

DDD Commission Meeting
March 10, 2020, 8:00 a.m.
St. James Episcopal, Large Parlor, 208 N. 4th Street

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

Absent: Erin Monroe Wesley

Others in Attendance: **Sarah Amacker, Paul Arrigo, James Avault, Ben Blackwell, Timothy Boone, Mary Boutwell, Kevin Broussard, Caitie Burkes, Gayle Carnahan, Shane Chalmers, Leanne Clement, Oren Conner, Sonja Cotter, J. Daniels, Marty Enquist, Justin Gaudet, Brooke Goodrich, Blaine Grimes, Jonathan Grimes, Nathan Hall, Sonita Hawkins, Michelle Hebert, Hank Henagan, Stacey Howel, Sam Karlin, John Kaufman, John Kelton, Reverend Michael Kuhn, Officer T. C. Lamb, Lauren Lambert, Jason Langlois, Ron LeBouef, Adelina Lepine, Jeannie Magdefrau, Rob Malone Mary Jane Marcantel, Laura Martin, Laura McDavitt, B. J. Miletello, Donnie Miller, Aaron Mollura, Grant Murphy, Mary Olinde, Wendy Overton, Serena Pandos, Melissa Parmelee, Kristina Pepelko, Michelle Phillips, Marlee Pittman, Jen Racca, Rebekah Rainey, Kelly Reed, Davis Rhorer, David Rhymes, Frederick Sargent, Whitney Sayal, Darryl Smith, Lisa Smith, Dr. Kay Solar, Daniel Stetson, Andy St. Romain, Katie Tasman, Casey Tate, Ann Vail, Clark Vega, Mitch Verma, Gabe Vicknair, Jacques Waguespack, Elizabeth Walker, Jennifer Whittington, Jeff Wittenbrink, 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 February 11, 2020 minutes, Mr. Jude Melville seconded and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Hensgens thanked St. James Episcopal for hosting the DDD Commission Meeting. Reverend Michael Kuhn welcomed everyone to St. James and Rev. Huhn informed the Commission that the school is now accepting applications for the 2 and 3 year old early Childhood Development Center. Mr. Rhorer encouraged everyone to order gumbo this week for pick up next Friday, March 20, 2020.

5. Board Action – There was no board action.

6. Governmental Issues – Nuisance Ordinance Amendment – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the proposed ordinances. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the Mayor's office has submitted 2 items for introduction at the Metro Council meeting Wednesday, March 25, 2020. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the proposed Nuisance Ordinance Amendments are listed below:

- 5. 20-00336 Amending Title 12 (Nuisances), Chapter 3 (Trespass), Part I (General) so as to add Section 12:153 (Aggressive Solicitation and Harassment) and Section 12:154

(False or Misleading Representation). By Mayor's Office. Introduce for public hearing/meeting on March 25, 2020 Aggressive Solicitation

- 6. 20-00337 Amending Title 12 (Nuisances), Chapter 3 (Trespass), Part I (General) so as to add Section 12:155 (Obstruction of Sidewalk). By Mayor's Office. Introduce for public hearing/meeting on March 25, 2020 Obstruction of Sidewalk

Mr. Rhorer commended the Mayor's office for support on this issue. Discussion ensued. Ms. Mary Jane Marcantel, Spanish Town resident, briefed the Commission on the issues and encouraged everyone to contact their Metropolitan Council and express their support for the amendments.

Mr. Scott Hensgens moved that the DDD endorse the proposed amendments to the Nuisance Ordinance, Mrs. Maddie Brown seconded and the proposed amendments to the Nuisance Ordinance was unanimously endorsed by the DDD Commission.

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:

LABI Offices – Mr. Rhorer reviewed the current construction photographs of the LABI Offices on Main Street. The renovations are expected to be completed in May 2020.

Water Campus Update – Water Street – Mr. Rhorer reviewed the current construction photographs of the Water Campus. Construction continues on 200 Water Street and the traffic signal has been installed at Water Street and River Rd.

Terrace Street – Terrace Street is currently under construction and upon its completion it will connect River Rd and Nicholson Dr.

Spencer Calahan Law Offices – Construction continues on the law offices located at 827 St. Louis Street. It is expected to be completed soon after the Mississippi River water levels decrease and construction resumes.

Army Corps Flood Wall – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the riverfront levee flood wall currently being constructed at North Street and River Road. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the project is near completion.

Catholic Presbyterian Apartments – The Commission via PowerPoint, a photograph of the location of the proposed pedestrian crosswalk. Mr. Vicknair briefed the Commission on the proposed crosswalk with a caution light on North Street at 7th Street. Installation of the crosswalk will commence within the week. This will provide the residents a pedestrian friendly crossing into the Central Business District.

Raising Cane's River Center – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the Raising Cane's River Center General Manager. Mr. Rhorer introduced Mr. Shane Chalmers, ASM Global. Mr. Chalmers informed the Commission that ASM Global manages the Raising Cane's River Center and he was recently hired as General Manager. Mr. Chalmers expressed his excitement of be part of downtown.

Raising Cane's River Center Feasibility Study – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of the River Center and the interior of the ballroom, theatre and arena. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles. Mr. Rhorer encouraged everyone to view the article in the Business Report. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the River Center Advisory Committee has recommended that the City Parish issue a request for proposals to address the following in order to improve the performance of the Raising Cane's River Center:

- Infrastructure needed to attract events
- Meeting rooms / large assembly areas
- Headquarter hotel
- Infrastructure improvements around the campus for cars, pedestrians and bikes
- Implement items in the parking feasibility study

The feasibility study will provide recommendations on how to increase the River Center's competitiveness for premier events in a market with other nearby event facilities (New Orleans and Lafayette).

Downtown Library – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the library. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that installation of furniture and books continue. The DDD has submitted correspondence to the Mayor's office, regarding proposed parking, loading and drop off zones for the library.

Riverfront Plaza Phase II – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the proposed renderings, Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that \$50,000 of approved state sales tax rebate funds will be utilized for Phase II of Riverfront Plaza. The project will include additional tree planting, extending the meadow planting, adding some parking islands and installation of a crosswalk on River Road near the River Center. Design will commence upon completion of the contract. In addition, \$100,000 of approved state sales tax rebate funds will be utilized for two shade-covering structures at the riverfront landing and levee stage. Another combined \$23,000 is requested to upgrade lights for the Yazoo Plaza area and within the Beacon Plaza fountain in Town Square.

Cultural Assets / Central Green – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an aerial image indicating the location of the Library, Arts Council and River Center. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the concentration of cultural assets near the new River Center Library and the future addition of the Arts Council headquarters. This area is known as the 'Central Green' and it links these cultural assets together through a system of greenspaces and bicycle/pedestrian corridors.

Bike Master Plan Update – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of a bicyclist. Mrs. Whitney Sayal informed the Commission that approximately 1-2 years ago a multitude of agencies began the process of developing a Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan. The DDD sits on the technical advisory committee to ensure the Downtown Greenway plan is integrated with the proposed plan. Approval of the plan will begin the 3rd week of March 2020, if approved it moves to the Planning Commission in April 2020 and presented to Metropolitan Council in May 2020.

Downtown Greenway – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of current construction. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that construction continues on the greenway with the installation of the pedestrian pathway, planting and striping. Mr. Dexter asked how the unique lighting structures were chosen. Mr. Vicknair expressed that the lighting was part of the design concept to illuminate the pathway and mimic the rail line appearance. Mr. Rhorer also mentioned that he requested the same lighting structures to be used in BREC's future plans for Expressway Park - along the Greenway path in the park. He also requested that BREC install entry signage, bike repair station, and a water fountain. Mr. Vicknair mentioned that East Boulevard is near complete and striping will begin soon including a dedicated lane to cross Government Street at East Blvd.

Louisiana Avenue Connection – Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that DOTD finished the feasibility study and they are completing the final review stages necessary before the grant request is officially approved. If approved, the grant will help fund sidewalk and crosswalk work on Louisiana Ave and Eddie Robinson Sr. Dr. / 13th St.

Downtown Maintenance – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of Public Services / Safety booklet. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that a meeting was held February 20, 2020 with downtown stakeholders to discuss safety, maintenance and cleanliness downtown. Following are the items that were discussed:

- BRPD presence
- Group homeless feedings
- Homeless sleeping on benches / sidewalks
- Aggressive panhandling
- Utility paint
- Repair of curbs
- Ball Moss
- Street lighting
- Trash can issues on Main Street
- Parking meters & Management
- Riverfront Plaza Landscape bed cleaning
- Fireworks

The DDD is taking measures to address the issues. Mr. Rhorer requested that the committee set up a policy for curb repair to give the City Parish for guidance and informed the Commission that the City Parish is committed to repair the curbs.

New Business – Carleton Hebert Wittenbrink & Shoenfeld LLC – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the partners of the law firm. Each Commissioner received a copy of the press release. Mr. Jeff Wittenbrink, attorney, briefed the Commission on the expansion of the law firm located in II City Plaza.

Bad Axe Throwing – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of the building. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Bad Axe Throwing will be opening on the corner of Main and Sixth Streets.

Vintage – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of the building. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the venue located on the corner of Third Street and Laurel Street will have a soft opening Thursday, March 12, 2020.

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.

- Third Street Songwriters Festival – March 20 - 22
- Holi Festival – March 21
- Providence Corporate Cup – March 21
- Walk for Humanity – March 21
- Live After Five – March 27, April 3
- American Heart Walk – March 28
- Ebb & Flow – April 4 – 5
- Opera Louisiane – April 3 & 5
- Sunday in the Park – April 5
- LSU Center for River Studies – First Sunday Tour – April 5
- 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 informed the Commission that strawberries will be available at the market this Saturday.

12. Correspondence – There was no information to report

13. Public Comment – Leanne Clement, Opera Louisiane, briefed the Commission on the upcoming event " Tales of Hoffman, to be held at the Manship Theatre.

Dr. Kay Solar briefed the Commission on the upcoming 3rd Street Songwriters Festival scheduled for March 20 - 22, 2020.

Mr. Frederick Sargent with Electronic Media briefed the Commission on his business and encouraged businesses or anyone wanting to promote an event to contact him after the meeting.

Ms. Misty Burns, Arts Council, briefed the Commission on the upcoming Ebb & Flow festival scheduled for April 4 - 5, 2020.

Ms. Stephanie Cotter, Hilton, informed the Commission that renovations of the historic tunnel are near completion and she anticipates taking reservations in April 2020.

Mr. Daniel Stetson, LSU MOA, briefed the Commission on the upcoming exhibits at the museum. Mr. Stetson also encouraged everyone to attend the upcoming Live After Five Paint the Town Red Party scheduled for Thursday, March 12, 5pm - 7pm at Jolie Pearl.

Mr. Paul Arrigo, Visit Baton Rouge, informed the Commission that downtown is currently hosting 700 travel professionals in downtown Baton Rouge.

Meeting Adjourned: