

DDD Commission Meeting  
March 14, 2017, 8:00 a.m.  
Arts Council, 427 Laurel Street

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

Absent: Cheryl McCormick

**Others in Attendance:** Gary Anderson, Joe Anthony, Calli Baio, David Beard, Bliss Bernard, Gary Black, Ben Blackwell, Shannon Blakeman, Timothy Boone, Shaun Braud, Chris Brooks, Kevin Broussard, Gary Buuck, Sgt. Kyle Callihan, Gayle Carnahan, Jonathan Cary, Bubba Cashio, Albert Chao, Renee Chatelain, Whitney Cooper, Melanie Couvillion, Suzette Crocker, Lauren Crump, Shelby Daugherty, Michael Day, Alex Deshotels, Frank Duke, Mary Durusau, Mina Estrada, Ashley Fabre, Phil Fernberg, Joey Furr, Brian Goad, Rannah Gray, Kayla Hayes, Anita Hebert, Ryan Holcomb, Courtney Hunt, Stacy Jamieson, Mary Johnson, Mary Joseph, John Kaufman, Stafford Kendall, David Kors, Jeff Kuehny, Morgan Landry, Katie Lauder, Beverly LeBeau, T. C. Matherne, Fr. Pat Mascarella, Kristy Mayes, Nicole McAlister, Michael McDuff, B. J. Militello, Ben Moran, Grant Murphy, Chris Neumann, Lisa Nice, Shawn Nolan, Mary Olinde, Melissa Parmelee, Michael Petty, John Pierre, Erin Porche, Skipper Post, Tina Rance, Lauren Ray, Margaret Read, Davis Rhorer, Gabrielle Roussel, Fredrick Sargent, David Savario, Lisa Smith, Emily Sulzer, Ebru Sumer, Casey Tate, Tom Tanner, Vickie Theriot, Lauren Tompkins, Memry Tucker, Clark Vega, Gabe Vicknair, Le'Moine Washington, Danny Watts, Lindsey West, Paige Whittington, Samaer Zaitoon

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, Mrs. Melanie Montanaro seconded and the agenda was approved.
4. Mrs. Fran Gladden moved to approve the February 14, 2017 minutes, Mrs. Melanie Montanaro seconded and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Kearny recognized Mrs. Renee Chatelain, Arts Council President and CEO, and thanked the Arts Council for hosting the Commission meeting. Mrs. Chatelain welcomed everyone to the Arts Council and briefed the Commission on the current exhibits. Anyone interested in having rotating art displayed in their business was encouraged to contact the Arts Council. The Laurel Street Firehouse and Scotlandville Firehouse are part of the Firehouse Project that aims to respond to the housing crisis through culture. The project is in the beginning stages and the Arts Council is meeting with the Baton Rouge Area Foundation and other organizations to coordinate the effort.

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

**6a. Governmental Issues – FuturEBR Public Meeting** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the logo. Mr. Frank Duke, Planning Commission, informed the Commission that they are kicking off the process to update FuturEBR. Everyone was encouraged to attend the public meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 14, 2017 from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. at the Goodwood Library. The remaining series of public meeting dates are available on the Planning Commission web site.

**Transportation Open House** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the flyer. Ms. Rannah Gray encouraged everyone to participate in the open house to provide input for the Capital Region Long Range Transportation Plan. For those that cannot attend they were encouraged to fill out the survey online at [crcla.org](http://crcla.org). Ms. Gray expressed that projects recommended by the CRPC Long Range Transportation Plan are the projects that get prioritization for federal funds. The open house is in conjunction with the FuturEBR public meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 14, 2017 from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. at the Goodwood Library.

**6b. Development Initiatives – Ebb & Flow Festival** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the sculptures and the festival poster. Ms. Mina Estrada, Arts Council, briefed the Commission on the upcoming festival scheduled for April 1 – 2, 2017. The festival will be held on the riverfront and feature demonstrations, workshops, interactive sculpture garden, music and much more. Everyone was encouraged to visit the web site at [www.ebbandflowbr.org](http://www.ebbandflowbr.org) for more information. Mr. Rhorer recognized the chairman of the Arts Council, Mr. Scott Hensgens. Mr. Hensgens commended the Arts Council staff on their hard work.

**Third Street Developments** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of current development. Mr. Rhorer reviewed the development along Third Street.

- Library – construction continues
- Iberia Bank – open for business
- Courtyard Marriott – construction continues

**Downtown Greenway** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the greenway. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the plants are beginning to bloom and encouraged everyone to walk the greenway. Mr. Gabe Vicknair informed the Commission that the East Blvd. portion of the Downtown Greenway received 95% construction drawings which will be submitted Friday, March 17, 2017 and the project received environmental clearance.

**River Road Multi-Use Pathway** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the proposed renderings. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that the west side of River Road is a DOTD project which will include installing an 8' multi use pathway. Construction is expected to begin end of March or early April 2017 with construction to be completed by end of 2017.

**East side** – Transportation Alternatives Program grant will be used to install sidewalk and streetscape elements on River Road from Florida Street Riverfront Access north to the state buildings. Duplantis is currently working on the design and once finalized it will be sent for environmental review.

Mr. Rhorer informed the commission that this will allow for a continuous bike or walk from the River Center to Hollywood Casino. Plans also include removing the steps near the Hilton garage on the east side of River Road and converting them to ADA accessible.

**Bike Share** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of bike sharing. Ms. Lindsey West, director of Baton Rouge Bike Share, introduced “Bike Share” the new transportation option that will become available in Baton Rouge. Ms. West informed the Commission that phase I of the program will include downtown Baton Rouge, LSU, and Southern University. The goal is to begin the program fall 2017 with 50 stations and a total of 500 bikes. The program will expand over the next few years with a total of 800 bikes and 80 stations. A RFP for actual equipment will be sent out soon. Updates will be available at [www.braf.org](http://www.braf.org) or Facebook. Ms. West thanked everyone involved with the program.

**Riverfront Plaza** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, renderings of proposed improvements. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that the contract with Carbo Landscape is being finalized and will include all electrical design for lighting. Once the contract is signed it will be presented to the Metropolitan Council for approval. There will be a six month design process, then on to construction in late fall with 300 days to complete.

**Yazoo Plaza** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the plaza. Mr. Brian Goad, Suzanne Turner Associates, informed the Commission that Suzanne Turner Associates was awarded the Merit Award for the Yazoo Plaza at LASM. Mr. Goad thanked everyone involved with the project.

**Dock Shade Structure** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, renderings of proposed shade structures. Ms. Lisa Nice, Post Architects, informed the Commission that the city issued the Notice to Proceed on Monday, March 13, 2017. Projected date for installation is June or July 2017. Post Architects are working with the city to include lighting under the panels.

**City Hall Plaza** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendering of the proposed improvements. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Arrighi was awarded the contract and the project construction kick off meeting is being held today. The project will take approximately nine months to complete.

**Downtown Maintenance Committee** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of a sidewalk cleaner. Ms. Whitney Cooper informed the Commission that the Downtown Maintenance Committee has launched the first annual Downtown Distinction campaign, recognizing downtown businesses with outstanding exterior maintenance and beautification techniques that exemplify the way 'We Live It' in Downtown Baton Rouge. Downtown Duplicating, located at 1445 Main Street, was awarded the March Downtown Distinction Award for the outstanding business in the Retail/Service category. Each month, a downtown business will be selected from a different category to highlight the variety of businesses contributing to downtown's quality of place and community pride. At the end of twelve months, citizens will vote on which of the businesses awarded over the past year deserves the 'People's Choice' Award. The next overall maintenance meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 16, 2017.

**Rotary Centennial Project** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, renderings of the proposed sculpture. Mr. Skipper Post, Post Architects, recognized Mrs. Chatelain and Fr. Pat Mascarella for their commitment to the Baton Rouge community. Mr. Post informed the Commission that as part of the Rotary’s centennial anniversary in 2018, the DDD is partnering with the Rotary Club to construct a public sculpture on the improved riverfront. Mr. Post briefed the Commission on the concept of the project and the process of selection. The iconic piece on the riverfront will be illuminated at night and an added attraction for downtown. It is currently being fabricated on the west coast and will be shipped early 2018.

**New Business – Sonic** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the construction site. Ms. Memry Tucker informed the Commission that the family owned Sonic located at the corner of Government and S. 10<sup>th</sup> Street will not have drive-in stalls but will have a drive through and dine in. The existing building at 982 Government Street will be used for their corporate office. The \$2.3 million restaurant is scheduled to be open the end of March 2017 and will hire between 40 – 60 employees. Plans are to have a soft opening March 31, 2017. Mr. Jeff Kuehny, Beauregard Town resident, expressed concerns regarding the signage, dumpster placement, landscaping, lighting etc.

**Another Broken Egg** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of the building. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the restaurant is open and located at the corner of Lafayette and North Streets.

**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.

- Glory & Gumbo – March 17,24,31 & April 7
- Bloom Art & Music Festival – March 18
- Providence Corporate Cup – March 25
- Ebb & Flow Festival – April 1 & 2
- Live After Five – April 7,14,21,28
- The Color Run – April 8
- Baton Rouge Blues Festival – April 8 & 9
- 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

**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 River Rd. and City Hall project.

**8. Ongoing Projects – CPEX** – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, an image of the CPEX logo. There was no information to report.

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

- March 25 – Knock Knock Museum fun food activity with our friends from the Knock Knock Children's Museum. Children participating in the the Sprouts Program will create a 'sweet potato kid' made from fresh fruits and vegetable.

**Downtown Business Association (DBA)** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the DBA logo. Mrs. Lauren Tompkins informed the Commission that Live After Five commences on Friday, April 7, 2017. DBA decals are available for DBA members and anyone interested in joining the DBA was encouraged to contact Ms. Tompkins.

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

**9. Public Comment** – Mr. T. C. Matherne introduced himself and informed the Commission that he started a theatre company “The Leather Apron Theatre Co.”. The theatre specializes in long improvisational comedy. The shows are held the first Tuesday of every month at Driftwood Cask & Barrel. For more information visit [www.leatheraprontheatre.com](http://www.leatheraprontheatre.com).

Mr. Chris Brooks, Chairman of B.R. Blues Festival, thanked the DDD for their support. Mr. Brooks briefed the Commission on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual B. R. Blues Festival scheduled for April 8 & 9, 2017. Everyone was encouraged to visit the web site at [www.brbluesfestival.org](http://www.brbluesfestival.org) for more information. Mr. Rhorer congratulated Mr. Brooks on being a new father.

Mr. Le’Moine Washington briefed the Commission on R & B Night at the Belle of Baton Rouge which is held the third Tuesday of the month. Mr. Washington encouraged everyone to attend an upcoming concert.

Mrs. Tompkins informed the Commission that an artist alley has been added to Live After Five. The alley will feature art from local artists.

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