

DDD Commission Meeting  
April 10, 2018, 8:00 a.m.  
Raising Cane's River Center, 275 River Rd., Meeting Rooms 9 & 10

Attending: Eric Dexter, Fran Gladden, Scott Hensgens, Gordon LeBlanc

Absent: Ric Kearny, Cheryl McCormick, Melanie Montanaro

Others in Attendance: Logan Anderson, Meredith Anderson, James Avault, Melanie Bennett, Ben Blackwell, Timothy Boone, Kevin Broussard, Clara Bryan, Gary Buuck, Gayle Carnahan, Bubba Cashio, William Cox, Suzette Crocker, Remy Curry, Kim Daugherty, Michael Day, Dominic Distefano, Mary Durusau, Judy Foust, Jonathan Guelfo, Blaine Grimes, Angela Harms, John O. Hearin, Anita Hebert, Emily Jackson, Mary Johnson, Mary Joseph, Sam Karlin, John Kaufman, Jessica Keasler, Jack Koban, Steven Lumpkin, Brian McNabb, B. J. Miletello, Donnie Miller, Aaron Molluro, Mary Olinde, Michael Petty, Lluvia Peveto, Casey Phillips, Ruth Phillips, Andy Pino, Trula Remson, Davis Rhorer, Erin Roy, David Savario, Whitney Sayal, Darlene Shingleur, Debbie Stiltner, Kathy Stites, Casey Tate, James Taylor, Boo Thomas, Travis Thornton, Gabe Vicknair, Councilwoman Tara Wicker, Austin Wong, Samaer Zaitoon

1. Mr. Scott Hensgens called the meeting to order.
2. Mr. Scott Hensgens declared a quorum.
3. Mr. Gordon LeBlanc moved to approve the agenda, Mr. Eric Dexter seconded and the agenda was approved.
4. Mr. Eric Dexter moved to approve the March 13, 2018 minutes, Mrs. Fran Gladden seconded and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Scott Hensgens thanked Raising Cane's River Center for hosting the meeting. The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, renderings of the proposed improvements. Mr. Michael Day, Raising Cane's River Center General Manager, briefed the Commission on the proposed improvements to the performing arts theatre and arena.

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

**6. Governmental Issues – Cultural Products District** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the logo and boundary map. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the Metropolitan Council approved the proposed expansion of the Arts & Entertainment Cultural District. The expansion would include the Arts Market, Beauregard Gallery and the Industrial Park area. The state is reviewing the application and will notify the DDD if the first phase of the application process is approved this summer.

**Riverfront Gaming** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendering of potential improvements to the Belle of Baton Rouge Casino. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article and legislation. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the city is watching the course of Senate Bill #316. The bill would allow landside gambling for riverboats. The Belle of Baton Rouge would utilize the Belle of Baton Rouge atrium for the casino area.

**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:

- Downtown Library – reviewed current construction photographs.
- Courtyard Marriott – Mid Summer opening. Purchasing a delivery cart for use by hotel and Starbucks
- The Elias – reviewed current construction photographs of the 25 residential unit development proposed to be complete May 2018
- House on the Hill – reviewed the current construction photographs of the 15 residential unit development in Beauregard Town.

**Lofts @ 6C** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, current construction photographs and time lapse video. Mr. John O. Hearin, Hearin Properties briefed the Commission on the project and informed them that some units will be available at the end of the summer. The 1 bedroom units will range from 700 sq. ft. – 900 sq. ft. and the 2 bedroom units will range from 1,000 sq. ft. – 1,100 sq. ft. Plans are to begin working on marketing, branding and logo. Construction will be topping out in approximately three weeks. Mr. Rhorer commended Mr. Hearin on the project.

**Downtown East – BREC S. 14<sup>th</sup> Street** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of the park. Ms. Angela Harms, BREC, briefed the Commission on the following proposed updates to the S. 14<sup>th</sup> Street boxing center and park:

- Exterior Lighting
- Ornamental Fencing & Gates
- Windows and Door Updates
- General Exterior Painting
- Minimal Tree Removal
- Concrete Removal
- New Basketball Goals
- Possible Mural

Mr. Rhorer commended BREC for their commitment to downtown.

**DDD 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, images of the cover of Plan Baton Rouge Phase II. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission that the DDD is implementing the following recommendations of Plan Baton Rouge II:

- Central Green / City Hall Plaza
- DDD Boundary Expansion
- Downtown East

Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on 15 projects in Downtown East. The DDD also conducts downtown education tours as requested.

**State Licensing Board of Contractors Building** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the proposed rendering of the building. Mrs. Trula Remson, Remson Haley Architects, informed the Commission that Ratcliff Construction is the contractor for the three-story, 19,000 sq. ft. building located on the corner of North Street and Sixth Street. The location will bring approximately 40 employees downtown as well as people coming in for testing or hearings. Mr. Jonathan Guelfo, project manager, informed the Commission that drilling is scheduled to begin the end of this week and the project is scheduled to be complete by June 2019.

**Pedestrian and Bike Master Plan** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the riverfront. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the State in conjunction with BREC, BRAF and LA DOTD are initiating a Comprehensive Pedestrian and Bike Master Plan. A committee has been formed to direct Arcadis and Toole Design Group who are under contract to develop the plan.

**Rail Station Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, images of maps indicating proposed station locations. Mr. James Taylor, EBR Redevelopment Authority, informed the Commission that HNTB has been hired to design 2 train terminals between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Stakeholder meetings were held in February 2018 and a public meeting will be scheduled for May or June 2018. There will be a 3<sup>rd</sup> round stakeholder meeting summer 2018. Mr. Rhorer commended everyone involved with the project.

**19<sup>th</sup> Street Hostel** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the exterior and interior of the building. Ms. Melanie Bennett informed the Commission that Chez Fab Arts and Community Project, a Non-Profit Organization based out of Baton Rouge, purchased the church at the corner of N. 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Spanish Town Rd. Ms. Bennett and Ms. Cindy Wonderland founder of the non-profit will be initiating the process to renovate the building into a hostel “Easy Town Hall”. Current plans are to have 2 dorm rooms with 6 bunk beds and depending on fundraising, plans are to open the hostel in one year. The hostel will also host musical and theatrical events. Mr. Rhorer expressed his excitement with the project and commended everyone involved.

**City Hall Plaza** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendering of the proposed improvements and photographs of current construction. Mr. Gabe Vicknair reviewed the current construction photographs and commended Mr. Michael Petty, Reich Associates for his work on this project.

**Event Procedure and Guidelines** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the event packets and guidelines. Mr. Casey Tate informed the Commission that with the increased use of the downtown green space, the City Parish has established guidelines and procedures for the use of the space. Anyone interested in utilizing the space is encouraged to visit the DDD’s website at [www.downtownbatonrouge.org](http://www.downtownbatonrouge.org) or call the office.

**Riverfront Plaza** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendering of the proposed improvements. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that the plaza improvements include refurbishing landscape, add lighting to the plaza and lawn, pathways, sound system and kiosks. The bids will be open April 17, 2018.

**Town Square Phase II** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendered image of the proposed improvements. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the bids will be open on April 11, 2018.

**Downtown Maintenance Committee** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of Downtown Duplicating employees. Mrs. Whitney Sayal informed the Commission that the winner of the Downtown Distinction People’s Choice Award is Downtown Duplicating. Mr. Rhorer presented the employees of Downtown Duplicating with the People’s Choice Award trophy. Mrs. Sayal thanked Keep Baton Rouge Beautiful for the grant that was awarded to the Maintenance Committee. The grant was used to purchase the Downtown Distinction award, decals for the twelve winners and “We Live It” bags. The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 12, 2018. This will be the final meeting as the committee has reached their goals. The DDD will continue to work on any upcoming maintenance issues. Everyone was encouraged to participate in the downtown Clean Sweep EBR scheduled for Saturday, April 14, 2018 at 8:00 a.m.

**New Business – Chow Main** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of a menu item. Mr. Austin Wong, informed the Commission that he will be opening “Chow Main” restaurant in the former “Pam’s Corner Market” on the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Main Street. The restaurant will serve Asian lunch and dinner and is scheduled to open early Summer 2018.

**Driftwood Cask & Barrel** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of the building. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Driftwood Cask & Barrel located at 326 Third Street is now serving lunch.

**Cecelia Creole Bistro** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the logo. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Cecelia Creole Bistro located at 421 Third Street is now serving dinner and will begin serving lunch beginning Monday, April 16, 2018.

**9. 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.

- Live After Five – April 13, 20,27 & May 4
- Baton Rouge Blues Festival – April 14 – 15
- Third Street Song Writers Festival – April 20 – 21
- Walk for Humanity – April 21
- MS Walk / Wine on the River – April 28
- LOL Driving the Future – April 30
- Crawfish King Cook-off – May 4
- B. R. Arts Market / Red Wig Walk – May 5
- Preserve Louisiana/Old Governor’s Mansion
- Manship Theatre / LSU MOA
- Capitol Park Museum
- Old State Capitol
- River Center Events
- LASM
- USS Kidd

**10. 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.

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11. **Ongoing Projects – CPEX** – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, an image of the CPEX logo. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that PBR will be celebrating 20 years and DDD 30 years. The ‘Power of Vision’ Gala will be held on May 12, 2018.

**BREADA** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the BREADA logo. Mr. Rhorer encouraged everyone to continue to support the market.

**Downtown Business Association (DBA)** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the DBA logo. Mr. Rhorer encouraged everyone to support the Live After Five concerts.

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

13. **Public Comment** – Councilwoman Tara Wicker expressed concern regarding public notification of street closures downtown.

**Meeting Adjourned:**