

DDD Commission Meeting
January 8, 2019, 8:00 a.m.
Hilton Capitol Center Baton Rouge
Heidelberg Ballroom, 10th Floor, 201 Lafayette Street

Attending: Eric Dexter, Fran Gladden, Scott Hensgens, Gordon LeBlanc,
Cheryl McCormick, Melanie Montanaro

Absent: Ric Kearny

Others in Attendance: Adam Alford , James Avault, Greg Bivin, Gary Black, Ben Blackwell, Timothy Boone, Dawn Braud, Luke Breard, Hannah Schexnaider, Kevin Broussard, Shelby Bullion, Gayle Carnahan, Eric Carnegie, Bubba Cashio, Derrell Cohoon, Marie Constantine, Sonja Cotter, Suzette Crocker, aniel, Mary Durusau, Holly Duchmann, Meranda Flowers, Councilwoman Barbara Freiberg, Joseph Furr, Rannah Gray, Blaine Grimes, Kelli Gueho, Lauren Hatcher, Jamie Hernandez, Sadie Roberts Joseph, Sam Karlin, John Kaufman, Jessica Keasler, John Kelton, Theresa Langlois, Danae Leake, Austin Lolan, Jeannie Magdefrau, Carla Mazique, B. J. Miletello, Aaron Mollura, Mikeila Morgan, Grant Murphy, Chris Nichols, Mary Olinde, Davis Rhorer, Rhonda Ruffino, Sam Sanders, Whitney Sayal, Hannah Schexnaider, Stacy Schlieve, Austin Schroeder, Sherry Smith, Daniel Stetson, Casey Tate, Ben Taylor, Alex Thibadeaux, Travis Thornton, Lisa Thrower, Lauren Tompkins, Jamie Turnage, Clark Vega, Gabe Vicknair, Robert Webb, Jr., Samear 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, Mrs. Melanie Montanaro seconded and the agenda was approved.
4. Mr. Eric Dexter moved to approve the December 11, 2018 minutes, Mrs. Melanie Montanaro seconded and the minutes were approved.

5. Board Action – Nominating Committee – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the DDD logo. Each Commissioner received a copy of the Nominating Committee report. Mrs. Fran Gladden informed the Commission that the Nominating Committee has met and presented the proposed slate of 2019 officers as follows: Scott Hensgens, Chairman; Melanie Montanaro, Vice Chairwoman; Eric Dexter, Treasurer and Fran Gladden, Secretary. **Mrs. Fran Gladden moved to adopt the nominees as presented, Mrs. Cheryl McCormick seconded and the nominees were unanimously approved as presented.**

Mrs. Gladden thanked Mr. Ric Kearny for serving as chairman and congratulated Mr. Scott Hensgens as the next DDD Chairman.

6. Governmental Issues – There was no information to report.

7. Update from Previous Board Meeting – Downtown Arts Exchange – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the vendor booths. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on concept of the event that featured over twenty vendors and was held in Main Street Market during December 2018. The event was a huge success and Mr. Rhorer proposes additional pop up markets downtown in 2019.

Scooter – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the bird scooters. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the scooters showed up throughout the downtown area. There are a number of issues that arise when the scooter programs are initiated. Mr. Rhorer approached the Parish Attorney's office and requested that they review the regulations. Bird and Gotcha will hold off official program initiation until regulations are in place.

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

- **Elysian II** – Reviewed the current construction photographs of the 100 residential unit development on Spanish Town Rd. 60% market rate / 40% affordable units.
- **Licensing Board of Contractors** – Reviewed the current construction photographs of the development under construction on the corner of 6th & North Streets.
- **Associated General Contractors** – The building at the corner of 7th and Main Streets is also undergoing a major renovation as part of the block redevelopment.
- **Spencer Calahan** – Reviewed the current construction photographs of the development under construction on the corner of St. Louis and South Blvd.

Viking Cruises – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an aerial image indicating the proposed docking options along with photographs of possible option locations, as well as a photograph of a Viking cruise ship. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that he and the Mayor's office met with representatives of Viking Cruises about their desire to begin docking in Baton Rouge at the end of 2020. It is a requirement for the company to reserve a dock space before committing to a Baton Rouge stop and the city is evaluating potential sites and overall potential economic impact. The cruise will begin with one weekly visit and increase up to 4 – 5 visits per week. Both casino riverboat docks are included in the location discussion as they could be a viable location due to recent state legislation that allows riverboats to go landside. The existing city dock and Water campus dock will also be considered.

Mentorship Academy – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior and interior of the building. Mr. Ben B. Taylor, realtor, introduced Mr. Robert Webb, CEO of Mentorship Academy. Mr. Webb expressed his excitement in being located downtown and the opportunity it gives the students being part of the progressive downtown. Mentorship Academy is expanding their campus to accommodate the increased enrollment. The seniors will move to an adjacent space that is currently under renovation at 323 Florida Street. The renovation is expected to be complete in approximately 90 days. Southern University Law School continues to utilize the Mentorship Academy campus for night classes.

Bus Rapid Transit Open House – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the open house flyer. Ms. Rannah Gray, informed the Commission that the Baton Rouge Bus Rapid Transit Public Open House is scheduled for Tuesday, January 29 2019, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at the Downtown Development District office. Everyone was encouraged to attend the open house to provide input on the feasibility study. Additional meetings will be held within the next 2 weeks. Mr. Rhorer emphasized the importance of the route to include downtown. Discussion ensued.

EBR Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the flyer. Mrs. Whitney Sayal informed the Commission that the meeting scheduled for January 23, 2019 will be rescheduled in order to review comments received and create an updated draft master plan. The meeting is expected to be rescheduled in late February 2019 or early March 2019. The safety component of the plan is funded by the Federal Highway Administration and managed by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development. The connectivity portion of the plan is led by BREC, City-Parish, BRAF, and CRPC.

Downtown East Update – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an aerial map indicating the boundaries of Eddie Robinson Sr. Historic District and a photograph of Hotel Lincoln and Electric Depot. Each Commission received a copy of the newspaper article and historic district map. Mr. Gabe Vicknair informed the Commission that the Eddie Robinson Sr. Historic District is official and commended Mr. Dyke Nelson for his work surveying the district and applying for designation. Mr. Vicknair briefed the Commission on the program and expressed that there are approximately 560 eligible properties in the area.

Gotcha Bike Share – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the Gotcha bicycle and an aerial indicating the proposed bike station locations. Mr. Rhorer informed that the DDD has met with Lindsey West, Director of Baton Rouge Bike Share, to discuss locations for the 12 bike stations to be located downtown. The DDD is working with downtown neighborhoods on possible locations for the bike stations. Bike Share is scheduled to launch at locations in downtown, LSU and Southern University beginning March 2019.

2018 Yearbook – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the yearbook cover. Each Commission received a copy of the 2018 Yearbook. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the 2018 Yearbook is available on the DDD web page.

Riverfront Improvements – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, images of proposed improvements to the pedestrian staircase and retaining wall and photographs of current construction. Mr. Gabe Vicknair informed the Commission that the DDD is in the process of obtaining estimates on prep work and final artwork for improvements to the pedestrian staircase connecting the River Center to Riverfront Park over River Road. The DDD is working with DPW on improvements to the visitor kiosk on the riverfront that will include additional lighting, paint, and illuminated display cases. In addition, DDD will meet with The Walls Project to identify artists for the proposed improvements to the 395' retaining wall on the riverfront between Laurel & Main Streets.

Riverfront Plaza – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of current construction. Mr. Gabe Vicknair informed the Commission that construction continues on riverfront plaza with prepping the area for meadow planting and landscape planting continues to be installed.

Town Square Phase II – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of current construction. Each Commission received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Vicknair briefed the Commission the improvements that include installing seating in the plaza, a visitor's kiosk, and transforming St. Phillip into a pedestrian friendly promenade.

Downtown Greenway – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the rendering for East Boulevard improvements. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that the City of Baton Rouge has accepted the bid from T. L. Hawk, LLC for \$1,470,961. Once the contract is executed, construction will begin.

Rotary Centennial Project – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the sculpture. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the high water level in the Mississippi River has postponed the installation of the sculpture.

Downtown Maintenance – Third Street & Florida Street Intersection Pilot Study – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an aerial photograph of the intersection. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that improvements will be made to the intersection of Third and Florida Streets as part of a pilot project. Ms. Cheryl McCormick requested that the DDD look at the condition of the North Street and Laurel Street exit ramps.

The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the Downtown Distinction award recipients. Mrs. Whitney Sayal informed the Commission that the January 2019 winner of the Downtown Distinction award in the Education category is First United Methodist Church Early Learning Center (ELC). Ms. Pam Brignac, ELC Director, briefed the Commission on the renovations to the center and encouraged everyone to tour the facility.

New Business – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, the logo for Power Engineers, Inc. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the engineering firm has located their offices in One American Place.

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.

- Red Stick Revelry Recap
- Louisiana Marathon – January 19-20
- Louisiana Street Food Festival – January 19
- MLK March – January 21
- Louisiana Life March – January 26
- Red Stick Roux Rally – February 9
- Race for the Cure – February 9
- Mardi Gras Parades
- Preserve Louisiana/Old Governor's Mansion
- Manship Theatre
- LSU MOA
- Capitol Park Museum
- Old State Capitol
- River Center Events
- LASM
- USS Kidd

Red Stick Revelry Recap – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the event. Mr. Tate informed the Commission that the 2018 event was a huge success and the largest crowd to date. Mr. Tate commended everyone involved with the event.

10. Ongoing Projects – BREADA – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the logo. Ms. Theresa Langlois encouraged everyone to attend the Saturday Farmer's Market and support the Main Street Market during the week.

DBA – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the DBA logo. Mrs. Lauren Lambert, DBA Director, briefed the Commission on the mission on the DBA and encouraged anyone who is not a DBA member to contact her for more information. The DBA is working with the DDD to schedule a movie night in NBTS towards the end of February 2019.

11. Correspondence – There was no information to report.

12. Public Comment – Ms. Sadie Roberts Joseph, Executive Director, Odell S. Williams Now and Then African American Museum informed the Commission that the museum has changed its name to the Baton Rouge African American History Museum. Ms. Sadie Roberts Joseph encouraged everyone to visit the museum located at 538 S. Blvd.

Mr. Eric Carnegie briefed the Commission on the 2nd Oyster Festival scheduled for Saturday, May 18, 2019. Everyone was encouraged to visit the web site at www.batonrougeoysterfestival.com.

Mr. Scott Hensgens thanked the Hilton for hosting the board meeting and congratulated the 2019 slate of officers.

Meeting Adjourned: