

DDD Commission Meeting
May 8, 2018, 8:00 a.m.
The Lyceum Historic Meeting & Events Center, 124 Third Street

Attending: Eric Dexter, Scott Hensgens, Cheryl McCormick, Melanie Montanaro

Absent: Fran Gladden, Ric Kearny, Gordon LeBlanc

Others in Attendance: James Anderman, Joe Anthony, James Avault, Dakota Ball, Jay Barros, David Beard, Nick BeJeaux, Timothy Boone, Kevin Broussard, Sgt. Kyle Callihan, Gayle Carnahan, Maurice Casadaban, Bubba Cashio, Derrell Cohoon, Wendi Coates, Melanie Couvillion, Suzette Crocker, Remy Curry, Sandra Daire, Michael Day, Ed Doyle, Julie Doyle, Holly Duchmann, Liz Eure, Patrick Fenstermaker, Councilwoman Barbara Freiberg, Celeste Gill, Rannah Gray, Blaine Grimes, Haden Hammons, , Emily Jackson, Mary Johnson, Mary Joseph, Sadie Roberts Joseph, Sam Karlin, John Kaufman, Jessica Keasler, Jerry Kennnedey, Jack Koban, Steven Lumpkin, Brinkley Maginnis, Mary Jane Marcantel, Joe McFerrin, Brian McNabb, B. J. Miletello, Donnie Miller, Aaron Molluro, Ben Moran, Chris Nichols, Shawn Nolan, Mary Olinde, Michael Petty, Lluvia Peveto, Davis Rhorer, Whitney Sayal, Ryan Scardina, Darlene Shingleur, Tony Sibley, Casey Tate, Ben Taylor, James Taylor, Travis Thornton, Lauren L. Tompkins, Mary Treppendahl, Gabe Vicknair, Matt Vondenstein, Councilwoman Tara Wicker, Jami Williams

1. Mr. Scott Hensgens called the meeting to order.
2. Mr. Scott Hensgens declared a quorum.
3. Ms. Cheryl McCormick moved to approve the agenda, Mr. Rhorer requested the following be added to the agenda “637 St. Ferdinand” Mr. Eric Dexter seconded and the agenda was approved as amended.
4. Mrs. Melanie Montanaro moved to approve the April 10, 2018 minutes, Mr. Eric Dexter seconded and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Scott Hensgens thanked The Lyceum for hosting the meeting. Ms. Brinkley Maginnis, Director of Sales for The Lyceum Historic Meeting & Events Center welcomed everyone to the space. Ms. Maginnis encouraged anyone interested in the event space to contact her after the meeting.

5. Board Action – There was no board action.

6. Governmental Issues – Riverfront Gaming – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendering of potential improvements to the Belle of Baton Rouge Casino. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the city is watching the course of Senate Bill #316. The bill would allow landside gambling for riverboats. The Belle of Baton Rouge would utilize the Belle of Baton Rouge atrium for the casino area.

Utility Paint Ordinance – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of utility markings downtown. Each Commissioner received a copy of the draft ordinance. Mrs. Whitney Sayal briefed the Commission on the issues regarding the utility paint. The maintenance committee drafted an ordinance that requires utility companies use water based paint for marking utilities.

Mrs. Sayal requested that the DDD Commission review the draft ordinance and send any comments to the DDD office. Once approved by DDD Commission, it will be introduced to the Metropolitan Council.

Opportunity Zones – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the Opportunity zones boundary map. Mr. Gabe Vicknair briefed the Commission on the Opportunity Zones tax incentive program that if approved, will be available for downtown.

- The census tracts that make up downtown are now designated as opportunity zones.
- Opportunity zones were added to the tax code by the tax cuts and jobs act late last year.
- The zones were recommended by the state to the US treasury and have since been certified. These zones are economic development tools to spur economic development and job creation in distressed communities.
- The zones spur economic development by providing tax benefits to investors. Prior gains taxes can be deferred if reinvested in the opportunity zone and if the investment is held for at least 10 years.

For more information visit www.opportunitylouisiana.com/business-incentives/opportunity-zones

637 St. Ferdinand – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the building. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the proposed demolition of 637 St. Ferdinand is on the May 21, 2018 agenda for the Planning Commission. Mrs. Melanie Montanaro, resident of Beauregard Town, informed the Commission that Beauregard Town Civic Association (BTCA) is opposing the proposed demolition and requested that the DDD Commission support BTCA's position. Mr. Rhorer recommended reaching out to the buyer and requesting a deferral to the Planning Commission.

7. Update from Previous Board Meeting – There was no information to report.

8. Development Initiatives – Developments Underway – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of current projects. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the following projects:

- Courtyard Marriott – Scaffolding is coming down and opening is planned for mid-summer 2018.
- The Elias – Reviewed current construction photographs of the 25 residential units. Currently installing landscaping.
- Prince Apartments – Converting into condominiums
- Lofts @ 6C – Reviewed the current construction photographs of the 142 residential units.
- House on the Hill – Reviewed the current construction photographs of the 15 residential unit development in Beauregard Town.
- Downtown Library – Library is stable and the roads are open. In the process of completing the survey and analysis.

Downtown East – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image listing the current downtown east projects. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the following projects:

- Elysian II
- Electric Depot
- Forte & Tablada Office building
- Government St road diet and bike lanes
- Louisiana Ave Connector
- Hotel Lincoln renovation
- Passenger Rail Terminal
- Chef Celeste Catering headquarters
- BREC South 14th St Park renovation
- 19th St Hostel
- North Boulevard Overpass Lighting and Homeless Initiative
- Lincoln Theater historic renovation
- Private sector home renovations (Temple)
- 368 Media Company office at South 14th Street
- BREC's CMAQ Bike Path linking North BR to Spanish Town Road
- BREC's Sports Academy at Memorial Park

DDD 30th Anniversary – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photograph of the North Blvd. Town Square ribbon cutting ceremony and before and after photographs of North Blvd. Town Square (NBTS). Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the 2012 construction of NBTS that connects Third Street and the Raising Canes' River Center. The space has been a huge economic impact for the city with community events.

Pedestrian and Bike Master Plan – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of the riverfront. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the State in conjunction with BREC, BRAF and LA DOTD are initiating a Comprehensive Pedestrian and Bike Master Plan. The public meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 8, 5:00 p.m. at BREC's Perkins Road Community Park.

City Hall Plaza – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendering of the proposed improvements and photographs of current construction. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the ribbon cutting for City Hall Plaza, now officially open. The public green space is a major component of PBR II and great location for activities and events.

Riverfront Plaza – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendering of the proposed improvements. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that bids are under review.

Town Square Phase II – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a rendered image of the proposed improvements. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the improvements are designed for pedestrians the City-Parish is in the process of finalizing the construction contract.

Downtown Maintenance Committee – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of Downtown Duplicating employees. Mrs. Whitney Sayal informed the Commission that decals will be distributed to winners of the Downtown Distinction Awards. The final meeting was held Thursday, April 12, 2018. The DDD will continue to work on any upcoming maintenance issues.

LED Small Business Excellence Award – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the staff of Downtown Healthcare and Wellness. Ms. Liz Eure informed the Commission that Downtown Healthcare and Wellness was the recipient of the LED Small Business Excellence Award. Downtown Healthcare and Wellness was the only small business recognized in Baton Rouge. Ms. Eure expressed her gratitude to be a recipient of the award and she thanked everyone for their support.

New Business – 368 – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the interior of the building. Mr. Jay Barros briefed the Commission on the marketing company that has located at 212 S. 14th Street in Downtown East. Everyone was encouraged to visit the web site at <http://threesixtyeight.com/>

Chef Celeste Gill – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the exterior of the building. Chef Celeste informed the Commission that she purchased the 1,700 sq. ft. building at 520 Spain Street and will offer the space for lease for events. Chef Celeste is also planning to open a kitchen and culinary school at 1120 Government Street.

Church Under the Tree – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the web site. Mr. Ed Doyle, servant leader briefed the Commission on the services that are held under the oak tree at Repentance Park every Sunday at 5:00 p.m. Mr. Doyle invited everyone to attend a Sunday service at 5:00 p.m.

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.

- Corked 5K – May 12
- Music and Mudbugs – May 12
- Baton Rouge Soul Food Festival – May 19 - 20
- GymFit Fest – May 26
- For Our Fallen Hump – May 26
- CANN 5K / Happy's 5K – June 2
- Oyster Festival – June 30
- Preserve Louisiana/Old Governor's Mansion
- Manship Theatre / LSU MOA
- Capitol Park Museum
- Old State Capitol
- River Center Events
- LASM
- USS Kidd

10. 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.

11. Ongoing Projects – CPEX – The Commission viewed, via Power Point, an image of the CPEX logo. Mr. Rhorer reminded everyone of the PBR 'Power of Vision' Gala scheduled for Saturday, May 12, 2018.

BREADA – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the BREADA logo. Mrs. Emily Jackson encouraged everyone to visit the Main Street Market.

Downtown Business Association (DBA) – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the DBA logo. Mrs. Lauren Lambert-Tompkins, briefed the Commission on the Gym Fit Fest scheduled for Saturday, May 26, 2018 at Galvez Plaza. Anyone interested in serving on the DBA board is encouraged to contact her.

12. **Correspondence** – There was no information to report.

13. **Public Comment** – Mr. Steven Lumpkin, SJB Group, informed the Commission that City Parish has hired SJB Group to conduct an ADA Transition Plan. A public meeting will be scheduled within the next month to provide information and obtain community input regarding their concerns or recommendations.

Ms. Mary Treppendahl, First United Methodist Church, briefed the Commission on the after school program “HYPE”. The program offers tutoring and enrichment programs for after school students. Anyone interested in volunteering for the program is encouraged to contact Ms. Treppendahl or visit the web site at www.firstmethodist.org.

Ms. Sadie Roberts Joseph encouraged everyone to attend the Juneteenth event scheduled for June 16 at the Odell S. Williams Now and Then African Museum located at 538 South Blvd.

Meeting Adjourned: