

DDD Commission Meeting  
March 12, 2013, 8:00 a.m.  
River Center, 275 S. River Rd., Meeting Room 9

Attending: Norman Chenevert, Derrell Cohoon, Fran Gladden, Verni Howard, Chris Nichols

Absent: Van Mayhall, Jr.

Others in Attendance: Laura Acord, Tom Adamek, Ben Anderson, Gary Anderson, Josh Anderson, Paul Arrigo, Jo Landry Bagwell, Joy Banks, Alicia Baron, Bradley Bates, Brad Bates, Jeffrey Beck, Matt Beeson, Kathryn Belanger, Carolyn Bennett, Frances Bennett, Charles Bennett, Debbie Bennett, Gary Black, Virginia Black, Suzanne Blanchard, Ward Bond, Tim Boone, Chip Boyles, Benjamin Bradford, Jim Brandt, Chelsea Brasted, Kevin Broussard, Nancy Broussard, Zach Broussard, Mike Bruce, Gary Burkett, Jimmy Burland, Chad Calder, Gayle Carnahan, Sarah Casper, Christy Chachere, Margaret Chappuis, Renee Chatelain, Cosimo Clements, Allison Cooper, Whitney Cooper, Sara Courtney, Zoltan Crete, Suzette Crocker, Ron Crum, Allison Crump, Scott DAgostino, Sandra Daire, Melissa Daly, Patrick Danna, Nedra Davis, Tom Dawson, Angela deGravelles, Genny Denton, James Digby, Rachel DiResto, Caroline Domecq, Jason Diu, Erin Ducote, Terri Dugas, Erin Brush Duncan, Pat Duncan, Ben Dupuy, Kendrick Ebanks, Kirk Elgin, Terry Elmore, Gwen Emick, Mark Entrekin, Randy Fauchaux, Betsy Fazekas, Peyton Feigley, Heather Folks, Clayton Forbes, Judy Foust, Rev. Brad Franklin, Mac Freeman, Jonathan Fricker, Rob Gann, Aaron Glaser, Brian Goad, Selena Grant, Ashanti Green, Katie Guasco, Hunter Hall, Jennifer Hall, Jenny Harbourt, Brandon Hargrave, Debra Harris, Stephen Hazel, Daniel Hawthorne, John O. Hearin, Kendall Hebert, Robert Hebert, Emily Hebert, Jan L. Herrington, Ben Heroman, Justin Hewitt, Quincy Hodges, Ryan Holcomb, Tom Holden, Pam Hotard, Courtney Hunt, Fairleigh Jackson, Stacy Jamieson, Jennifer Jenkins, Martin Johnson, Teresa Johnston, Claire Juneau, Danielle Kelley, Bridget Kender, Julia Kennedy, Hannah King, Tara Kistler, Irene Kotval, Joe Labbe, Ashley LaBorde, Mathew Laborde, Robert Lacinak, Jason Lockart, Morgan Landry, Michael Lang, Andee Lanier, Lori Lasseigne, Donna LeBlanc, Rose Marie Leleaux, Justin Lemoine, Anna Long, Diane Losavio, Nicole Marshall, Lauren Marschall, Michael Mayer, Murray McCullough, Trey McCowan, Ferris McDaniel, Al McDuff, Joseph Michaels, Wes Michael, Jason Miller, B.J. Militello, Todd Mitchell, Ashley Montagnino, Rebecca Moses, Gordon Nelson, Shawn Nolan, Ashley Ortego, Maestro Billy Overton, Vertina Overton, Melissa Parmelee, Renee Payton, Garland Pennison, Andrew Perry, Ashley Pierce, Andy Pine, Eric Poche, Lee Prieto, Jere Quinn, Tina Rance, Margaret Read, Dan Reed, Bill Reich, Eric Relle, Leif Remo, Davis Rhorer, Jason Richards, Jessica Richardson, Brooke Riglin, Susan Ringwald, Tina Righteous, Tanya Roberson, Darlene Rowland, Jenny Rozas, LeAnn Russo, Robyn Ryan, Diana Samuels, Sam Sanders, Beth Sansovich, Kathy Scherer, John Schneider, Larry Selders, Casey Sessums, Shay Schillilng, Darlene Shingleur, Brian Sleeth, John Smith, Lisa Smith, Anna Snyder, Tyler Spears, Karen Stagg, Bill Stark, Jennifer Stenhouse, William Stevens, Jan Sumrall, Cherry Talbert, Justin Tassin, Casey Tate, Tiffany Terrell, Boo Thomas, Manuel Valencia, Tyelise Vavasseau, Clark Vega, Mitch Verma, Gabe Vicknair, Ladonna Ward, Shane Warren, Rossie Washington, Jr., Steven Watts, Pam Welsh, Emily Wharton, Councilwoman Tara Wicker, Matt Wilks

1. Ms. Chris Nichols called the meeting to order.
2. Ms. Chris Nichols declared a quorum.
3. Mr. Derrell Cohoon moved to approve the agenda, Mr. Norman Chenevert seconded and the agenda was approved.
4. Ms. Fran Gladden moved to approve the February 12, 2013 minutes, Mr. Derrell Cohoon seconded and the minutes were approved.

Rev. Brad Franklin shared a few words of wisdom. Mr. Rhorer thanked Mr. Todd Mitchell for hosting the meeting at the River Center and encouraged everyone to tour the facility and view Repentance Park. Mr. Rhorer announced that the Bowling Congress will be returning to the River Center in 2017.

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

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

**6b. Development Initiatives – Ameritas** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the Chase Tower. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Ameritas will be hiring up to 200 employees and will be located in the Chase Towers.

**North Blvd. Town Square Update** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of North Blvd. Town Square. Each Commission received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that repairs have begun on the power supply and thanked Department of Public Works for their assistance with supplying electricity via generators for the beacon. With spring approaching there will be a number of activities beginning in April at NBTS. Tuesday, April 2, will be the debut of the Town Square Toy Box filled with soccer balls, footballs and Frisbees.

**Repentance Park Update** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the Repentance park and toy box. Mr. Gabe Vicknair informed the Commission that the contractors are finishing the punch list.

**Downtown Greenway Update** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, renderings of the proposed greenway and photographs of the charrette. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles. Mr. Wes Michaels, landscape architect, reviewed the proposed presentation of the overall greenway. Input is still being accepted and everyone was encouraged to submit input to [ddd@brgov.com](mailto:ddd@brgov.com). The final EPA Greening Americas Communities report will be submitted May 2013 followed by the bidding out of design development and construction drawings of the plan. Funding is secure for Phase I & Phase II.

**Expressway Park** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of preliminary improvements. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that BREC has plans to initiate improvements to Expressway Park. BREC will present the proposed project at the April 2013 DDD board meeting. The vision of the greenway is to pull the neighborhoods together as one common area. Expressway Park is a major destination within the greenway.

**State Historic Tax Credits** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the Kress building. Each Commission received a copy of the tax credit information. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that there is discussion regarding the elimination of state income tax credit which would affect the state historic tax credits. Mr. Ben Dupuy, Stonehenge Capitol, expressed that his firm is a participant of a coalition that is supportive of the state historic tax credit. Legislation is expected to be filed that will preserve the credit in the event the state income tax is eliminated. Mr. Johnathan Fricker, Fricker Historic Preservation Services, briefed the Commission on the background of the tax credits and the projects that have benefitted from the credit. **Mr. Derrell Cohoon moved that the Downtown Development District support maintaining the historic tax credits for Louisiana. Mrs. Fran Gladden seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.**

**Commerce Building Update** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the Commerce building. Each Commission received a copy of the newspaper article.

Mr. Michael Lang reviewed the “Commercial Leasing Package” power point presentation which included conceptual renderings of the proposed project. The proposed project will include the following:

- Commercial spaces on ground floor and roof top
- 92 residential lofts
- 127 spaces of parking for residential & commercial
- Possible market / grocery store on 1<sup>st</sup> floor
- 5,000 sq. ft. on rooftop would possible include outdoor water feature / commercial space

Construction for the project is expected to commence within 12 – 16 months. The “Commercial Leasing Package” will be available on the DDD website and the Commerce building website.

**Hampton Inn Update** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the Hampton Inn. Mr. Zoltan Csete, general manager, informed the Commission that the hotel is scheduled to open by the end of April 2013. The 137 room hotel will include 27 suites, fitness center and business center. The Hampton job fair attracted approximately 300 applicants to fill 45 positions.

**Downtown Residential Checklist** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of a home in Beauregard Town. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the DDD will compile a list of all contacts name and phone numbers for residential issues such as electricity, water etc. Ms. Chris Nichols expressed that this information will assist the current downtown residents and incoming residents.

**BR Walls** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of a mural on the back of the Mayer Building. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that BR Walls will be installing approximately 5 walls throughout the downtown area. The location of the walls will not be revealed prior to installation.

**Riverboat Schedule / Dock Improvements** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of riverfront dock and the riverboat. Each Commission received a copy of the press release. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that improvements have been made to the riverfront landing facility. The repairs conclude in time to welcome the return of the riverboats that will be using the dock. Mr. Rhorer thanked Visit Baton Rouge for their efforts to bring the riverboats downtown.

**Downtown Pharmacy Ribbon Cutting** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of the building. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the Ribbon Cutting for Prescriptions to Geaux pharmacy will be held Friday, March 15 at 11:00 a.m. The pharmacy will offer delivery service to downtown business and residents. Mr. Rhorer will also unveil the Diversity of Third Street at the ribbon cutting.

**New Business Announcements – The Lobby Cafe** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the logo. Ms. Tiffany Terrell informed the Commission that her and business partner will be opening “**The Lobby Café**” in the previous location of the Buzz Café at 340 Florida. Plans are to open Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup> pending approval and permits. The restaurant will offer soups, salads and sandwiches and will be open Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Springboard** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the logo. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles. Mr. John Schneider informed the Commission that the infrastructure is in place for Springboard and they are ready to move forward. Mr. Schneider announced that the Capitol Region Venture Partner fund will be fully funded by the end of March 2013. Mr. Schneider introduced Springboard CEO Mr. James Digby. Mr. Digby expressed his excitement to be a part of this venture and thanked Vision City. Mr. Digby is looking to build the new entrepreneurial force and he sees the potential for young entrepreneurs to make a disruptive change within the community.

Mr. Schneider introduced Mr. Martin Johnson, Chief Financial Officer for Springboard and thanked Mrs. Fran Gladden, Ms. Vern Howard and Mr. Norman Chenevert for their support of this project.

**Reception Hall** – 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 Mr. Andy Blouin is working on plans to open a reception hall on the second floor of the former Latil Stationery building on Third Street.

**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.

- Capitol Park Museum – Lunch Hour Lecture Series – March 13,20,27
- Foundation for Historical La. Lecture – March 14
- St. James Gumbo, March 15, 22
- Belle of Baton Rouge Concerts – March 15, 29, April 5, 26
- LSU Cycling Criterium / City Citrus – March 17
- Old State Capitol Associates Speaker Series – March 21
- Arts Council Community Gallery Public Reception – March 22
- Providence Corporate Cup / Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans – March 23
- Live After Five – April 5, 12,19,26
- Fest For All – April 6 & 7
- Sunday in the Park – April 7,14,21,28
- Fleur Du Jour Floral Classes
- Viking Cooking School Outdoors
- Manship Theatre Events / LSU MOA
- River Center Events
- Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra
- LASM

**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 development and pharmacy as discussed in above agenda item.

**8. Ongoing Projects – Construction Updates – Hampton** – Discussed above

**CPEX** – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of the CPEX logo. Mrs. Rachel DiResto briefed the Commission on the following event:

- Better Block Baton Rouge – April 13 – 14 – Demonstration project on Government Street as a complete street – Volunteer sign up meeting Tuesday, March 19 at La Carretta on Government Street.

**BREADA** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of BREADA logo. Ms. Darlene Rowland encouraged everyone to continue to support the market and briefed them on the following:

- Specialty coffees now available at GoYaYa's
- Market is open for breakfast and lunch Monday – Saturday

**Literary Committee** – Ms. Whitney Cooper informed the Commission that the committee met on Feb. 27 and welcomed new committee members: Barbara Freiberg, Judy Kahn and Mary Stein. Mr. Robert Wilson reported on the Louisiana book festival. Subcommittees were also formed to further research programs, inventory and book club templates.

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

9. **Public Comment** – Lorraine Slade encouraged everyone to attend a luncheon in the Kress Gallery that will commemorate the Southern student sit-in on Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup> from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Mr. Manuel Valencia briefed the Commission on the Storybook Ball. Everyone was encouraged to attend the event at the River Center on May 18 from 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. The event is a primary fundraiser for Family Road of Greater Baton Rouge. For more information visit [www.familyroadgbr.org](http://www.familyroadgbr.org).

Mr. Robert Seeman, Baton Rouge Green, informed the Commission that they will begin planting for the City Citrus project in Old South Baton Rouge this weekend. Everyone was encouraged to get involved by visiting the web site at [www.citycitrus.org](http://www.citycitrus.org)

Mr. Chris Nichols commended the Baton Rouge City Police for the service.

Councilwoman Tara Wicker encouraged everyone to attend the Tell Tara Town meeting tonight at 6:30 pm., at the Leo S. Butler Center.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:00am.**