

MINUTES
LDDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
DOWNTOWN CRA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
City Commission Conference Room
Thursday, October 4, 2007
8:00 AM

PRESENT: Ford Heacock, Jerry Herring, David Hallock, Jim Verplanck, Chris McLaughlin, Anne Furr, Becky Abel, Heather Huebner, Ellen Simms, Julie Townsend, Justin Wilson, LeRoy Bradley, John Hutto

ABSENT: Janet Tucker, Joe Mawhinney

MINUTES: Jerry Herring moved approval of the Minutes of the September 20, 2007 regular LDDA Board of Directors Meeting. Motion seconded by David Hallock. Motion passed 4-0.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Anne Furr presented two issues concerning changes in the budget.

1. Last year's budget allowed \$10,000 for the George Harris Memorial Arch, of which \$5,615 was spent. We need to carryover the balance remaining from last year. **Jerry Herring moved and Jim Verplanck seconded the motion to move \$4,384.57 from 6950-Unappropriated Surplus to 8920.19 for the George Harris Memorial Arch expenses. Motion passed 4-0.**

Chris McLaughlin arrived.

2. Electrical outlets can be installed on six lampposts from Kentucky to Tennessee Avenues on Lemon Street for \$3,500. We will have the ability to turn the outlets off. This will allow consistent and controllable electricity for events in this area. **David Hallock moved and Chris McLaughlin seconded the motion to move \$3,500 from 1160-Restricted Streetscape to 9770-Restricted Streetscape Expense to install the outlets on six lampposts. Motion passed 5-0.**

GUIDING PRINCIPLES: Tamara Sakagawa presented the background by which the conversations could begin concerning the LDDA's need to create guiding principles as a framework for accomplishing the vision of Downtown. Jerry Herring and Chris McLaughlin felt that the proposed plan was too light on reinvestment, i.e., the Tax Increment benefit for renovations and new construction in Downtown. Tamara explained that while Tax Increment was a component of the guiding principles, it is important to have in place a direction that the Board wants to go. That direction provides the basis for discussions as proposals come to the LDDA and other officials in the City for the Downtown. The guiding principles would not rule out exceptions to the principles should the LDDA decide to make them. After some discussion, the Board decided that they wanted to discuss TIF before deciding on guiding principles. They want to know what other CRAs are doing with TIF and what they have as criteria. Anne will prepare a report on how much TIF has been used in the past and separate the amounts for LDDA projects and City Directed projects. There will be a presentation by Heather Huebner at a future meeting about how TIF has been used in other communities.

DLP REPORT: New President, John Hutto, thanked the Board for their support in the past and in the present. He pledged to strengthen relationships that have been built. He also thanked those who attended the recent luncheon and auction. He stated that the DLP Board had budgeted to change Julie Townsend's position to an Executive Director. She received many questions about why the DLP luncheon was held out of Downtown. It had to do with food choices and the attempt to "stretch" Downtown. An evaluation of the event is coming up soon and the whole event will be reviewed. Julie shared that October's First Friday would have artists on the sidewalks. The focus of First Friday in November will be a Historic Walking Tour. The DLP continues to do neighborhood outreach and they are working on upcoming holiday events.

CITY COMMISSION REPORT: Jim Verplanck noted that the contract for the final elements of Lake Mirror Community Park had been approved. The entire project will be completed in about 12 months. Naming rights are still available for the swan sculpture that will be at the junction of Massachusetts Avenue and the entrance to the Park. The new Seward Johnson exhibit will arrive in the Downtown in January 2008.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Ford Heacock commented that the LDDA's vision was derailed by another Board – Planning & Zoning – concerning Tom Elliott's bar proposal that they rejected. As Ford urged Mr. Elliott to appeal the rejection, he indicated that he would walk away from his project. Justin Wilson said that he had urged Mr. Elliott to appeal and that he had said it was "on his to-do list".

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Audit Services Engagement Letter – LDDA received the engagement letter from Baylis & Company for their audit services for our FY 2007. Fees would be no more than \$7000 to \$7,500 for the audit and \$500 to \$1,000 for the fee to prepare the annual report. This is in line with our budget. **Jim Verplanck moved and David Hallock seconded the motion to approve audit services. Motion passed 5-0.**

Mediation Report – Mediation was not successful with Mrs. Beall and Mr. Whitesides. A letter was sent to each with an offer. They have 30 days to respond. They are responsible for any fees for their consultants that are incurred between the date of the offer and the jury trial if they choose to reject the offers. Mr. Whitesides is supposed to be out of his house by Monday, October 8. The property will be videoed (interior and exterior) and boarded up. Mrs. Beall still wants to have her house moved. She must be out by 1/1/08. Anne was complimentary of the mediator in the process.

The structure at 503 N. Iowa has been demolished. 424 N. Vermont Avenue and 306 N. Gilmore Avenue will have bids let for demolition this week.

Presentation October 4 – Downtown Lakeland - Anne will make a PowerPoint presentation to one of the Democratic Clubs that meets at the Presbyterian Homes on Lake Hunter.

Leadership Lakeland City Day – City Day is October 11th and Tamara and Anne will present information on the CRAs to the group. They will go on a tour of our urban residential project north of Bay Street.

NEW BUSINESS:

CSX Update – Anne reported that the meeting with Secretary Pelham was a good one. The biggest concern is the 318 acres, Phase One, in Winter Haven. If DCA is only going to look at Phase One, then everything is scaled back, making it easy to sail through on that level. It is hoped that Ron Weaver's key points will deal with the legal stability of the DRI. The letter promised from CSX to the City offering to cover the costs of quiet zones and pedestrian walkways hasn't been received. Anne will attend the TPO meeting and the CSX Pre-DRI meeting. Anne was requested to write a letter asking the CFRPC if a study of alternate routes for freight and a plan for commuter rail can be required / included in the DRI.

The Meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

The next LDDA Board Meeting will be Thursday, October 18, 2007 in the City Commission Conference Room, 3rd floor, City Hall.