

DDD Commission Meeting  
March 12, 2019, 8:00 a.m.  
St. James Episcopal, 208 N. 4th Street, Large Parlor

Attending: Eric Dexter, Fran Gladden, Scott Hensgens, Ric Kearny, Cheryl McCormick, Melanie Montanaro

Absent: Gordon LeBlanc

Others in Attendance: Gary Anderson, Taylor Anderson, James Avault, Shervisa Battley, David Beard, Robyn Belle, Gary Black, Timothy Boone, Dawn Braud, Shelly Bullion, Kevin Broussard, Shelby Bullion, Travis Campbell, Eric Carnegie, Bubba Cashio, Derrell Cohoon, Melanie Couvillion, Suzette Crocker, Les Crooks, Lauren Crump, Sandra Daire, Holly Duchmann, Chris Duncan, Daniel Espinoza, Joey Furr, Trevor Gauthreaux, Blaine Grimes, Anita Hebert, Tyler Herrmann, Victoria Herrmann, Jamie Hernandez, Wade Himel, Sam Karlin, Emily Jackson, Katelyn Johnson, Jerry Jones, John Kaufman, Emily Kay, John Kelton, Theresa Langlois, Jeannie Magdefrau, Michelle Mahaffey, Mary Jane Marcantel, Ryan McKnight, B. J. Miletello, Aaron Mollura, Mikeila Morgan, Grant Murphy, James Newkirk, Mary Olinde, Ana Otamendi, Serena Pandos, Katie Pryor, Lauren Ray, Cokie Reed, Davis Rhorer, Jim Rigot, Whitney Sayal, Daniel Stetson, Shervisa Sullivan, Casey Tate, Pauline Tavera, Bryan Taylor, Courtney Taylor, Alex Thibadeaux, Lauren Tompkins, Clark Vega, Gabe Vicknair, Brad Watts, Wes Wilkerson, Cindy Wonderful

1. Mr. Scott Hensgens called the meeting to order.
2. Mr. Scott Hensgens declared a quorum.
3. Mrs. Fran Gladden moved to approve the agenda, Mr. Ric Kearny seconded and the agenda was approved.
4. Mr. Eric Dexter moved to approve the February 12, 2019 minutes, Mr. Ric Kearny seconded and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Scott Hensgens thanked St. James for hosting the meeting. Rev. Christopher Duncan expressed his excitement to be part of downtown development. Rev. Duncan welcomed everyone and invited them to the 68<sup>th</sup> St. James Gumbo lunches offered Friday's during lent. Ms. Ray, Head of School, welcomed everyone and briefed them on the grand opening of the St. James Early Childhood Development Center.

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

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

**7. Update from Previous Board Meeting – Short Term Rentals** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a street map image indicating the locations of downtown Airbnb's. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that there are approximately 30 Airbnb's downtown and the DDD has been fielding inquiries that come through the office. Ms. McCormick informed the commission that Spanish Town representatives have met with Councilwomen Wicker to express their concerns and also spoke with Airbnb representatives. Ms. McCormick is hopeful for a compromise or resolution and looks forward to working with interested parties.

**8. Development Initiatives – Developments Underway** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of current projects. Mr. Rhorer briefed the Commission on the following projects:

- **Elysian II** – Reviewed the current construction photographs of the 100 residential unit development on Spanish Town Rd. 60% market rate / 40% affordable units.
- **Licensing Board of Contractors** – Reviewed the current construction photographs of the development under construction on the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> & North Streets.
- **Associated General Contractors** – The building at the corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and Main Streets is also undergoing a major renovation as part of the block redevelopment.
- **Spencer Calahan** – Reviewed the current construction photographs of the development under construction on the corner of St. Louis and South Blvd.

**Downtown Library Update** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the library. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the Metropolitan Council approved an additional \$2.74 million to repair the building. Mr. Bubba Cashio, DPW, informed the Commission that a preconstruction meeting will be scheduled this week. Construction is expected to be complete by October 30, 2019.

**Parking Meters Public Meeting Recap** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the public meeting and an image of the proposed parking layout. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that the City Parish released a Request for Proposals for the management of the 2 City Parish parking garages, B1 & B2 parking and surface parking lots. Bids will be open April 23, 2019.

The City is also in the process of finalizing the RFP for the purchase of 800 new parking meters downtown.

In addition, Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Councilman Trae Welch has an item on the Metropolitan Council agenda to discuss downtown hotel parking and valet.

**Downtown Public Transportation** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the new CATS and LSU First Transit route. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that CATS has altered several routes to be more efficient.

Mr. Rhorer also briefed the commission on the LSU Tiger Trails Transit System. LSU First Transit operates 2 routes – 1<sup>st</sup> Route – on the hour from downtown to LSU for free – every hour between 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Night B Route – Thursday – Saturday operates from 6:00 p.m. until 3:00a.m.

DDD will distribute an email with the updated information.

**EBR Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan Public Meeting** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image flyer. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Mrs. Whitney Sayal informed the Commission that the following public meetings are scheduled to review the draft plan:

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March 20, – 5:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m., – Scotlandville Library

March 21, – 5:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m., – Baton Rouge Garden Club

**Downtown East Update** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the Hotel Lincoln and the exterior of Red Stick Social. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper articles. Mr. Rhorer informed the Commission that Hotel Lincoln project goes before the Planning Commission for rezoning on April 18, 2019. Red Stick Social is expected to open late March 2019 or early April 2019. Mr. Bubba Cashio informed the Commission that bids will be open on April 21, 2019, for renovations on the Council on Aging building located at 1701 Main Street.

**Gotcha Bike Share** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the Gotcha bicycle and an aerial indicating the proposed bike station locations. Each Commissioner received a copy of the newspaper article. Ms. Cokie Reid, Gotcha Community Manager, informed the Commission that Gotcha bike share will launch May 8, 2019. There will be 500 new bikes and 50 stations installed between downtown, LSU and Southern University. Ms. Reid reviewed the list of sponsors and will keep the Commission apprised of the project.

**Riverfront Improvements** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, images of proposed improvements to the pedestrian staircase, retaining wall and a photograph of kiosk. Mr. Gabe Vicknair informed the Commission that the DDD has partnered with Visit Baton Rouge to design and install the step graphics. The DDD also continues to work with DPW on improvements to the visitor kiosk on the riverfront that will include led lighting, updated maps, paint, and illuminated display cases. A contract is being processed for the artist, Marc Fresh to paint the mural on the 395' retaining wall on the riverfront between Laurel & Main Streets.

**Riverfront Plaza** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of current improvements. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that construction continues on Riverfront Plaza with meadow and landscape plantings, fountain repairs, and plaza pressure washing. The DDD is currently working on the wayfinding signage for the riverfront.

**Town Square Phase II** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, photographs of current construction. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that construction near River Road and North Blvd. has been stopped until the river level drops. Construction continues on the remainder of the project.

**Downtown Greenway** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the rendering for East Boulevard improvements. Mr. Vicknair informed the Commission that City of Baton Rouge has accepted the low bid from T. L. Hawk, LLC for \$1,470,961 and a construction kick off meeting will be scheduled once the Purchase Order is released. Mr. Rhorer recognized Mrs. Courtney Taylor, Visit Baton Rouge Director of Destination Services, Mrs. Taylor is in charge of the riverboats that dock in downtown Baton Rouge.

**Downtown Maintenance** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, images of the February 16<sup>th</sup> Operation Fresh Start clean-up activities. Mrs. Whitney Sayal commended everyone that was involved with the clean-up efforts. There will be more clean ups scheduled throughout the year. The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the March Distinction Award Recipient.

Mrs. Sayal informed the Commission that the March 2019 winner of the Downtown Distinction award in the bar / lounge category is Bengal Tap Room. Mr. Brad Watts, Bengal Tap Room, expressed his appreciation for the recognition and encouraged everyone to visit one of his establishments.

**LCASLA Awards** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, a photograph of the Downtown Greenway and City Hall Plaza. Mr. Grant Murphy, Reich & Associates, informed the Commission that the following 2 awards were received by ASLA:

- American Society of Landscape Architects, Louisiana Chapter, honored the Downtown Greenway with the President's Award of Excellence
- City Hall Plaza was awarded the Honor Award

**9. New Business** – There was no information to report.

Mr. Rhorer recognized Mr. Jerry Jones, newly appointed Executive Director of North Baton Rouge Economic Development District.

**10. 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.

- Belle of Baton Rouge Community Health Fair – March 21
- Providence Corporate Cup – March 23
- Holi Festival – March 24
- American Heart Walk – March 30
- BRSO – April 4
- Live After Five – April 5, 12, 26 & May 3, 10, 17
- Ebb & Flow – April 6 & 7
- Third Street Songwriter Festival – April 6
- Sunday in the Park – April 7, 14, 28 & May 5, 12, 19
- 4Forty Fitness Matherne's Grocery Store Tour – April 8
- Preserve Louisiana/Old Governor's Mansion
- Manship Theatre
- LSU MOA
- Capitol Park Museum
- Old State Capitol
- River Center Events
- LASM
- USS Kidd

**11. Ongoing Projects – BREADA** – The Commission viewed, via PowerPoint, an image of the logo. Ms. Theresa Langlois encouraged anyone that would like to participate in the Fresh from the Market cooking demonstrations to contact her after the meeting. She also invited everyone to attend the Saturday morning Red Stick Farmer's Market.

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

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- Beers & Business Cards, a free networking event – March 12, 2019
- Live After Five – April 5, 2019 Kickoff

Mrs. Lambert encouraged anyone who is not a DBA member to contact her for more information.

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

**13. Public Comment** – Ms. Cheryl McCormick commended the City Parish for their cleanup efforts after the Spanish Town parade.

**Meeting Adjourned:**