

MINUTES
LDDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
DOWNTOWN CRA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
City Commission Conference Room
Thursday, November 1, 2007
8:00 AM

PRESENT: Ford Heacock, Jerry Herring, David Hallock, Jim Verplanck, Janet Tucker, Joe Mawhinney, Anne Furr, Becky Abel, Heather Huebner, Julie Townsend, Justin Wilson, LeRoy Bradley, Glenn Higgins, Steve Bissonnette, Tamara Sakagawa

ABSENT: Chris McLaughlin.

MINUTES: Janet Tucker moved approval of the Minutes of the October 18, 2007 regular LDDA Board of Directors Meeting. There was an error in the Treasurer's Report. With the correction, the approval of the Minutes was seconded by Jerry Herring. Motion passed 6-0. The corrected Minutes will be sent to all Board Members and changed for the record.

DOWNTOWN CRA ADVISORY BOARD:

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING – At the request of the LDDA Board, Heather Huebner presented her study of similar age and size CRAs and how they handle tax increment. The CRAs were in Gainesville, Hollywood and Bradenton. She discussed each CRA's goal or purpose for their program, the amount of the grants, the calculation methods and the reimbursement schedules. Gainesville has a transformational incentive program. Bradenton uses a building and site enhancement grant program. Hollywood has a property improvement program.

It was reiterated that having guidelines gives developers and deal-makers the opportunity to know what the Downtown is looking for in new development and redevelopment. Flexibility to accommodate projects of merit can be inherent in the program.

The last page of Heather's handout has a matrix and comparison between Lakeland and the other CRAs. LDDA has always guessed at and pledged the increment. Gainesville said projects must meet half of the priorities listed by the CRA.

Jerry Herring suggested that it would be important as we analyze Lakeland's position that small projects be included along with big projects. The current criteria require an increase in value by more than 50%.

By consensus, the Board agreed to extend the next LDDA Board Meeting to 10:30 a.m. Business can be handled in the first 1/2 hour then discussion of the TIF options will follow. Anne will get a list of options and a copy of Heather's PowerPoint presentation to everyone in advance of that meeting.

COMMITTEES:

Retail/Recruitment Committee – David Hallock, Chairman, reported that a Realtor/Property Manager Breakfast has been scheduled for Friday, November 16 at The Terrace Hotel's Lake Mirror Room. Invitations will go out on Friday. The purpose is to share with those who are leasing/selling property the goals of LDDA and the Downtown. It is hoped that they will be able to communicate with prospective clients about parking, branding, etc. At the breakfast, about 30 guests are expected. Heacock Insurance will sponsor the breakfast and The Terrace Hotel has waived the room fee. The LDDA Board is invited.

Downtown Farmers Curb Market – The Ledger's video of the *Dr. Scissorhands* event was shown. Janet Tucker, Chairman, reported that the Market is doing well and continues to slowly grow. The Fall Art Festival is scheduled for November 17th. Informational fliers about the Fall Art Festival were included in agenda packets.

Container Gardens – Janet Tucker, Chairman, reported that last Friday, Anne, Bill Koen and others surveyed the container gardens in Downtown. There have been some complaints about the maintenance and the

choice of plants. They talked about types of plants, locations and the theft of some plants. The P & R employees are working to improve the situation.

DLP REPORT: Julie Townsend reported that First Friday is coming up on November 2nd with an open house at Arts on the Park. Explorations V will host a “build your own scarecrow” workshop where kids can be left during the event. November 3 is the first Downtown historic walking tour. The DLP received a tourism grant in the amount of \$5,000 for the map/brochure from Polk County for the next time the maps are printed. The Holiday Walkabout is scheduled for December 4. Nick’s Mix at Janet Tucker’s home is scheduled for December 5. The Christmas Parade is December 6th and the Holiday Art Fest is December 14th.

Kathleen Munson clarified the Chamber’s stand on the CSX issue for the DLP at the recent board meeting. The CSX Task Force meets again on November 16th. Ford Heacock mentioned that the Manatee Port Authority and the Tampa Port Authority are feeding the ILC also. A Lakeland representative will sit on the Tampa Bay Transportation Committee. Julie asked whether the LDDA supports the activities of the DLP in response to the CSX project. The LDDA, by consensus, supports the activities of the DLP as an independent organization voicing its concern of the CSX project with the ILC.

CITY COMMISSION REPORT: Jim Verplanck, City Commissioner, just returned from a trip to China which included 11 people from Lakeland and two from Orlando. He shared his experience in China with the Board and stated that there are lots of business opportunities for Lakeland businesses there.

CHAIRMAN’S REPORT: Ford Heacock received a copy of a letter sent to the Lakeland City Commission from Harris Estroff who is concerned about the proposed bar at 215 E. Main Street. Harris presented his concerns at the DLP meeting.

STATUS OF RESTAURANTS: Ford asked Anne if she could tell about the status of various restaurants that have been planning Downtown establishments. Jerry Herring stated that the deal with Bill Watts on the lower level of The Lofts is dead. As for Gosh!, there have been conflicting rumors of the proposed location. Anne will call Dr. Vo to find out the latest plan. It is Anne’s understanding that Arabella’s still plans a Downtown location.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

Sponsors for Lemon Street Sculptures – Anne, Bill Tinsley and Pam Page have raised \$24,000 for the outdoor sculptures. They have talked with Todd Behrens at the Polk Museum of Art about moving the project forward. They are talking about the possibility of focusing on one or two single artists to display in October 2008 through September 2009. The artists who created the sculptures currently on display on Lemon Street will be asked to extend the time their art can stay in place on Lemon Street until September 2008. In January, the J. Seward Johnson sculptures will return to Lakeland, thanks to dollars from the Community Foundation of Greater Lakeland. This year, two will be in Munn Park, and Bill Tinsley has suggested that two other Johnson sculptures might be included on Lemon Street. The Parks and Recreation Department has the money to put the sculptures in place. The money from the ten sponsors will be for the artists, not for a street party this year.

Lake Mirror Lamp Posts – Anne shared that Bill Tinsley will come before the LDDA on December 6th to update the Board on the Lake Mirror Project. The Parks & Recreation Department is responsible for the overall maintenance at Lake Mirror Park, working with other City departments. On the December 6, 2007 LDDA meeting, Bill will present an update on the Lake Mirror project.

FY 2007 Audit – Auditors from Baylis were present in the office on Monday and Tuesday this week.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Homelessness Issue: Jerry Herring reminded the Board about LPD’s trespass warning form that can be signed so that police may enter private property to remove unauthorized people. He suggested that LDDA provide signs that can be posted on businesses so unauthorized people know that police can remove them from the property.

NEW BUSINESS:

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- 1. Realtor/Property Manager's Breakfast, Friday, November 16, 2007. 7:30-9 a.m., Terrace Hotel, Lake Mirror Room**
- 2. CSX Task Force, Friday, November 16, 2007, 2-4 p.m., City Commission Chambers**
- 3. Fall Art Festival, Saturday, November 17, 2007, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., Downtown Farmers Curb Market**

The Meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

The next LDDA Board Meeting will be Thursday, November 15, 2007 in the City Commission Conference Room, 3rd floor, City Hall and will be extended to 10:30 a.m. for work on Tax Increment Financing.