

DDD Commission Meeting  
January 10, 2017, 8:00 a.m.  
Raising Cane's River Center, 275 S. River Rd. Meeting Rooms 9 & 10

Attending: Eric Dexter, Fran Gladden, Scott Hensgens Ric Kearny, Gordon LeBlanc, Melanie Montanaro

Absent: Cheryl McCormick

Others in Attendance: Gary Anderson, Joe Anthony, Jeb Barber, David Beard, Dr. Ray Belton, Bliss Bernard, Gary Black, Ben Blackwell, Timothy Boone, Mayor Broome, Kevin Broussard, Sgt. Kyle Callihan, Gayle Carnahan, Jonathan Cary, Bubba Cashio, Preston Castille, Albert Chao, Renee Chatelain, Whitney Cooper, Melanie Couvillion, Suzette Crocker, Shelby Daugherty, Rachel Diresto, William Doran, Leslie Dozier, Frank Duke, Liz Eure, Phil Fernberg, Barbara Freiberg, Joey Furr, Brian Goad, Blaine Grimes, John O. Hearin, Ryan Holcomb, Courtney Hunt, Stacy Jamieson, Mary Johnson, Mary Joseph, Sadie Roberts Joseph, John Kaufman, David Kors, Morgan Landry, Katie Lauder, Beverly LeBeau, Jolie Maberry, Marissa Lingori, Mary Jane Marcantel, Lauralyn Maranto, Fr. Pat Mascarella, Michael McDuff, Carolyn McKnight, B. J. Militello, Donnie Miller, Ben Moran, Woodrow Muhamad, Mikela Morgan, Ken Naquin, Tim NesSmith, Lisa Nice, Mary Olinde, Melissa Parmelee, Michael Petty, John Pierre, Skipper Post, Tina Rance, Lauren Ray, Margaret Read, Trula Remson, Davis Rhorer, Gabrielle Roussel, Fredrick Sargent, Francis Sicard, Lisa Smith, Emily Sulzer, Ebru Sumer, Casey Tate, Vickie Theriot, Lauren Tompkins, Clark Vega, Alex Velasquez, Gabe Vicknair, Dr. Tamiara Wade, Dr. Grayson Wales, Marlon White, Samaer Zaitoon

1. Mrs. Fran Gladden called the meeting to order.
2. Mrs. Fran Gladden declared a quorum.
3. Mr. Ric Kearny moved to approve the agenda, Mrs. Melanie Montanaro seconded and the agenda was approved.
4. Mr. Gordon LeBlanc moved to approve the November 8, 2016 minutes, Mr. Ric Kearny seconded and the minutes were approved.

Mrs. Fran Gladden recognized Mr. Michael Day, General Manager of Raising Cane's River Center and thanked the River Center for hosting the Commission meeting.

**5. Board Action – Nominating Committee Report** – 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 2017 officers as follows: Ric Kearny, Chairman; Scott Hensgens, Vice Chairman; Melanie Montanaro, Treasurer and Gordon LeBlanc, Secretary. **Mr. Ric Kearny moved to adopt the nominees as presented, Mr. Gordon LeBlanc seconded and the nominees were unanimously approved as presented.** Mr. Rhorer commended Mrs. Fran Gladden on her leadership and commitment to downtown and presented her with a token of appreciation.

**Mayor Sharon Weston Broome** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of Mayor Broome. Mayor Broome expressed her excitement to work with the DDD and informed the Commission that the best is yet to come for the entire city, parish and downtown. Mayor Broome informed the Commission that she has an open ear and open door policy and briefed them on the transition process and outreach initiatives. She is currently developing an administrative staff and introduced Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, Dr. Tamiara Wade.

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

**6b. Development Initiatives – Third Street Developments** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of 2016 development. Mr. Rhorer reviewed the development along Third Street in 2016:

- Opening of Watermark hotel
- Library construction
- 2 mixed use developments
- 5 restaurants
- Onyx Building

Mrs. Tina Rance informed the Commission that Iberia Bank located in the Onyx building will be opening February 2017. The Onyx building has 3,300 sq. ft. available for lease.

**Water Campus** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, image of land use map, proposed rendering of garage and photographs of current construction. Mrs. Tina Rance informed the Commission that Commercial Properties Realty Trust (CPRT) has submitted a final development plan to the Planning Commission. Construction will commence shortly on a \$7 million, 405 space parking garage with proposed completion by the end of 2017. Beginning infrastructure work includes extension of Archer Street and two new streets: Water Street and Brickyard Lane. The Water Institute of the Gulf building has tied into the old dock and vertical construction should begin this month. The Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority have moved into their building. The LSU Center for River Studies is complete and they are currently building out the exhibit and the river model, plans are to open April 2017.

Another Broken Egg is scheduled to open in approximately three weeks and IBM has 5,600 sq. ft. of available space.

**Rehabilitation Tax Credit Study** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the study group. Ms. Whitney Cooper informed the Commission that the Louisiana State Office of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism hired a consultant company to study the impacts of state/federal rehabilitation tax credits throughout the state of Louisiana. The consultant team visited Baton Rouge January 5 & 6 to study a few area projects. This study will highlight the success of the program and help substantiate the importance of retaining the tax credits through legislative processes. The goal is to have the report finished by the start of the legislative session. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that there are over 100 projects in downtown Baton Rouge that have utilized the tax credits. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that he will be meeting with Senator Cassidy to discuss the importance of the continuance of retaining the Federal Historic Tax Credit program.

**New Construction Industry Center** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, images of proposed rendering of the facility. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Michael McDuff, executive director of Louisiana State Licensing Board of Contractors, informed the Commission that the Construction Industry Center will be owned by the Louisiana State Licensing Board of Contractors and will also house the Louisiana Associated General Contractors. The 28,000 sq. ft. building will be located at 600 North Street. Site work has begun on the center, bids will go out today and February 2, 2017 is the proposed date to accept a bid. Mrs. Trula Remson, Remson, Haley, Herpin Architects reviewed the schematic site plans and informed the Commission that the building will be brick for low maintenance. Construction is expected to be complete in 15 months.

**Southern University Announcement** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of Mentorship Academy. Mr. Preston Castille, president of Southern University Alumni Federation, informed the Commission that evening law classes at Southern University's downtown campus have begun and are full. Mr. Castille introduced Southern University President and Chancellor, Dr. Belton. Dr. Belton expressed his excitement about establishing a higher education presence downtown and announced that in the coming months plans are to establish an executive MBA program and teacher certification program at the downtown campus. Chancellor of the Law Center, Mr. John Pierre said he is proud to carry out a couple of the missions of increasing the footprints and creating access and opportunity. This collaboration will be a model for Southern University. Dr. Grayson Wales, Mentorship CEO, expressed his excitement about the collaboration which is creating an atmosphere for students that showcases the values of continued education as well as, opportunity for teachers to continue their education. Dr. Wales encouraged everyone to tour Mentorship Academy. Mr. Rhorer congratulated them on the program and expressed his excitement on the partnership.

**Lofts @ 6C Groundbreaking** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the groundbreaking. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the groundbreaking for the 142 residential units was held December 22, 2016. Mr. Rhorer thanked the Hearin family for their investment in downtown. The development will also include a parking garage with limited parking available to the public.

**Downtown Greenway** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the current construction and ribbon cutting. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the ribbon cutting was held Wednesday, December 28, 2016 at 5pm. Mr. Rhorer commended Ms. Carolyn McKnight, BREC Superintendent, for her support and commitment to providing trails throughout the City-Parish. Mr. Rhorer reviewed the improvements and the route of the Greenway. As recommended in Plan Baton Rouge, the Greenway, 7<sup>th</sup> Street Park and improvements along 7<sup>th</sup> Street ties the downtown neighborhoods together.

The East Blvd. portion of the Downtown Greenway will go out to bid once environmental clearance has been obtained by DOTD and SHPO. It is expected to begin construction in the spring of 2017.

The DDD is exploring opportunities for grants to secure funding resources for The Louisiana Avenue Connection under the Interstate along Louisiana Ave. to Eddie Robinson to connect the Government Street bike lanes to the Downtown Greenway. The bike and pedestrian path would also connect Downtown East to the core of downtown.

BREC has also applied for a bicycle/pedestrian grant that would tie the Downtown Greenway to the neighborhoods of North Baton Rouge.

**River Road Multi-Use Pathway** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the proposed renderings. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that the project will include the following:

- Bike lane west side of River Rd.
- Overlay roadway
- 8' bike lane
- Landscape buffer

DOTD let the project a few months ago and the low bid was recently accepted. Construction is expected to begin in early spring. A grant was also received by DOTD to install sidewalk and streetscape elements on the east side of River Road from the Florida Street Riverfront Access north to the state buildings. A project kick off meeting with DOTD and the consultant is expected in January with a six month design timeline.

**Riverfront Plaza** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, renderings of proposed improvements. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that the Metropolitan Council approved the Professional Services Agreement for Carbo Landscape. DDD is working with DPW regarding the contract language. Construction is proposed to begin in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2017 with a six-month construction period.

**Dock Shade Structure** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, renderings of proposed shade structures. Ms. Lisa Nice, Post Architects, informed the Commission that the Metropolitan Council will vote on the contract for Arrighi at the January 11, 2017 meeting. If approved, the city will issue a Notice to Proceed with 180 days to complete. Ms. Nice briefed the Commission on the fabric panels that will provide shade on the dock. She also indicated that there were plans to include LED Lighting for the shade structure. Mr. Rhorer thanked Mr. Bubba Cashio, DPW, for his work on this project.

**City Hall Plaza** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendering of the proposed improvements. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the Metropolitan Council approved the \$4.9 million contract to Arrighi Construction for City Hall Plaza renovations. They will begin staging for the project by the end of January 2017. Mr. Rhorer commended the administration for their support of this project. This is the final component of Plan Baton Rouge II's Central Green recommendation which involves creating a contiguous system of greenspaces surrounded by the City's civic and cultural attractions.

**Downtown Maintenance Committee** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of participants of the "We Live It" campaign. Ms. Whitney Cooper informed the Commission that the winners of the "We Live It" campaign were selected and notified. Ms. Cooper thanked everyone who donated prizes. Following are the scheduled subcommittee meetings:

- January 10 – Education
- January 12 – Enforcement
- January 19 – Ordinance

As a result of the December meeting with EBR Trash companies, the city is in the process of creating a waste collection plan.

Mr. Rhorer commended Cox for their quick response on a recent issue regarding an outage in the Central Business District due to construction activity on Third Street.

**New Business – The Parlor** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the interior. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Casey Tate informed the Commission that the creative space is located in Beauregard Town at 705 St. Joseph. The space offers daytime space at a daily rate or monthly membership. The space also hosts live music events during the evenings.

**Sonic** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the current site work. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Sonic is constructing a location at the corner of Government and S. 10<sup>th</sup> Street and utilizing the existing building at 982 Government Street for their headquarters. A representative will address the board at a later date.

**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.

- Louisiana Marathon – January 13 - 15
- MLK March – January 16
- Baton Rouge 200 – January 17
- Louisiana Right to Life March – January 21
- Red Stick Roux Rally – February 4
- Mardi Gras Parades
- Belle of Baton Rouge
- Preserve Louisiana/Old Governor's Mansion
- Manship Theatre / LSU MOA
- Capitol Park Museum
- Old State Capitol
- River Center Events
- LASM
- USS Kidd

Mr. Michael Day welcomed everyone and briefed them on the upcoming events. Mr. Day encouraged everyone to visit their updated web site.

**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 with residential and retail development along Third Street as well as green space.

**8. Ongoing Projects – CPEX** – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, an image of the CPEX logo. Mrs. Rachel DiResto informed the Commission that \$250,000 of federal funds which was matched by the city have been identified to develop a detailed stationery plan for the Passenger Rail Station. This project is a huge catalytic opportunity for the state. Gonzales and St. John Parish received funds as well. EBR Redevelopment Authority will issue the RFP.

**BREADA** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the BREADA logo. Ms. Emily Sulzer briefed the Commission on the following:

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January 10 – Louisiana citrus will be available today at the Main Street Market.

January 14 – Saturday Market will be open

January 21 – Red Stick Sprouts

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

- DBA has a new Logo
- Live After Five (LAF) scheduling poll for committee
- January 17 – DBA the Baton Rouge 200 event
- LAF commences April 2017

8. **Correspondence** – There was no correspondence.

9. **Public Comment** – 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. Liz Eure introduced Dr. Sicard, who will be locating his dentistry in the offices of Downtown Healthcare & Wellness. Dr. Sicard expressed his excitement to be downtown and informed the Commission that he will begin taking appointments Friday, January 13 2017.

Mrs. Gladden thanked everyone for investing in downtown.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.**