

MINUTES
LDDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
City Commission Conference Room
Thursday, November 4, 2004
8:45 AM

PRESENT: Jim Verplanck, Chris McLaughlin, Kevin Jones, Joe Mawhinney, Anne Furr, Becky Abel, Rachel Pleasant, Doug Thomas, Tamara Sakagawa, Glenn Higgins, Ford Heacock, Brenda Paul, Shirley Whitney, LeRoy Bradley, Don Scott, Randy Mathews

ABSENT: Jerry Herring, Greg Mugg, Janet Tucker

MINUTES: Joe Mawhinney moved to accept the Minutes of the October 7, 2004 regular Board Meeting. Motion seconded by Jim Verplanck. Motion passed 4-0.

DLP REQUEST: New DLP President Brenda Paul stated that the DLP had investigated other means of marketing downtown besides billboards. She presented a proposal from Bright House Networks for approximately \$6,000 which would be 240 30-second spots in a 17-week campaign beginning November 22. The DLP requested \$7,000 from the LDDA for the Bright House package with the remainder of the \$7k being used for miscellaneous print advertisements. Money is currently budgeted for the DLP - \$10,000.00 for the 1-to-3 matching grant, \$2,000 for a parking map, and \$15,000 for billboards. Brenda asked that the \$7,000 be granted from the money originally earmarked for billboards. (They will come back to the LDDA at a later date with a detailed request for the remaining budgeted \$8,000.) The DLP wants to go ahead with the television campaign so that it will benefit from holiday advertising. **Jim Verplanck moved and Joe Mawhinney seconded the motion to approve the allocation of \$7,000 to DLP for the television advertising and print campaign. Motion passed 4-0.**

LeRoy has received bids for the printing of the parking map. The lowest bid came in at \$2,014.56 for 10,000 maps. \$2,000 had been budgeted. **Joe Mawhinney moved and Chris McLaughlin seconded that the overage be absorbed by other DLP allotments. Motion passed 4-0.**

TWISTEE TREAT REQUEST: Don Scott, owner of Twistee Treat on South Florida Avenue presented a request for a 10'-12' electrically-lit palm tree to be placed on his property. The idea is to draw attention to the restaurant and attract more customers after 5:00 p.m. Mr. Scott passed around a brochure describing the fiber optic palm tree. Anne shared some photographs of the building from both the north approach and from the south. Currently, Mr. Scott has a live tree that has white holiday lights on it, set back from S. Florida Avenue. He also has a podocarpus plant trimmed in topiary style. The electric palm would go where the podocarpus is now. Jim Verplanck stated that he thought the tree bordered on needing to be treated as a sign would be treated, meaning that it would require a set back. Some Board Members felt that approval of the fiber optic palm tree would set a precedent. Others felt that restaurants need all the help they can get to encourage evening business. **Joe Mawhinney moved and Chris McLaughlin seconded the motion to approve the 10'-12' electrically lit palm tree for the Twistee Treat location. Motion passed 3-1.**

EXPANSION OF LDDA: The proposed expansion area to the Northwest would begin at the current LDDA boundary southwest of Lake Wire at Lake Wire Drive, proceed south to Dakota, west to West Lemon Street at Lake Beulah, proceed around the north side of Lake Beulah to West Main Street, proceed north to the overpass at the CSX railroad crossing, proceed east and north along the south side of Phase II of the InTown Bypass to West Magnolia Street, proceed east to New York Avenue which abuts the current LDDA boundary northeast of Lake Wire. A second potential expansion area would be the Garden District. That potential expansion area might run along East Walnut Street from Lake Morton on the south to South Ingraham Avenue on the west, north to the InTown Bypass and proceed along the bypass up to the current LDDA boundary at the north end of South Lake Avenue, proceed south to East Orange Street, proceed west to South Iowa, proceed south to Lake Morton where it joins East Walnut Street.

There was a question as to whether this is the right time to expand, and if so, does it make more sense to expand in both areas at one time? The expansion process takes about two years, which includes public meetings, a referendum, a blight study and redevelopment plan, and the eventual approval of the CRA

boundary by the City Commission. It is the same amount of work to expand in two areas as one. \$50,000 was budgeted for Planning and Development and could be used to finance the plan. LDDA will put together an Ad Hoc committee to discuss the idea with the Community Development Department.

Jim Verplanck moved that an ad hoc committee be formed to come up with a time frame and an expansion proposal. Motion seconded by Joe Mawhinney. Motion passed 4-0.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Janet Tucker, Chairman, has asked Kevin Jones to serve as the Chairman of the Nominating Committee for officers in 2005. Jim Verplanck and Greg Mugg will serve as committee members. The Committee will present a slate of officers in December to be voted on at the Annual Meeting in January.

CITY COMMISSION REPORT: Jim Verplanck reported that the first reading for a conditional use for Batteries Plus was on the City Commission agenda November 1. Planning & Zoning recommended approval with requirements for parking for those vehicles needing a battery. The public hearing and second reading will be November 15. Batteries Plus has been requested to have a representative present at the City Commission meeting to present the request.

On October 18, the proposal to require a conditional use for residential development in downtown was withdrawn.

Also on October 18, it was passed by the City Commission that restaurants that serve alcohol do not have to get a conditional use (for that purpose) in downtown. The only conditional use required now for entities is those only serving alcohol.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

2005 LDDA Retreat – Anne asked the Board to check their calendars for the date of January 27, 2005 (4th Thursday in January) for the retreat. Becky will send out an e-mail to confirm. The Board decided by consensus that it would like Larry Ross to facilitate the retreat.

Expansion Area Update – On August 5, 2004, the Board authorized Anne to enter into a contract with Jock Willers, representative of Falls Adventure Inc, owner of 411 N. Vermont Avenue to purchase the property for \$12,600. Anne would like to use the same attorney for the closing and title search that MidTown has used. LDDA will cover that cost.

Mr. Willers has said that he would agree to sell the property at 410 N. Vermont for \$68,000. **Jim Verplanck moved to acquire that property for \$68,000. The current tenant will be vacated prior to closing. The LDDA will cover the cost for closing and title search. Motion passed 4-0.**

Batteries Plus Conditional Use Application – The Planning & Zoning Board recommended approval of the conditional use application requiring vehicles that need a battery replaced park in a designated parking space. It is the policy of the company that the customer removes the battery and Batteries Plus will put the new battery into the vehicle. The first reading for the conditional use went before the City Commission on November 1. The second reading will be November 15, when a representative from Batteries Plus will be present. Anne has contacted the owner of the business to let him know that the pylon sign was approved by the Design Review Committee pending approval of the conditional use by the City Commission.

Wayfinding Design Consultant – Anne has been working to break the proposal into phases and negotiate whether they will downsize their proposal to design the needed signage for downtown. The proposal should be in the \$40,000 range. If we do not reach an agreement in two weeks, we will talk with the #2 firm on the short list – Guidance Pathways out of Tallahassee.

RFP for Downtown Marketing/PR – Anne sought direction from the Board concerning how to frame the RFP for marketing and PR. Shouldn't the "branding" of downtown be a part of new signage the wayfinding consultant will design? Some Board members stated that the original intent was to market the 19 unique restaurants. Others felt that would be misleading (since some restaurants are open only for lunch or are very small) and may short-change other retail in downtown. Quality of life was discussed and whether that should be the focus with restaurants being a sub-category. It was the consensus of those present that restaurants would be the focus.

Truth in Millage Certification – LDDA has received the acceptance of certification and a copy of the letter was included in agenda packets.

NEW BUSINESS:

Travel Writer – Anne will meet with Herb Miller, a travel writer, on Monday, November 8 to discuss the downtown.

Signage – Downtown Retail Group – Anne has met with Jim Studiale (Community Development), Lanny Walker (Chief Building Inspector) and Marni Johnson (business owner) concerning signage in downtown for the holidays. The idea is to clarify for shoppers on Massachusetts and Florida Avenues where the downtown is located. Temporary stake signs are not allowed by code. It was suggested that banners – similar to the ones on the Lemon Street Promenade – might be used instead. The banners could be placed at the intersections of Oak, Bay, Pine, Main and Lemon Streets on light posts off of both Massachusetts and Florida Avenues. The banners would have the swan logo, an arrow and the text “shop downtown”. There would also be a bow to make the banners look holiday-festive. Cost would be \$3,000.00 or less for a total of 20 banners and the necessary hardware. **Jim Verplanck moved and Joe Mawhinney seconded the approval of the purchase of banners and hardware for the 10 intersections not to exceed \$3,000 from 9770-Restricted Expense (Streetscape). Motion passed 4-0.**

Award for Brooke Pottery – Brooke Pottery has been selected as a 2004 Top 100 Retailer of American Crafts.

Classic Auto Festival Thanks – Ford Heacock thanked the Board for its support of the Lake Mirror Classic Auto Festival.

New Arrival – Congratulations to Chris McLaughlin on the birth of his son.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

The next LDDA Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 18, 2004 in the City Commission Conference Room, 3rd Floor, City Hall, at 8 a.m.