Patrick Michaels, B. J. Miletello, Donnie Miller, Aaron Mollura, Ashley Montagnino, Samantha Morgan, Sacoren Muhsamy, Grant Murphy, Paula Noguera, Shawn Nolan, Wendy Overton, Melissa Parmelee, Kristina Pepelko, Katie Pryor, Rebekah Rainey, Tina Rance, Davis Rhorer, Jim Rigot, Rodney Ryder, Frederick Sargent, Whitney Sayal, Tanner Sinclair, Andrew Soltau, Daniel Stetson, Casey Tate, Courtney Taylor, Clark Vega, Mitch Verma, Gabe Vicknair, Councilwoman Tara Wicker, Samaer Zaitoon

1. Mr. Scott Hensgens called the meeting to order.
2. Mr. Scott Hensgens declared a quorum.
3. Mr. Eric Dexter moved to approve the agenda Mrs. Melanie Montanaro seconded and the agenda was approved.
4. Mrs. Maddie Brown moved to approve the August 13, 2019 and September 10, 2019 minutes, Mr. Eric Dexter seconded and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Scott Hensgens presented the retiring DDD Commissioners, Mr. Gordon LeBlanc and Mr. Ric Kearny a token of appreciation for serving on the DDD board. Mr. Hensgens expressed the DDD's appreciation for their service on the DDD board.

Mrs. Maddie Brown informed the Commission that she is a Spanish Town resident and looks forward to representing Spanish Town on the DDD Commission.

Mr. Jude Melville informed the Commission that he is CEO, of Business First Bank's downtown location. Mr. Melville expressed his excitement to be part of the momentum downtown.

Mr. Prescott Bailey informed the Commission that he is President of Southern Lifestyle Development. He works and lives downtown and is excited to be part of the downtown development.

Mr. Davis Rhorer thanked First United Methodist Church for hosting the meeting.

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

**6. Governmental Issues – 2020 Budget** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the budget, performance measures and photographs of recent projects. Each Commissioner received a copy of the proposed 2020 budget and performance measures. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the proposed budget for 2020 is \$761,590 and that the DDD continues to implement the performance measures. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the current and upcoming projects. Mr. Rhorer requested the Commission review the information and take action on the 2020 budget during the November 2019 Commission meeting.

**7. Update from Previous Board Meeting** – There was no information to report.

**8. Development Initiatives – Developments Underway** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of current projects. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the following projects:

**First United Methodist Church (FUMC)** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of renovations. Mr. Lamar Drummonds, Director of Music for First United Methodist Church, welcomed everyone to the Conference Center. Mr. Drummonds briefed the Commission on the renovations that commenced in May 2019. The project is on budget but not on schedule due to the decision to install a sprinkler system to the entire building and unforeseen issues. Completion date is proposed for mid to late December 2019. The faith community is strong downtown with ten churches located in the downtown area.

**Library** – Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Rhorer confirmed that the substantial completion date is October 30, 2019. A final punch list will be developed following the completion and then the library will begin moving furniture, technology and materials in the building. The DDD looks forward to having a Commission meeting in the new facility.

**Downtown East – N. 14<sup>th</sup> Street Park** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of improvements underway. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the project is 95% complete. Currently they are installing the windows and landscaping to follow. Plans are to paint a mural on the exterior of the building.

**Streetscape Improvements** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendering of proposed streetscape improvements. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that streetscape improvements are planned for Louisiana Avenue and Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive. The project will connect the Downtown Greenway to the Government Street project, heading north on Eddie Robinson and East Blvd. /T.J. Jemison Blvd. \$300,000 is pending final approval from the state and federal government for the Louisiana Connector project. At Louisiana Avenue, the Greenway will go under Interstate I-110 and be lit at night. Free parking is currently available under the Interstate in multiple areas.

**Hotel Lincoln** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendering of proposed improvements. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the 15 residential units and ground floor retail spaces continue progressing. Ground breaking is expected to take place late 2019 or early 2020.

**Shamrock Marine** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of Shamrock Marine’s christening of their new Wheelhouse office, the “Laupepa Maiava” Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Shamrock Marine services the vessels that come in and out of the Port of Baton Rouge.

**Beauregard Town Historic District** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of a home in Beauregard Town. Mrs. Whitney Sayal informed the Commission that the DDD hosted a public meeting Wednesday, September 11, 6:00 p.m. to obtain input regarding the proposed local historic district. The Planning Commission acquired a grant to update the building survey for Beauregard Town. The DDD will work closely with the Planning Commission, EBR Historic Preservation Commission, State Historic Preservation Office, and the Metropolitan Council to assure any proposed local historic district and/or design guidelines meet the needs and desires of the community. Mrs. Melanie Montanaro, Beauregard Town resident, expressed that the public meeting was very informative.

**5<sup>th</sup> District Police Department** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of recent meeting with Baton Rouge Police Department. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles and a copy of the long and short term homeless initiatives. Mr. Rhorer introduced Captain Murial Hall with the 5<sup>th</sup> District Police Department. Captain Murial Hall informed the Commission that downtown police patrols have increased and BRPD is working with the Mayor’s office to assist with the homeless issues and placement for the people. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the Mayor’s office hosted a meeting with agencies involved with the homelessness and property owners to discuss the short term and long term initiatives. Mr. Rhorer commended the BRPD on their assistance.

**LAZ Parking** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the River Center garage. Mr. Mark DaSilva, Operations Manager for LAZ Parking. Mr. DaSilva informed the Commission that LAZ Parking is the manager of the River Center Parking garages and B1 & B2 parking. Following are 3 initiatives that LAZ will be focusing on:

- Cleanliness of stairwells
- Security of the garages
- Integration of technology

Mr. Rhorer expressed that often the River Center garages are the first and last impression of downtown for patrons.

**Downtown Sewer Program (SSO)** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the SSO logo. Mr. Patrick Michaels, SSO, briefed the Commission on the sewerage rehab work downtown. He will be working with impacted businesses during the repairs and welcomes downtown stakeholders to contact him with any issues.

**Water Campus Update** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a map of the Water Campus and renderings of the proposed development. Mrs. Tina Rance, Vice President of Marketing, briefed the Commission on the newest components of the Water Campus master plan:

1200 Brickyard Lane – Multi-Tenant office building that is currently occupied by Stantec, La. Cyber Coordination Center and a fitness center. Additional tenants will be announced at a later date.

200 Water Street – 20 loft style apartments that will be under way within the next 2 weeks.

Plans are to create a park “Main Square” between 1200 Brickyard Lane and 200 Water Street. The park will incorporate green space with a water feature modeled after a memorial fountain in London. The campus will also include bike share hubs and car charging stations. Construction is expected to commence any day on the park and the lofts with a projected 10 month buildout for both. Mrs. Rance briefed the Commission on the status of the other components of the Water Campus.

**Short Term Rentals** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a map indicating locations of short term rentals downtown. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles. Councilwoman Tara Wicker informed the Commission that an agenda item will go before the Metropolitan Council that will give the Planning Commission the authority to proceed with studying the matter and work with the Federation of Civic Associations to obtain a comprehensive review of the issue.

**Downtown Greenway** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of current construction. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that construction continues on the second phase of the greenway which picks up at the 9<sup>th</sup> Street and continues along the last block of North Blvd. to East Blvd. / T.J. Jemison to Expressway Park. Mr. Vicknair reviewed the improvements to T. J. Jemison that include tree planting, lighting, landscaping and limestone. As part of the DOTD roadway widening project they will be providing a bike connection from Expressway Park to Brooks Park. The oak trees located on the east side of FUMC will be relocated to downtown east area and construction of the bike path will commence on that area. The project is expected to be completed in approximately 4 months. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the proposed DOTD, BREC and City Parish projects that connect downtown to beyond Siegen Lane. BREC is also constructing a bike path from Southern University to Spanish Town Road.

**Rotary Centennial Sculpture** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the sculpture and construction underway. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that construction has begun and the work is expected to be complete mid November 2019. The 14’ structure will cantilever over the water and be lit at night, featuring interactive music based upon the currents of the river.

**Riverfront Improvements** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the mural and proposed improvements. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that the retaining wall of the parking lot located on Lafayette Street between Laurel and Main Street has been completed by local artist Mr. Marc Fresh. Streetscape improvements on the east side of River Road are also planned. The Army Corp of Engineers flood gate project currently under construction at North Street will not affect the bike path.

**Downtown Maintenance** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the employees of Dudley Debossier Injury Lawyers.

Mrs. Sayal informed the Commission that the September 2019 winner of the Downtown Distinction award in the Service category is Dudley Debossier Injury Lawyers.

**New Business – GLO Resources** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the logo. Mr. Rodney Ryder, located on the corner of St. Louis and Government Streets in the Beauregard House. GLO Resources provides long term personnel placement. Mr. Ryder commended the DDD on their accomplishments.

**Marex Services** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the logo. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Marex Services is a vessel charter service and welcomed them downtown.

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

- Jambalaya Jam – October 10 / 13<sup>th</sup> Gate Haunted House – October 10<sup>th</sup> - 31
- Live After Five – October 11,18,25, November 1,8
- Sunday in the Park – October 13,20,27, November 3,10
- White Cane Safety Day – October 15
- Zombie Pub Crawl – October 18
- American Cancer Society 5K/ Pumpkin Pi Race / Halloween Parade – October 19
- HTJ Day – October 26
- FUMC Fall Fest / Light the Night Walk – October 27
- Wine Walk Wednesday's – October 30
- Baton Rouge Arts Market / Louisiana Book Festival /Opera Louisiane – November 2
- Capitol City Beer Fest / Lantern Walk – November 3
- Preserve Louisiana/Old Governor's Mansion
- Manship Theatre
- LSU MOA
- Capitol Park Museum
- Old State Capitol
- River Center Events
- LASM
- USS Kidd

**11. Ongoing Projects – BREADA** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the logo. Ms. Theresa Langlois briefed the Commission on the Red Stick Farmer's Market 23<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary scheduled for November 2, 2019.

**DBA** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the DBA logo. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Live After Five continues on Friday, October 11, 2019.

**12. Correspondence** – There was no information to report.

**13. Public Comment** – Mr. Frederick Sargent with Electronic Media briefed the Commission on his digital billboard services and encouraged anyone interested to contact him after meeting.

Ms. Ashley Montagnino briefed the Commission on the Capital Area United Way (CAUW) Jambalaya Jam scheduled for Thursday, October 10, 2019. The event will be held downtown and everyone was encouraged to participate in the event and support CAUW.

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Ms. Rhonda Altazin, Travail 633, briefed the Commission on the transitional housing program. The program works with the despondent and homeless on an individual basis to help them become sustainable and self-sufficient. Everyone was encouraged to contact Ms. Altazin after the meeting for contact information.

Mr. Joey David, Capitol Park Museum, briefed the Commission on the “Cislanderus” exhibit reception scheduled for Thursday, October 17, 2019. Everyone was encouraged to attend the reception.

Ms. Misty Byrnes, Opera Louisiane, briefed the Commission on the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Young People’s Opera Program, scheduled for Saturday, November 2 at First Baptist Church downtown.

**Meeting Adjourned:**