

DDD Commission Meeting
September 13, 2019, 8:00 a.m.
Kean Miller LLP, 400 Convention Street, 7th floor

Attending: Fran Gladden Scott Hensgens, Melanie Montanaro

Absent: Eric Dexter, Ric Kearny, Gordon LeBlanc, Cheryl McCormick

Others in Attendance: Gary Anderson, Paul Arrigo, Tracey Bethley, Gary Black, Ben Blackwell, Timothy Boone, Kevin Broussard, Rene Brown, Gayle Carnahan, Solomon Carter, Renee Chatelain, Leanne Clement, Marie Constantin, Sonja Cotter, James Curtis, Laura Ferguson, Donnie Garrett, Anna Gasperecz, Brooke Goodrich, Blaine Grimes, Cpt. Murial Hall, Nathan Hall, Hank Henagan, Ryan Holcomb, Taylor Jacobsen, Sam Karlin, John Kaufman, John Kelton, David Kors, Danae Leake, Ron LeBouef, Jeannie Magdefrau, Lauralyn Maranto, Mary Jane Marcantel, Patrick Michaels, B. J. Miletello, Scott Miles, Susan Miles, Aaron Mollura, Grant Murphy, Chris Nichols, Shawn Nolan, Mary Olinde, Wendy Overton, Katie Pryor, Ryan Randazza, Davis Rhorer, Jim Rigot, Whitney Sayal, Alexandra Sevier, Andrew Soltau, Daniel Stetson, Casey Tate, Courtney Taylor, Freda Thorton, Clark Vega, Gabe Vicknair, Andre Vinning

1. Mr. Scott Hensgens called the meeting to order.
2. Mr. Scott Hensgens informed the Commission there was no quorum due to an unexpected absent board member.
3. Agenda presented
4. Minutes will be approved at October 8, 2019 DDD board meeting.

Mr. Davis Rhorer thanked Kean Miller for hosting the DDD board meeting and introduced Mr. Steve Boutwell. Mr. Boutwell welcomed everyone to the Kean Miller Conference Center.

5. **Board Action** – There was no board action.
6. **Governmental Issues** – There was no information to report.
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) – Work continues on the \$3.5 million renovations to FUMC. Mr. Rhorer commended the robust faith community for their commitment to downtown. Phase II of the Greenway is being constructed outside of the FUMC.

Spencer Calahan – Construction continues on the development on the corner of St. Louis and South Blvd.

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 and materials in the building.

Downtown East – N. 14th Street Park – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendering and photographs of improvements underway. Each Commissioner received a list of the 18 different projects in downtown east. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the improvements to the BREC park which is expected to be complete within the next few weeks.

Streetscape Improvements – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendering of proposed improvements. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that corridor improvements are planned for Louisiana Avenue and Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive. The Government Street bicycle and pedestrian improvements that end near Hotel Lincoln at Eddie Robinson Sr. Dr. will be connected to the Downtown Greenway at East Blvd. / T.J. Jemison Blvd.

Hotel Lincoln – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, renderings of the proposed improvements to the building. Mr. Solomon Carter informed the Commission that he is expecting to receive the full set of construction documents by the end of the month. They submitted the part II of the historic tax incentive application to the State Historic Preservation Office and is expected to receive response in 2 weeks. He is currently negotiating leases with 2 tenants for the commercial space and is under negotiations for usage of an adjacent parking lot. A ground breaking ceremony is expected to be held by the end of 2019. Mr. Rhorer commended Mr. Carter for his contribution to downtown east.

Beauregard Town Historic District – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of a home in Beauregard Town. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mrs. Whitney Sayal informed the Commission that the Planning Commission acquired a grant to update the building survey for Beauregard Town. Beauregard Town is currently a national historic district, a local historic district would offer more control over designs on exterior of homes or commercial structures. Design guidelines specific to the wants and needs of the community would also need to be developed and approved by the EBR Historic Preservation Commission, Planning Commission, State Historic Preservation Office, and the Metropolitan Council. A public meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 11, 6:00 p.m. at the DDD office. Mrs. Melanie Montanaro, Beauregard Town resident, is looking forward to obtaining input and ways to preserve the historic structures in the neighborhood.

5th 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 article. Mr. Rhorer introduced Captain Murial Hall with the 5th District Police Department. Captain Hall informed the Commission that he is working on the homeless issue downtown and encouraged anyone with questions or concerns to contact him at mehall@brla.gov. Captain Hall is requiring the downtown officers to make at least 3 contacts with downtown businesses and Captain Hall will follow up with the businesses. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that there have been several meetings to discuss aggressive panhandling, homeless and criminal activity. The meetings were well attended and the City Police were well represented. Continued meetings to follow up on progress are expected. Mr. Rhorer commended Ms. Mary Jane Marcantel on her work as the police ambassador.

Mr. Rhorer expressed that the economics of downtown must maintain a healthy balance to ensure quality of life benefits to citizens, business owners, and visitors.

The Mayor's Office submitted a Press Release announcing the following funds that are going towards homeless issues:

- \$3.1 million Community Development Block Grant – provides for community development resources for a wide variety of community needs
- \$266,896 Emergency Solutions Grant – provides for homeless prevention and shelter needs.

Water Campus Update – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a map of the Water Campus. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that a \$1.5 million Cybersecurity Center will locate in the Water Campus at 1200 Brickyard Lane and will bring 92 jobs to Baton Rouge. Mr. Rhorer welcomed them and thanked the State and LED for their partnership to assist with securing the center.

Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge New Offices – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of the building and renderings of the proposed improvements. Ms. Renee Chatelain, Arts Council, CEO & President, informed the Commission that the Arts Council will be re-locating to 233 St. Ferdinand. The move will allow the Arts Council to be a resource center for the Arts. Ms. Chatelain reviewed the renderings for the proposed improvements that include the following:

- Art gallery
- Performance space
- Administrative Offices
- Class room space
- Artist co-op
- Rooftop patio

Everyone was encouraged to support the upcoming Arts Council capitol campaign. Mr. Rhorer thanked Ms. Chatelain for her leadership with the Arts Council and the community.

Touchdown Express – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the Touchdown Express flyer. Each Commissioner received a copy of the flyer. Ms. Alexandra Sevier, CATS, informed the Commission that CATS Touchdown Express will pick up 3 hours before the game and run until one hour after the game. Tickets are \$10 round trip and pickup and drop off at the following locations:

- Hotel Indigo
- Under I-110 Overpass
- L'Auberge Casino

Tickets may be purchased game day at the pickup locations or online at brcats.com/touchdown. The DDD is working with CATS updates to the downtown trolley route.

Gotcha Bike Share – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the Gotcha press conference and bike station. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that bike share has launched and been well utilized.

Town Square Phase II – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of current construction. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that Town Square phase II is nearing completion and a walk through is scheduled for this afternoon with the City and the contractors. Mr. Vicknair briefed the Commission on the improvements.

Downtown Greenway – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of current construction. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that construction continues on the downtown greenway starting at 8th Street with the construction of the pedestrian and bicycle path that continues to the median of East Blvd. / T.J. Jemison. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the proposed DOTD, BREC and City Parish projects that connect downtown to beyond Siegen Lane.

Rotary Centennial Sculpture – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the construction meeting and the sculpture. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that prep work will commence this week and construction fencing will be installed around the site. The work will be complete in approximately 6 – 7 weeks. The 14’ structure will cantilever over the water be lit at night, and feature interactive music based upon the currents of the river.

Riverfront Improvements – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the mural and proposed improvements. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the mural on the retaining wall on the riverfront between Laurel & Main Streets is complete and has been named “Chromatic Currents”. Mr. Rhorer commended the local artist Mr. Marc Fresh and the DDD for their work on this project. Mr. Fresh will be working on another mural on the retaining wall of the parking lot located on Lafayette Street between Laurel and Main Street.

River Road Multi-Use – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the proposed rendering for east side of River Road improvements. Mr. Gabe Vicknair informed the Commission that the project is in the final stages of design. Construction will begin after final approval from DOTD and expected to begin in 2020.

Downtown Maintenance – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the employees of the Mt. Zion First Baptist Church. Mrs. Sayal informed the Commission that the August 2019 winner of the Downtown Distinction award in the non-profit category is Mt. Zion First Baptist Church. Pastor Brown expressed his excitement to be selected and the appreciation for the recognition.

New Business – Cajun Fitness – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of interior of the gym. Mr. Andre Vinning informed the Commission that Cajun Fitness has taken over 440 Fitness gym located at 440 Third Street. For more information everyone was encouraged to contact Andre.

Plantriarch – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the logo.

Mr. James Curtis, owner, briefed the Commission on the concept of his retail establishment located at 315 Third Street and studio located at 207 Florida Street. Plans are to open October 2019 and everyone was encouraged to visit the web site at www.plantriarch.com

Cambria Solutions – Mr. Ryan Randazza, Louisiana Account Manager for Cambria, informed the Commission that Cambria is a technology and management consulting firm. Cambria opened their Baton Rouge Offices approximately 4 months ago and is located in One American Place.

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.

- Matherne's Wine Dinner – September 12
- Opera Louisiane – September 13
- Common Ground – September 17
- Wine Walk Wednesday – September 25
- BRSO – September 26
- 13th Gate Haunted House – September 27
- St. Jude Walk – September 28
- Live After Five – October 4
- Baton Rouge Arts Market – October 5
- Sunday in the Park – October 6
- 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. Mr. Rhorer encouraged everyone to support the first annual fundraiser “Farm Fete” scheduled for September 19, 2019, at White Oak Estate and Gardens. The event will include cocktails, tastings from local farmers and chefs, tours of the farm, and a small auction.

DBA – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the DBA logo. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Live After Five concerts begin Friday, October 4, 2019.

12. Correspondence – There was no information to report.

13. Public Comment – Ms. Wendy Overton briefed the Commission on the 9th Annual Baton Rouge Entrepreneurship Week (BREW) scheduled for November 12-15, 2019. Everyone was encouraged to visit www.celebratebrew.com

Dr. Leanne Clement, Director of Opera Louisiane briefed the Commission on the non-profit organization. Dr. Clement briefed the Commission on the opening night concert scheduled for September 13, 2019 at the Manship Theatre. Everyone was encouraged to support the Opera Louisiane.

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Mr. Danny Garrett, attorney, informed the Commission that he represents the Louisiana School Board Association, and they closed on the building at 620 Florida Street. Plans are to renovate the 2nd floor for event and training space.

Mr. Hank Henegan, WLFT-TV, informed the Commission that WLFT-TV is moving to 334 Third Street and plans to occupy the space by October 1, 2019. The station will cover downtown events and evening bar scenes live.

Mr. Rhorer congratulated Mrs. Fran Gladden as DDD Commissioner since 2008 as she has been an asset for the community.

Meeting Adjourned: