

MINUTES
LDDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
City Commission Conference Room
June 5, 2008
8:00 a.m.

PRESENT: David Hallock, Janet Tucker, Jerry Herring, Joe Mawhinney, Chris McLaughlin, Ford Heacock, Anne Furr, Becky Abel, Julie Townsend, Justin Wilson, Lynn Schindler, Tamara Sakagawa, George Lindsey, Frances McCranie, Glenn Higgins

ABSENT: Jim Verplanck

CALL TO ORDER: David Hallock called the meeting to order.

MINUTES: Jerry Herring moved to accept the Minutes of the May 1, 2008 regular LDDA Board of Directors Meeting. Motion seconded by Janet Tucker. Motion passed 5-0.

DESIGN REVIEW – 92 Lake Wire Drive, Lake Wire Center (Formerly Holland & Knight Building): George Lindsey brought a rendering of the renovation design of the building. There will be no net increase in impervious areas, so no new retention ponds are required. The developer is not asking for any changes on the site. At this point, colors and materials are the only things that require approval. There is blue-tinted glass and framing. The blue tint will replace all windows in the entire building. There will be a three-story foyer in the front. The signage is not designed yet. The rear of the building will have the same features as the front, but less ornate while carrying the same theme. The back entry will be enhanced and doubled. The current covered parking is coming down. A lot of vegetation has been removed, including some large trees. The general design around Lake Wire is going a bit more contemporary, so this building will fit that trend. They are moving forward in their timeline as fast as possible. Lynn Schindler, Historic Preservation Board, had no objections to the plan from a historic point of view, but has heard complaints about the removal of the trees. The project already has one committed tenant, a mediation firm.

Chris McLaughlin arrived.

Ford asked George if there was any difficulty in getting permits. George said that there was not a sense of urgency from the DRT process. For a developer, time is money. He said there seemed to be multiple layers (departments) that could defer to other authorities to minimize the number of hoops to jump through. Joe asked what happens to the balconies on the second floor and George said that they will be removed and become part of the foyer. **Jerry Herring moved approval of the project. Motion seconded by Janet Tucker. Motion passed 5-0. Ford Heacock claimed a conflict of interest and abstained.**

For the approval form, Anne asked George for information in writing to describe the exterior materials.

COMMITTEES

Design Review Approval since May 1, 2008 Meeting:

126 West Main Street, The Pit, Screened-in enclosure for BBQ cooking – The screened enclosure was approved with the provision that a block wall surround the enclosure so it will not be visible.

205 S. Florida Avenue, MIDFLORIDA Federal Credit Union, sign – Approved adding the words “drive thru” under the existing “Open 7-7” on a wall sign on the south side of the building.

Downtown Farmers Curb Market – Janet Tucker stated that the Farmers Curb Market has added three new organic vendors. There are about 17 vendors each week, and we usually pick up some extra ones during the summer due to other nearby markets being closed for the summer. Our market will be closed during the month of August.

Retail Recruitment Committee – Ford shared the recent activity of the Committee. Most recently, a very productive meeting was held with local commercial real estate brokers eliciting their comments about the best way to get new retail into Downtown. They expressed frustration at the difficulty of moving through the approval process in Downtown - that it was not for rookies. They felt that help was not so much needed with recruiting but with having an advocate to help make deals happen, especially when “deal-killers” like backflow preventer upgrades happen. They also felt that Downtown vacancy rates are not out of line with vacancy rates elsewhere.

Ford continued by saying that the Committee is on the cusp of making three initiatives happen – the branding, the recruiter/facilitator staff person, and the research and strategy. Julie and Anne have been assigned the task of coming up with a job description for the recruiter/advocate. We are releasing an RFP to solicit proposals for analysis and economic strategies. As for the branding, we have a scope, a timeline, and a proposed schedule to begin July 14 with Kiku Obato. They will have conducted a survey by then and expect to begin meeting with stakeholder groups that week. We have already allocated the dollars for this project, but need the Board’s approval of the Agreement.

Ford moved approval of the proposal. Discussion: David said that the approval should allow for further edits as necessary. Joe thought that there was a lot of talk about indemnification of the firm, but there is no reference to additional named insured (LDDA). He also thought that the pass through charges seem heavy-handed. Chris reiterated his objection that \$90,000 seemed like a lot of money and that he felt that it would prohibit implementation of this or other planned projects and he said he thought we should have chosen a local firm. Jerry said that he was also feeling conflicted about the expenditure. He said he was more interested in getting help on the ground. Ford said that the issue is really driven by quality. Kiku Obato is a top shelf company. Our efforts are to try to position ourselves to compete with Hyde Park, Winter Park, etc. It is a critical juncture in time that Lakeland’s Downtown should develop a sense of place and brand Downtown Lakeland as a destination. He is not sure if the sequence of proposed projects is important, but this is a part of the Retail Recruitment Committee’s efforts that matured first. Jerry suggested a 60 day delay in approving the agreement with Kiku Obato. David said the proposal, as well as the other proposals, had been well-considered. Joe said that branding goes beyond just a logo and a tagline by making Lakeland have a sense of place. He used the example that during the height of the recent CSX issue in the legislature, the rest of the state was saying “Who is Lakeland?” There are those who think that Lakeland is mostly rural or just a tiny town. Because of its placement in the I-4 corridor, the branding of Lakeland is more important than ever. Because the recommendation for the approval came from committee, the motion does not need a second. **Motion passed 5-1.**

LDDA GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: No report.

POLK THEATRE: Frances McCranie was present to request that at least four, not more than six banners for the Polk Theatre be placed on South Florida Avenue. She believes that the banners would help visibility. The sidewalk is narrow. They have talked about having the banners face away from the street to minimize potential truck damage. The performing arts series is September through March, and she would like some generic banners to be hung from April to August. Janet was concerned about who has the authority to grant permission. The LDDA would facilitate the request through Community Development and the Historic Preservation Board, City Commission and the FDOT. Design Review would review the design. The bottom of the banner has to be at least seven feet off the sidewalk. **Jerry Herring moved annual**

approval of the banners as requested with LDDA paying for the hardware and installation. Motion seconded by Ford Heacock. Motion passed 6-0.

DLP REPORT: Executive Director Julie Townsend distributed membership packets that highlight opportunities for shared member marketing. She stated that new maps will be printed in time for the annual luncheon on October 1st at 11:30 a.m. Janet said the theme for the luncheon / auction will be “Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow”. Julie had information that the former Imperial Art Gallery on South Kentucky Avenue has been leased to a scrapbooking store. The store will sell supplies and have classes.

CITY COMMISSIONER REPORT: In the absence of Jim Verplanck, Glenn Higgins shared that the biggest news from City Commission is the announcement of 5% cuts in the budgets of all departments. To the public, the most visible cuts will be to the Parks & Recreation Department with less mowing, plantings and some parks being closed one day per week.

CHAIRMAN’S REPORT: David Hallock had no report.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

C-6 and C-7 Uses – At the Planning & Zoning Board Meeting on May 20th, the request for changes to the uses for C-6 & C-7 was on the agenda. Justin Wilson did an excellent job of giving the Board the background for the changes. Anne spoke on behalf of the LDDA in support of the changes. There were no concerns expressed. The request will come before the P & Z Board for final approval June 17, 2008.

Peterson Parking Garage – MIDFLORIDA Federal Credit Union has offered to lease the entire garage (75 spaces on the roof) for the life of the agreement. The City Attorney is working on the agreement between the City and MIDFLORIDA. Rick Lilyquist and Anne gave Kevin Jones and Steve Mosley, with MIDFLORIDA, a tour of the facility. They were impressed with the short walk to the garage, the security and the cleanliness. Kevin offered that MIDFLORIDA pay for an additional door on the south side of the garage. Rick and Anne are working with Terri Lee Earl, facility manager, to seek approval of this request.

There is now another party interested in leasing space also. The City’s lease is for seven years, but there is discussion of a five year term with tenants.

CSX Update – City Staff, Seth McKeel, Paula Dockery and Dennis Ross have been meeting at separate times to determine where we go from this point and what we want as a city. Jerry stated that now is the time to stop getting attention about how bad trains are in Downtown, but to let the work to plan the next steps continue. We do not need the negative rhetoric. Janet thought that next steps would be to promote commuter rail coast to coast. Chris said that we want to continue to get press in other areas of the state in order to rally statewide support.

NEW BUSINESS:

Financial Disclosure Form – The forms should have been received by all Board Members this week. The deadline to file is July 2. There is a fine \$25 per day, up to \$1,500 for failure to file in a timely manner.

New Taxi Cab Service – Cruzado Transport, Inc. is out of Kissimmee, Florida and has been certified to provide transportation services in Lakeland.

Gosh Express will open in July, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner six days per week (Monday – Saturday).

E-mail Survey – Jerry said that he recently had an e-mail survey that seemed easy to respond to. He thought that a few times a year the LDDA should conduct similar short, easy to respond to surveys. We should create a list for such an e-mail distribution.

ILC Site Visit - Janet arranged for a tour of the proposed CSX ILC in Winter Haven with Ron Morrow, local CSX representative. Anne, Jim Studiale, Tony Delgado and Janet went on the tour that was conducted from the center of the site. Winter Haven will keep

its water treatment plant in the area. All the runoff from the settling ponds will no longer be open ditches, but piped to the Peace River.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 AM.

The next LDDA Board Meeting will be Thursday, June 19, 2008 at 8 a.m. in the City Commission Conference Room.