

DDD Commission Meeting
February 10, 2015, 8:00 a.m.
St. Joseph Cathedral, Parish Hall, 401 Main St.

Attending: Scott Hensgens, Ric Kearny, Melanie Montanaro, Sevetri Wilson

Absent: Fran Gladden, Gordon LeBlanc, Cheryl McCormick

Others in Attendance: Gary Anderson, Joseph Anthony, Alicia Baron, Charles Bennett, Frances Bennett, Tom Bergman, Greg Bivin, Gary Black, Virginia Black, Shannon Blakeman, Timothy Boone, Chelsea Brasted, Cpl. Kyle Callihan, Johnathan Cary, Ken Champagne, Norman Chenevert, Cheryl Michelet, Whitney Cooper, Fr. Counce, Chief Dabadie, Tom Dawson, Angela deGravelles, Kristen Diehl, Peter Dieterich, Rachel DiResto, Lt. Donnie Distefano, Greg Dole, Monica Dugas, Liz Eure, Brian Falcon, Heather Fatzinger, Christine Forsman, Lisa Freeman, Marcia Groff, Gaye Hamilton, John O. Hearin, Edwin Hightower, Ryan Holcomb, Courtney Hunt, Rebecca Jacobs, Mary Johnson, Sadie Roberts-Joseph, Emily Kay, Douglas Kennedy, Nicole Kennelly, Tara Kistler, Jackie Kreutzer, Erin Kruppner, Ashley LaBorde, Lori Lasseigne, Beverly LeBeau, Ron LeBouef, Justin Lemoine, Jason Lockhart, Sam Losavio, Lisa Lymuel, Lauralyn Maranto, Mary Jane Marcantel, Fr. Pat Mascarella, Jennifer Mayer, Al McDuff, Rev. David Melville, Cheryl Michelet, BJ Milatello, Brandon Morgan, Jennifer Myer, Mikeila Nagura, Tim NesSmith, Chris Nichols, Shawn Nolan, Amy Norval, Beau Olinde, Mary Olinde, Duane Pierce, Andy Pino, Eric Poche, Skipper Post, Tina Rance, Margaret Read, Bill Reich, Eric Relle, Leif Remo, Davis Rhorer, Stephanie Riegel, Rachel Riley, Lakeisha Robichaux, Darlene Rowland, Sam Sanders, Ray Scriber, Larry Selders, Casey Sessums, Jamie Setze, Darlene Shingleur, Lisa Smith, Karen Stagg, Ben Stalter, J.T. Sukits, Jan Sumrall, Casey Tate, Ben Taylor, Jeremy Theriot, Eric Thomas, Veach Tucker, Henry Turner, Jr., Clark Vega, Gabe Vicknair, Dr. Graysen Walles, Sgt. Weber, Quinn Welsch, Councilwoman Tara Wicker

1. Mr. Ric Kearny called the meeting to order.

2. Mr. Ric Kearny declared a quorum.

3. Mr. Scott Hensgens moved to approve the agenda, Ms. Sevetri Wilson seconded and the agenda was approved.

4. Mr. Scott Hensgens moved to approve the January 10, 2015 minutes, Mrs. Melanie Counce Montanaro seconded and the minutes were approved.

Fr. Paul Counce began the meeting with a prayer. Mr. Rhorer thanked Fr. Counce for hosting the meeting at the St. Joseph Cathedral Parish Hall.

Mr. Davis Rhorer briefed the Commission on the correspondence he received regarding the closing of the BR General Emergency Room. Mr. Rhorer replied with an email indicating the importance of a nearby Emergency Room.

5. Board Action – There was no board action.

6a. Governmental Issues – There was no board action

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6b. Development Initiatives – Downtown Police Precinct – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the interior of City Hall. Chief Carl Dabadie informed the Commission that with the increase of activity downtown the police have seen the need to increase the number of officer's downtown. Currently there are ten officers assigned downtown and plans are to increase that number to 22 by October 2015. Plans are also in the works to open a full-time precinct in City Hall. The satellite office on Third Street will remain in operation.

St. Joseph Reception Hall – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, renderings of the proposed improvements. Fr. Paul Counce expressed his excitement with the renovations and encouraged anyone interest in utilizing the space for a community event or reception to contact the church office. Ms. Rachel Riley, Post Architects, briefed the Commission on the following renovations that include expanding the 5,000 square-foot parish hall to 15,000 square-feet - 9,900 square-foot of interior space and 5,100 square-foot of outdoor covered space. The space now accommodates 200-300 people for community events and receptions. Additional improvements include; enlarged restrooms, lobby renovations, and auditorium expansion. Although no construction work was focused on the cathedral's interior or exterior, new air conditioning was installed. Mr. Rhorer congratulated everyone with the project.

Rotary Centennial Project – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the Rotary logo. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that as part of the Rotary 100th year celebration the DDD is partnering with the Rotary Club to construct a public sculpture on the improved riverfront. Mr. Skipper Post informed the Commission that Rotary will begin accepting entries for the international design competition to design a piece of art for the riverfront. Rotary has contracted with CODAworx to assist with the entries. Rotary has raised \$350,000 for the project which will begin art solicitation spring 2015.

EPA Bike Share Grant – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of an existing bike sharing station. Ms. Whitney Cooper informed the Commission that the City in partnership with DDD, CRPC, BRAF and CPEX has received a grant to obtain a bike share development strategy for downtown. The grant will fund a 2 day workshop by experts to provide a plan for downtown Baton Rouge. Mr. J.T. Sukis, CRPC, commended everyone involved with the project.

440 on Third/ Matherne's Update – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendering of the exterior signage for Matherne's and interior of Matherne's. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the open house was a tremendous success on January 21, 2015. The DDD has reached out to surrounding areas to support the grocery store. Mr. Rhorer commended everyone involved with the project.

City Hall Plaza Update – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendering of the conceptual design for City Hall. Mr. Gabe Vicknair briefed the Commission on the design challenges of the project designed by Reed Hilderbrand. The capacity of the proposed lawn is approximately 3 times that of Galvez Plaza. Mr. Rhorer announced that the Crest received another international engineering award.

Riverfront Gateways / River Road Improvements – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the current construction on River Road in front of LASM and Repentance Park.

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Mr. Vicknair briefed the Commission on the current improvements that have been made to the riverfront gateways and River Road:

- Cross Walks are complete
- Planting is complete
- Currently removing old striping
- Pathway is complete
- Funding secured for seating / umbrellas
- Ribbon Cutting mid March 2015
- LASM – Improvements along the north side of plaza. Rotollo is the contractor for the project which has a projected six month construction timeline. The completion will provide public space.

Downtown Maintenance Committee – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of painted sidewalks and cleaned sidewalks. Ms. Whitney Cooper informed the Commission that she has been working with the utility companies to inform them of the existing ordinance. The next Maintenance Committee is scheduled for Thursday, January 26, 2015. Ms. Chris Nichols commended Ms. Cooper on her work with the committee.

Downtown Greenway Update – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the improvements to Expressway Park. Ms. Cooper informed the Commission that the site furnishings have been installed in Expressway Park. Ms. Cheryl Michelet informed the Commission that the basketball court is expected to be complete soon, pending appropriate weather conditions. Ms. Michelet also reported that improvements to Spanish Town neighborhood park will be going to bid Wednesday, February 11, 2015 with the bid opening Tuesday, March 10, 2015. The improvements will include a new playground, seating, trees, pavilion, BBQ grills and tables. A donation was received from an outside source which will be used to include additional alternates, providing the bid is approved.

New Businesses – US Agencies – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the ribbon cutting ceremony. Mr. Ken Champagne expressed his excitement to be downtown. The move brought approximately 100 employees to the downtown area.

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.

- #MovieNight BR – February 11
- Spanish Town Mardi Gras Parade / Ultimate LA Mardi Gras Party – February 14
- Mardi Gras Mambo – February 21
- A Confederacy of Dunces Kick Off – February 28
- B. R. Arts Market – March 7
- Foundation for Historical Louisiana/Old Governor's Mansion
- Manship Theatre Events / LSU MOA
- Capitol Park Museum
- Old State Capitol
- River Center Events

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- BRSO
- LASM
- USS Kidd

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. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that he recently met with Mr. Andres Duany, new urbanist planner, and Mr. Duany was overwhelmed with the progress of downtown Baton Rouge.

8. Ongoing Projects – CPEX – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, an image of the CPEX logo. Mrs. Rachel DiResto encouraged everyone to attend the Building Blocks event scheduled for Saturday, February 21, 10:00 a.m. at the Louisiana State Museum. The event introduces children and their families to the importance of design and planning in community development.

BREADA – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the BREADA logo. Mrs. Darlene Rowland briefed the Commission on the following events:

- Main Street Market will be open from 8am – 12noon, Saturday, February 14, 2015 & closed Tuesday, February 17, 2015 for Mardi Gras.
- Red Stick Market will be closed Saturday, February 14, 2015

Downtown Business Association (DBA) – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the DBA logo. Mrs. Alicia Baron briefed the Commission on the following event:

- Friday, February 20 – Announcing Live After Five Line up
- Wednesday, February 25 – Inaugural Open house – Christ in the City
- Thursday, March 5 – DBA Social – Jolie Pearl
- Friday, April 3 – Live After Five Spring season begins

8. Correspondence – Mentioned above

9. Public Comment – Councilwoman Tara Wicker encouraged everyone to attend the quarterly Tell Tara Town Meeting, Tuesday, March 10, 6:00 p.m. at First United Methodist Church.

Mr. Frances Bennett encouraged everyone to attend the 26th Annual Trash – Treasure event scheduled March 6,7 & 8, 2015 at Cortana Mall.

Ms. Jennifer Myer, CASA, briefed the Commission on the 4th Annual Golf Benefit schedule for March 30 at the University Club. For more information visit www.casabr.org.

Mr. Tim Nesmith, USS Kidd, briefed the Commission on the Mini Field Day scheduled for Saturday, February 28, 2015 from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

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Mr. Greg Dole, FHL, encouraged everyone to visit the Old Governor's Mansion for a tour. Mr. Dole briefed the Commission on the upcoming events:

February 12 – Professor of Folklore Barry Jean Ancelet to speak on history of Mardi Gras

February 17 – Lagniappe Tours Mardi Gras Trip in New Orleans

Ms. Marcia Groff briefed the Commission on the upcoming events:

February 12 – Henry Turner, Jr. – Listening Room

February 14 – Henry Turner, Jr. – Blues Room

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.