

DDD Commission Meeting
February 12, 2008, 8:00 a.m.
Louisiana State Museum, 660 N. 4th Street

Attending: Cheri Morial Ausberry, Mark Bensabat, Norman Chenevert,
Derrell Cohoon, Brace Godfrey, Chris Nichols

Absent: Van Mayhall

Others in Attendance: Ryan Andree, Rev. Chris Andrews, Paul Arrigo, Jo Landry
Bagewell, Brad Bates, Jeff Bell, Carolyn Bennett, Steve
Boudreaux, Greg Brandoa, Dave Briggs, Nancy Broussard, Mike
Bruce, Rex Cabaniss, Chad Calder, Gayle Carnahan, Nancy Carter,
Charles Coates, Jody Phelps Coco, Pete Darling, John Denman,
Rachel DiResto, Kendrick Ebanks, Madeline Ellis, Tress Fereday,
Adam Fishbein, Derek Fitch, Carley Fleming, Jeff Fluhr, Joey
Furr, Mike Futrell, Debbie Gill, Brian Goad, Mark Goodson,
Francis Grayson, Jill Green, Scott Hall, Gaye Hamilton, Dennis
Hargroder, John O. Hearin, Jerry Hebert, Mike Herschman, Kim
Hodgeson, Joe Hynes, David Jacobs, Staci Jamieson, Ernest
Junius, Jason Keller, Stafford Kendall, Andy Kopplin, Dana
LaFonta, Debbie Lapeyrouse, Justin Lemoine, Tom Livesay, Paul
Lockett, Jill Martinez, Dee Mather, Al McDuff, Carrie Miller,
Debbie Mire, Todd Mitchell, Al McDuff, Danny McGlynn, Camm
Morton, Penny Murray, Dyke Nelson, Janie Oldfield, Mary
Olinde, Theresa Overby, Betsy Paille, Skipper Post, Tina Rance,
Davis Rhorer, Jim Richard, Erin Rolf, Kerry Ruiz, Kristen
Sanders, Samuel Sanders, John Schneider, Lisa Smith, Patricia
Smith, Kathleen Spencer, Bill Stark, Jeremy Tennant, Austin
VandeVate, Clark Vega, Brad Way, Bubba Willis, Erin Wood

1. Mr. Derrell Cohoon called the meeting to order.
2. Mr. Derrell Cohoon declared a quorum.
3. Mr. Chenevert moved to approve the agenda, Ms. Nichols seconded and the agenda was approved as amended.
4. Mr. Bensabat moved to approve the January 10, 2008 minutes, Mr. Chenevert seconded and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Rhorer thanked Bill Stark, Louisiana State Museum director, for hosting the Commission meeting. Mr. Rhorer recognized Mr. Andy Kopplin, former LRA Director, for his leadership during a critical time in our state.

5. Board Action

6a. Governmental Issues – Green Light Program – The Commission viewed, via power point, an aerial photograph indicating the location of proposed curb cuts and new mast arms; as well as a perspective of the Third and Florida Street intersection with the proposed improvements. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the Metropolitan Council elected to re-bid the project, which will take approximately three months. Part of the Green Light Program sets a percentage of the Green Light Funds for Streetscape amenities, beautification etc., the DDD has recommended incorporating brick crosswalks as intersections improvements within the proposed Arts & Entertainment District.

6b. Development Initiatives – Downtown Visitors’ Amenity Plan – The Commission viewed, via power point, a photograph of the downtown vehicular and trolley stop signs. Mr. Fluhr informed the Commission that the large vehicular signs and trolley stop signs are currently being installed downtown as well as signage on the parking garage at Third Street and Convention. Mr. Fluhr commended Covalent Logic, Washer Hill Lipscomb, Sasaki Associates, City of Baton Rouge and AGI for their work on this project. Neighborhood identity signs will be placed in Spanish Town and Beauregard Town, the city has committed to landscape improvements around the neighborhood signs. The DDD has secured a grant of \$200,000 for phase II of the project to continue work with neighborhood street name signs and in the Central Business District.

Arts & Entertainment District Update – The Commission viewed, via power point, an aerial photograph of the proposed Arts & Entertainment District. Each Commissioner received a copy of the draft ordinance and newspaper article. Mr. Cohoon informed the Commission that the committee has been reviewing the draft ordinance over the previous month. The first of a four-step process is to define the boundaries of the Arts & Entertainment District and corresponding components such as architectural recommendations, streetscape improvements, maintenance, etc. The committee has drafted a document that will be submitted to the Planning Commission at the end of February and to the Metropolitan Council in March. Mr. Cohoon commended everyone involved with this process. The three other components are as follows – (1) economic incentives to retain and recruit businesses in the Arts and Entertainment District – (2) Designation as a Cultural Products District – tax free zone on original art purchases – (3) policy component that addresses issues such as alcohol, trash, police presence etc.

Mr. Cohoon moved that the DDD Commission endorse the document creating the boundaries and definition of the Arts and Entertainment District, Mr. Norman Chenevert seconded and the document was unanimously approved as presented.

Cultural Products District – Ms. Gaye Hamilton informed the Commission that the Cultural Products District will offer tax incentives for investing in a Cultural District, such as tax exemption on original works of art purchased or sold in the Cultural Products District. The Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism is in the process of implementing the program and the applications should be ready May 2008.

Proposed Riverfront mixed-use development access and planning – The Commission viewed, via power point, an aerial photograph of proposed development. Each Commissioner received a copy of newspaper articles. Mr. Pete Clements informed the Commission that he is

proposing a mixed-use development on 36 acres north of Hollywood Casino Baton Rouge. Plans also include a railroad vehicular underpass. The following three initiatives are underway: (1) design and construction documents for the vehicular underpass is scheduled to be complete by July 2008. (2) zoning and (3) master plan of the development. Current plans include 950 residential units which include condominiums and apartments and 375,00 sq. ft. office and retail. Mr. Clements has received interest by several developers. Mr. Cohoon commended Mr. Clements for his commitment to downtown.

Grace & Hebert relocation – The Commission viewed, via power point, a photograph of the renovation rendering of the building. Mr. Jerry Hebert informed the Commission that Grace & Hebert Architects has purchased the 1895 Causey Building at 501 Government Street. They are in the process of renovating the building, keeping the integrity of the front façade. The firm will occupy the second floor and lease out the first floor. The renovation is scheduled to be complete by August 2008.

Ashby Hospitality – The Commission viewed, via power point, a photograph of the company's logo. Mr. Camm Morton informed the Commission that he has launched a Hotel Management Company, Ashby Hospitality and Tina Rance and Austin Vandevate with the Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center will join the team. The company will manage the Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center and work on earning a four star ratings.

Historic Spanish Town local designation – The Commission viewed, via power point, a photograph of the neighborhood signage. Mr. Cohoon requested that the Commission go on record supporting the application by the Spanish Town Civic Association with the Planning & Zoning Commission for Spanish Town to be designated as an historic preservation district. **Ms. Nichols moved that the DDD Commission endorse the designation of Spanish Town being a historic preservation district, Ms. Ausberry seconded and the motion was unanimously approved as presented.**

Downtown State Representation – Representative Pat Smith – Senator Yvonne Dorsey - The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of Rep. Pat Smith and Senator Yvonne Dorsey. Representative Pat Smith expressed her excitement to be the representative for the downtown area, and she looks forward to working with the DDD Commission on furthering downtown's redevelopment.

New Business – The Vault – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, photographs of the interior of the establishment logo. Ms. Chris Nichols informed the Commission that The Vault has opened in the old Thirsty Tiger location at 140 Main St. The upscale wine and martini bar also offers a private room for parties or meetings.

Cajun Carriages – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of the logo. Ms. Kim Hodgeson informed the Commission that her business provides two pedi-cabs for people who want to get from one location to another in the downtown area. The goal is to grow to approximately fifteen pedi-cabs and advertisement is available on the pedi-cabs. The drivers will have knowledge of about local history and will drive for tips.

City Dwellers Media Group, LLC – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of the logo. Mr. Ernest Junius informed the Commission that City Dwellers Media Group is an advertising and consulting firm located downtown. The firm offers outdoor advertising via tricycles equipped with mounted frames to display advertisements.

International Downtown Association – Each Commissioner received a copy of the resolution. Mr. Rhorer requested that the Commission support the resolution regarding downtown Baton Rouge as the host city for the 2011 International Downtown Association Spring Conference. The DDD Commission endorsed the resolution. The DDD will work with the Baton Rouge Convention & Visitors Bureau in completing the conference bid.

Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the brochure for the Walking tour of the Capital Park is complete and commended Ms. Nancy Broussard for her work on the brochure.

Events – St. James Episcopal Gumbo Lunch – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of the logo. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that St. James Episcopal's annual gumbo lunch is scheduled for Fridays beginning on February 8 through March 14.

The Worley Claims Expo – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of the logo. Mr. Herb Carver informed the Commission that the 2008 Worley Expo is scheduled for Feb. 20 – 23 at the River Center. Mr. Carver expressed his excitement to be in Baton Rouge and said the expo will attract approximately six hundred attendees.

North Blvd. Town Square – Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the Request For Qualifications for the North Blvd. Town Square would be advertised within the next two weeks. With a selection of a design team in March. Mr. Rhorer will keep the Commission apprised of the progress on this important project.

LRCE 5k Run – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, the flyer for the event. Each Commissioner received a copy of the press release for the event. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that The Louisiana Resource Center for Educators (LRCE) 5K run is scheduled for February 23 and will begin at 8:00 a.m. at Galvez Plaza. Proceeds will benefit LRCE's educational programs and services that support public, private, parochial and charter schoolteachers and home school families directly impacting the students of Louisiana.

Microsoft Across America Trucks – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, a photograph of the logo. Ms. Jill Green representing Urban Entrepreneur Partnership Gulf Coast located at 327 North Blvd., informed the Commission that firm offers coaching programs for Entrepreneurs. On Friday, February 29, 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. they will be hosting the Microsoft Across America Truck, technology showroom on wheels, as well as workshops and seminars on how the latest technology can improve your business performance.

Race for the Cure – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, the logo for the event. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the Race for the Cure is scheduled for

DDD Commission Mtg.
February 12, 2008
Pg. 5

Saturday, March 8 in downtown Baton Rouge. Registration begins at 7:00 a.m. with one mile fun run commencing at 8:00 a.m. and 5k at 9:00 a.m.

7. Ongoing – Plan Baton Rouge / Center for Planning Excellence – Ms. Rachel DiResto informed the Commission that she recently attended the 7th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth Conference in Washington, DC, nine local mayors attended the conference and Ms. DiResto expressed the importance of green initiatives in further developing downtowns across the nation.

BREADA – Mr. Derek Fitch informed the Commission that the Main Street Market and Red Stick Farmer’s Market is open every Saturday.

8. Correspondence – No information to report.

9. Subcommittee Update – No information to report.

10. New Business – Mr. Godfrey commended the city for their rapid clean up after the Spanish Town Mardi Gras Parade as well as downtown merchants for maintaining their storefronts. Mr. Paul Arrigo informed the Commission that Baton Rouge would be the starting point for the Fireball Run in September 2008. Ms. Theresa Overby informed the Commission that the Harley Davidson Hog Rally is scheduled for March 28-29 at the Baton Rouge River Center. The rally is expected to attract between 2,500 - 5,000 attendees.

Meeting adjourned.