

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD
December 1, 2010 – 5:30 PM - Station Square Condominiums

Members Present:	David Allbritton (Until 7:00 p.m.)	Chairman
	Dennis Bosi	Treasurer
	Paris Morfopoulos	Member
	Thomas Wright	Member
	Tony Starova	Member Elect
	Andrew Winkler (Until 7:25 p.m.)	Member Elect
	Sean Belanger	Member Elect
Also Present:	John Doran	Ex-Officio/Councilmember
	Paul Gibson	Ex-Officio/Councilmember
	Geri Campos Lopez	Director of Economic Development and Housing
	Anne Fogarty France	Board Administrator

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 5:41 p.m. at Station Square Condominiums.

Chairman Allbritton stated that he requested the new members of the board to attend this meeting so that they can have an idea of what the board does.

1. Message from our Host – Lois Byrnside, Smith & Associates

Ms. Fogarty-France stated that Ms. Lois Byrnside is an associate from Smith & Associates and is the realtor for Station Square Condominiums. She is currently with some prospective buyers and will come to the meeting later and asked if the board would take this item out of order.

2. Citizen Comments – There were no citizen comments.

3. Approve the Minutes from the November 3, 2010 Regular Monthly Meeting

Member Bosi moved to approve the minutes from the November 3, 2010 meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

4. Adopt October 2010 Financial Statement for Filing

Member Wright moved to adopt the October 2010 Financial Statement for filing. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

5. Adjourn Regular Meeting

Chairman Allbritton adjourned the December 1st, 2010 regular meeting of the Clearwater Downtown Development Board at 5:44 p.m.

PLANNING SESSION

The Chairman called the planning session to order at 5:44p.m.

1. Board Member Responsibilities – Elise Winters, Board Attorney

Ms. Winters stated that the Downtown Development Board (DDB) represents a special taxing district that is unique and cannot be reinstated or duplicated if dissolved. In order to serve on the board, members have to have a direct tie to downtown. They must either have their business, place of employment or real property in downtown. They must remain in downtown the entire time they serve on the board or they will have to resign. The board can be dissolved by property owners in the district and its existence is dependent on property owner's willingness to pay additional taxes.

Ms. Winters stated that the DDB was created in 1970 and converted to a city ordinance in 1977. The purpose of the board is to revitalize downtown Clearwater. All members are elected public officials who represent the entire downtown district and have to act in good faith. She also stated that the board members are here at a good time because they have a good working relationship.

Ms. Winters stated that the Sunshine Law is very important and violating it is a criminal offense. The DDB must maintain open government because the best way to ensure that government truly represents the people it serves is to keep the government open and accessible to those people. The decision making process is as important as the decision.

The requirements of the Sunshine Law are that meetings of boards or commissions must be open to the public, reasonable notice must be given and minutes must be taken for public record.

Ms. Winters stated that if two or more members are talking about the downtown Clearwater district then it is considered a meeting and has to be open to the public. If they do not make this conversation public then it is a direct violation of the Sunshine Law. She advised the board that it is better not to discuss anything regarding downtown Clearwater outside of the regular monthly meetings. Even the perception of discussion about the downtown Clearwater district can get the board members in trouble.

Ms. Winters stated that there can be no discussion about downtown Clearwater in e-mails as well and that any e-mails that are sent to a board member regarding downtown Clearwater must be forwarded to Ms. Fogarty France to be shared with other board members for discussion at the next meeting.

Member Morfopoulos asked if someone sends an e-mail asking a question about downtown Clearwater does that have to be passed along to Ms. Fogarty France as well. Ms. Winters

responded that if anything is written about downtown Clearwater it needs to be forwarded to Ms. Fogarty France.

Member Morfopoulos asked if a store neighbor talks to him about downtown does he need to inform Ms. Fogarty France of that as well to which Ms. Winters responded yes. She also stated that being transparent is good so that no one can accuse a board member of hiding anything.

Member Wright asked if members have to pass on e-mail to Ms. Fogarty France if they serve on another organization as well. Ms. Winters stated that if the e-mail is about downtown Clearwater then they will have to forward it to Ms. Fogarty France. She also stated that if there are two DDB members on that board and the meeting is about downtown Clearwater then Ms. Fogarty France needs to be notified so that she can advertise those meetings as well.

Ms. Fogarty France stated that in the past when she has known that there were going to be two DDB members in attendance at the Downtown Clearwater Merchants Association (DCMA) meeting she has advertised them. She also stated that she needs at least two weeks' notice for publishing the meeting. Florida Statutes require at least ten days notice in the paper for an upcoming meeting.

Member Bosi asked if he and Member Elect Starova are attending a meeting and not participating do they still have to forward all the information from that meeting to Ms. Fogarty France to which Ms. Winters responded no.

Member Bosi asked if Member Elect Starova is allowed to discuss downtown Clearwater since he is not sworn in yet. Ms. Winters stated that she is not sure so she will have to check on that and get back to him.

Member Bosi asked if all meetings are open to the public to which Ms. Winters responded yes.

Member Elect Starova asked what should be done if a DDB member comes to another member's business. Ms. Winters stated that the DDB members can talk about anything other than downtown Clearwater.

Member Wright stated that he is on the Clearwater Downtown Partnership (CDP) committee and every e-mail he receives if on downtown Clearwater. He asked if all those e-mails should be forwarded to Ms. Fogarty France as well to which Ms. Winters responded yes.

Chairman Allbritton stated that Ms. Fogarty France needs to be on the CDP mailing list.

Member Elect Starova asked if there is a business meeting being held at his restaurant regarding downtown Clearwater should he inform Ms. Fogarty France about what was being discussed to which Ms. Winters responded yes. She stated that it is better to be cautious than to be in violation of the Sunshine Law. She also stated that the board members can inform Ms. Fogarty France of what is being said about downtown Clearwater but Ms. Fogarty France cannot discuss what someone else is saying about downtown to the members.

Member Elect Winkler asked if they need to forward advertisements from the chamber to Ms. Fogarty France about events taking place in downtown Clearwater. Ms. Winters stated that they need to forward the advertisements to Ms. Fogarty France since the DDB funds some of those events.

Chairman Allbritton stated that he will make sure that Ms. Fogarty France gets on the CDP's e-mail list so that board members will not have to worry about forwarding those e-mails to her.

Member Elect Belanger asked if anyone has been prosecuted on this law to which Ms. Winters responded yes.

Member Wright asked if conversation they have with Ms. Winters is privileged. Ms. Winters replied that conversation between her and the board members is privileged if there is concern of possible violation of the Sunshine Law.

Ms. Winters stated that the resources are listed at the back of the handout given to all board members if they need any more information.

Member Wright stated that he did not realize they had to do a financial disclosure. Ms. Winters stated that all board members have to fill out a financial disclosure form and asked if the form came from Chairman Allbritton. Ms. Fogarty France stated that the financial disclosure form comes from the Florida Commission on Ethics.

Member Bosi stated that the form asks if a member is profiting from any decisions that are made on the board. Ms. Winters stated that the DDB should not accept gifts or money from entities or people downtown. They should not misuse their position on the board for personal gain.

Member Elect Starova asked if he can ask for help to fill out the financial disclosure form. Ms. Winters responded that she doubts he would need help since the form that the DDB has to fill up is the lowest level of disclosure and is simple. She also stated that the financial disclosure is a full and public disclosure.

Ms. Winters stated that if a member has a voting conflict he needs to announce it to the board before the voting takes place and has to present it in writing shortly thereafter. The member can still participate in the discussion.

2. Year in Review – Geri Campos Lopez, Director, Economic Development & Housing and Anne Fogarty France, DDB Administrator

Ms. Lopez welcomed the new members to the board and informed them that they will get detailed information in their one-on-one orientation regarding the board and what they do. They will try to schedule the orientation sometime this month. She also told them that since this meeting was an overview of the big picture they were requested to attend.

Ms. Lopez stated that they have the year in review discussion once a year. There is an interlocal agreement between the DDB and the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). As part of this agreement the DDB pays the CRA for the administration of the board. Ms. Lopez is the Director of Economic Development and assists as part of the CRA and Ms. Fogarty France is the administrator.

Ms. Lopez stated that the downtown Clearwater strategy focus has been on infrastructure improvements, encouraging new residential development, and creating a destination for people to come visit. The East Avenue Pinellas trail extension has been implemented and should be completed in December 2010. The total cost of the project is \$798,000. The southbound lane is going to be for the trail only and the northbound lane is going to be for vehicles only. She also stated that a twentieth anniversary celebration for the trail will be held on December 4th, 2010 and asked Ms. Fogarty France where the celebration will be held. Ms. Fogarty-France stated that it will be held at Taylor Park in Largo.

Ms. Lopez stated that construction of the boat slips was completed in September 2010 and they had their grand opening. The DDB played an instrumental part in making this possible. One of the first studies that were done for the boat slips back in 2002 was the Seagrass study and was funded by the DDB. As part of the interlocal agreement, the DDB's commitment is to pay \$50,000 a year for the construction and the operation of the boat slips.

Ms. Lopez stated that they are beginning construction of phase two of the streetscape which will be from Myrtle Avenue to Missouri Avenue. The council is awarding the contract this week so the official date will be tomorrow, December 2nd, 2010. Construction will start on Missouri Avenue and the first phase of this construction will last approximately six months and will be from Missouri Avenue to Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue. The second phase of this construction will take place the next six months and will be from Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue to Myrtle Avenue. Construction will begin in January 2011 and a public meeting will be held to inform people of the type of changes that will be taking place.

Member Wright asked if they had a map showing the construction area because he is not familiar with Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue. Ms. Lopez stated that Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue is the midpoint around 1100 Cleveland Street where the building is under construction. The first phase of the construction will take place from Missouri Avenue where Crum Staffing is located to Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue.

Ms. Lopez stated that the city acquired Capitol Theatre in January 2009. Additional funding for programming has just been approved for Capitol Theatre by the CRA this week so the number of shows playing at the theatre will increase.

Ms. Lopez stated that there are one hundred fifty three condominiums at Water's Edge. They are in the process of sales and fifty of them have already been contracted. They have five thousand square feet of restaurant and five thousand square feet of retail space. There are one hundred twenty six condominiums at Station Square, thirty of which have already been contracted. They have ten thousand square feet of space for restaurant and retail.

Ms. Fogarty France stated that Cleveland Street District runs from Osceola Avenue on the

west to Myrtle Avenue on the east and Drew Street on the north to Pierce Street on the south. She also stated that they are continuing with retail and restaurant recruitment. Although it has been on hold since Courtney Orr has been on maternity leave they are still receiving inquiries about the grant and are providing grant document information to these inquiries.

Ms. Fogarty France stated that the DDB purchased directory kiosks that are located on the Cleveland Street streetscape. One kiosk is in front of Station Square Condominiums and the other is in front of the Chiang Mai Thai Restaurant. The DDB also funds the installation of different maps and information that are updated on a continual basis. This year the CRA purchased a new boat slip kiosk that has already been installed and the DDB is taking care of the map and information installation for this kiosk as well. Two additional signs have been purchased and are being fabricated by the CRA for the Pinellas Trail. One sign will be near the Post Office and the other will be placed at Turner Street and East Avenue.

Member Bosi stated that he was under the impression that the DDB would be taking care of the signs. Ms. Fogarty France stated that the DDB was approached but the CRA stepped in and took over funding for the two directory signs in the amount of \$19,000.

Member Bosi asked if that information came up in any meeting. Ms. Fogarty France stated that the information on the CRA funding the signs did not come up in any of the meetings.

Ms. Fogarty France stated that communications are still being maintained. Communication for the Streetscene newsletter is being done on a quarterly basis and the monthly Cleveland Street Update is being sent out to a database of one thousand nine hundred people.

Ms. Fogarty France stated that the Sculpture360 project is being funded by the DDB and is in season three. New sculptures are introduced every July and will replace the previous year's sculptures. Chairman Allbritton and Ms. Fogarty France have been on the selection committee for the past two years. She also stated that the DDB has funded the patriotic theme banners that will be put up again from May to July 2011.

Ms. Fogarty France stated that the DDB has sponsored some significant events including Jazz Holiday Festival, Jazz 'N Art Walk, Farmer's Market, Blast Friday formerly known as Fourth Fridays, the DDB Wreath Decorating Contest, the Sea Blues Festival, and the 5th Annual Pet Festival. The Fun 'N Sun Festival and Clearwater Celebrates America Festival were funded last year but this year the board had to make the hard decision of not funding these two events. Additionally, the board sponsored new events such as the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Day, the Wine and Book Fair, the Poetry and Art Festival, Clearwater Cultural Week, Operation Five Star and the Powerboat National Race.

Ms. Fogarty France stated that the DDB funded a sidewalk café grant in the amount of \$793. She submitted another request for funding to Mr. Rod Irwin today for Chiang Mai Thai Restaurant for their sidewalk café furniture. Under the Façade improvement program the CRA funded a small façade improvement in the amount of \$2,720. They are receiving many inquiries regarding the Retail and Restaurant grant. The CRA has provided funding for Tony's Pizzeria and Ristorante and Peter Gillham's Nutrition Center in the amount of \$50,000

each. The grant was for inside improvements that will stay with the building.

Ms. Fogarty France stated that as of this year the DDB have a new radio show on WTAN. The show broadcasts on AM 1340 and airs on Mondays at 9:00 a.m. She informed the newly elected members that once they have been on the board a while they will be asked to host some of the shows. She also stated that they are asking downtown merchants to participate in the show as well.

Ms. Fogarty France stated that the new Jolley Trolley route that connects downtown Clearwater, Dunedin, Palm Harbor and Tarpon Springs was funded by the DDB this coming year. Holiday lighting on buildings and trees are funded by the DDB. The Miracle on Cleveland Street event will be held this Friday, December 3rd, from 5:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. and a tree lighting ceremony will take place at 7:30 p.m.

Ms. Fogarty France stated that the Promotion Committee has merged with the Business Visitation Committee. They coordinated the 5th Annual Pet Festival and have a date for next year's pet festival. They also coordinated the Jaws screening at the Capitol Theatre which was a huge success and the inaugural Book & Wine Festival. They also help to distribute promotional material to all the merchants downtown.

Ms. Fogarty France stated that the DDB Business Assistance Committee has merged with the Promotion Committee and they are going to be looking for a member of the DDB to sit in as a co-chair for the committee. There are currently four people on the committee that are merchant liaisons who go out and talk to the merchants and receive feedback from them. They forward these inquiries and concerns to Ms. Fogarty France who then tries to get answers for them. They also distribute promotional material and assisted getting the participating merchants for the validation program for the parking.

3. Cleveland Street District Big Picture – Rod Irwin, CRA Executive Director

Mr. Rod Irwin stated that the CRA was created in 1969 by the state legislature by the Community Redevelopment Act. The reason for this organization was the recognition by the state back in the 1960s that some of the cities in the state were beginning to have a mature and aging downtown. They were having economic problems that were being seen across the country in areas with suburban malls among other things. There were a whole series of very specific issues that faced downtown in trying to accomplish rejuvenation and redevelopment that required finances beyond what was available. Some of these issues were small parcel ownerships, absentee ownerships, assembly of parcels, and transportation issues. Thirty years ago there were department stores, banks, and car dealers in this area but they left as suburbanization and malls took place. He also stated that Ms. Lopez and her staff have been extraordinary in working with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to get money to clean up and rid the area of hazardous materials.

Mr. Irwin stated that the CRA tries to deal with these larger issues on a downtown wide basis and works with the DDB on retail and the downtown merchants. They have recognized that the old concept for downtown is not going to come back again. In order to stabilize the area

and make it healthy and vibrant they have got to create a new downtown which is going to be a long, difficult and costly process. They had to see what will attract people to downtown Clearwater in today's economy. They spent a lot of time looking at that through the retail analysis and the façade studies that the DDB was actively involved in. They found out that restaurants and entertainment is what will attract people to downtown Clearwater. The ability to put on more shows at Capitol Theatre is going to be an immense driver in our downtown.

Mr. Irwin stated that the CRA approved additional funding for the Capitol Theatre. The Capitol Theatre has been putting on thirty six events a year but with the new funding, they will be able to put on one hundred shows a year. Showing films will be part of the proposed shows and for the first time they will be able to accommodate private groups. Rejuvenating downtown Clearwater is a long term commitment and it is going to require a partnership over a period of years.

Mr. Irwin stated that the downtown has some challenges that are unique to this region. One of the challenges that they face is transportation because there is no ready access to downtown Clearwater. People can get to St. Petersburg and Tampa quickly via the interstate but they have to find alternate routes to get to downtown Clearwater. One of the CRA's goals is to work on some of the regional initiatives and offer transit that will connect the beach more quickly to allow for people to move easily back and forth in downtown.

Mr. Irwin stated that the second thing the CRA is trying to accomplish is to generate housing. He feels that they need one to two thousand residential units close to downtown. They have two new buildings in downtown and another one is currently being built. They had another building at Prospect Lake which would have added two hundred fifty more rental units but it did not go through because of the downturn in the economy. They are hoping that as soon as the economy recovers they will be able to get a project in this location.

Mr. Irwin stated that they are also looking to do retail and restaurant assistance. They have storefronts that are hard to turn into restaurants because there is no kitchen or equipment and it is a big investment to turn a storefront to a restaurant. So the CRA recently approved grants to help open new restaurants. They have already provided funding for Tony's Pizza, Peter Gillham's Nutrition Center and Casanova. Downtown has come a long way from what it used to be five years ago. When the economy recovers they will see a lot of momentum moving forward.

Mr. Irwin stated that the CRA is helping the DDB in the marketing and the grants. The CRA has a little more flexibility so they can help businesses with relocation within the area. They are getting ready to roll out a major website for Cleveland Street District and are going to be embedding video for Blast Fridays on this website. They are going to have the ability to feature retailers and residential buildings on that website. The website has gotten a lot of positive pre-release press. Even hotels are waiting to advertise on the website.

Mr. Irwin stated that they are going to have a new promotional and tourism emphasis coming out of the Economic Development Department. They have hired a public relations firm from New York and they are going to be doing a website and will link these two websites so that

when someone clicks on the Clearwater website to look at tourism they will have a link for the Cleveland Street District website. They hope that this will drive more customers to Cleveland Street. The amount of traffic that the tourism website gets will really help business on the downtown website as well.

Mr. Irwin stated that Ms. Lopez and he sit down and talks about the budget to make sure that the CRA is not duplicating what the DDB is doing. The relationship between the DDB and the CRA has immensely improved and they are both on the same page as to what they are trying to accomplish for downtown Clearwater.

Mr. Irwin stated that downtown Clearwater is an entertainment and restaurant district and Cleveland Street District is meant to focus on that so it behooves everyone to promote the Cleveland Street District brand. When they were trying to come up with a name for downtown they conducted consumer testing focus groups. They had one focus group that was only in Clearwater and another group that was only in Pinellas County and both groups said that they should not use the word downtown but everyone said it was ok to use Cleveland Street. The word downtown does not always get a positive reaction and that is why they came up with the Cleveland Street District brand. To reinforce that, the CRA is going to incorporate into its grant agreement a line stating that if the potential business receives a grant from the CRA they have to agree to acknowledge the Cleveland Street District in their advertising. The CRA feels that they need to solidify this especially with the new website going live soon.

Member Elect Belanger asked how the initiatives for the Capitol Theatre or the boat slips get accomplished. He stated that he commends the CRA and the DDB for their work and the progress they have made despite the economy. Mr. Irwin stated that Member Elect Belanger's business is one of the CRA's relocation successes. They are focusing on trying to get the office buildings filled up. Daytime workers are also part of the equation. We cannot just concentrate on the residential aspect of downtown. We know we have to bring people to downtown during the day which is hard because of the lack of parking and mass transit. It is harder for workers to get to downtown than to get off at US 19 to go to an Office Park. He also stated that they are in the middle of a city wide economic development strategic plan effort. One of the things that they have looked at intensely over the past ten years is downtown and the beach but as they went through their budget discussions they realized that they are going to have to expand their economic base if they are going to stabilize municipal services. They have hired a firm from Austin and they are holding focus groups and doing a lot of analysis. They are going to bring back some stimulating ideas to the CRA on how they can look at the city in a different way and help create more jobs. Hopefully this will help them in their recruitment of new businesses.

Member Elect Belanger stated that he wanted to know how big things get done and how the CRA and the DDB work together to accomplish these things. Mr. Irwin stated that Capitol Theatre was an initiative that a lot of people had talked about and asked what can be done with it. This project was approved by the City Council in cooperation with Ruth Eckerd Hall. A proposal was put together and brought to the council three years ago to see if they could jointly buy the theatre because it was on the market and they were afraid that this historic resource would be lost. It is part of the redevelopment strategy. The council stepped up and

acquired the property. Ruth Eckerd Hall has a commitment to raise additional funds that will go towards the renovation of the building and for an endowment to operate the building.

Mr. Irwin stated that as far as the boat slips are concerned, there was a marina component back in the year 2000 but it failed for lot of reasons. What came out of it was that there was more support for the downtown marina than anything else at that time. So the CRA got together to find out how to fund the project and has put \$1,000,000 into this project. The city has done most of the funding for the boat slips. They get their primary funding from the boaters. The Mayor and the council approached the DDB for help and informed them that the marina meets a need for boating that was well identified and that they get a lot of transient boaters that stay for three to five days and have disposable income. The DDB agreed to help fund the boat slip project.

Chairman Allbritton stated that the biggest thing since he has been on board is that everyone has a common goal and he has seen this with the formation of the Clearwater Downtown Partnership (CDP) and the Merchant's Association working with the CRA, DDB and the council.

Member Elect Belanger asked what the CDP was. Chairman Allbritton stated that the CDP is the Clearwater Downtown Partnership, a business group of people that are concerned about downtown. They have a common purpose of supporting downtown Clearwater. The organization is almost like the combination of the DDB and the Regional Chamber and they can get things done faster than the DDB. Member Wright stated that the CDP are the ones that came up with the 4th Friday and Miracle on Cleveland Street events. The CDP now has a different focus are in the process of studying projects all for the betterment of downtown.

Mr. Irwin stated the difference between the DDB and the CRA and the CDP is that the CRA and the DDB both have dedicated revenue sources.

Member Elect Belanger asked what the lease occupancy of Cleveland Street District was to which Ms. Lopez responded approximately fifty percent.

Member Elect Belanger stated that the lease occupancy seems to have gotten better in the last couple of years. Ms. Lopez responded that the retail occupancy has stayed at fifty percent but the office occupancy has gone down and is now approximately seventy percent.

Member Elect Starova stated that there was a Social Security office that brought two hundred to three hundred people to downtown every day. Mr. Irwin stated that downtown Clearwater is going to take a hit with the loss of County Planning and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) offices who are moving a few blocks away. They are vacating two floors of the Bank of America building. Ms. Lopez stated that it takes many components to make downtown successful.

Chairman Allbritton stated that he had to leave and requested that Member Bosi close the meeting for him.

4. The Year Ahead – Geri Campos Lopez

Ms. Lopez stated that the DDB aligns all their projects with the CRA and helping with events should still be a major focus. The budget discussions in May and June 2010 were difficult because the DDB's revenues were down so they had to make some really tough decisions. Moving forward, the DDB should continue offering incentives to potential businesses. It is important for the board members to interact with businesses as much as they can to get feedback so that they can work on improvements.

Ms. Lopez stated that the DDB has had a lot of success this year with WTAN and the Business Visitation Committee. They will continue marketing the Cleveland Street District brand and will put that as one of the requirements for sponsorship.

Ms. Lopez stated that the Cleveland Street District website is going to be launched in the next month or two. The key component is to make sure that businesses have a presence on the website and this is going to be really important. With the economy down, they are still trying to recruit retailers to open shop in the Cleveland Street District so establishing marketing presence is really important.

Mr. Irwin stated that the biggest problem they face in downtown is the retail property owners and their lack of commitment to the process of improving downtown Clearwater. If they do not have the property owners supporting them they will not be able to accomplish anything. The CRA felt that if they could find at least one property owner to back them up then they can make some progress. They finally talked to Kevin Burke who represented the 400 block of Cleveland Street and at first he was not interested. They informed him that nothing is going to happen short term and that he had to give longer leases. He finally came around and realized that a longer lease was the better strategy and he ended up closing two deals as a result of the change. As representatives of downtown, the board members should try and make headway with some of the other property owners by making them see the long term benefits of making improvements to their property and how it will help them get better tenants, more stabilized cash flow and in the long run, better rents. This will help downtown Clearwater be more prosperous but it is tough to convince property owners of that. He also stated that the board might have better luck as a group in getting some discussions going with the property owners.

Member Elect Starova asked if they bring all property owners in downtown Clearwater to the table and ask them if they want downtown to succeed, they will all say yes. He also stated that he has been in his new location for one month now and since then he has doubled his revenue plus he also has a better landlord. Many people have come to his restaurant for the first time thinking it was new because they did not know of his old location.

Mr. Irwin stated that thanks to the additional funding there will be more productions at Capitol Theatre which will bring more people to downtown. Thirty six out of fifty two performances were completely sold out and the remaining sixteen performances were substantially sold out.

Member Elect Starova stated that there will be one hundred shows in Capitol Theatre which will bring approximately forty-five thousand people to downtown Clearwater in one year. He

is contracting with Ruth Eckerd Hall to offer tickets to his pizzeria for some of the shows. He experimented with this last year and sold thirty five tickets for his restaurant. He suggested that they make other business owners aware of this so that they might be able to take advantage of this opportunity to increase their profits.

Mr. Irwin stated that it is critical to use leverage of the Ruth Eckerd Hall website because they have a large following and now that they have segregated out Capitol Theatre they are going to have the ability to cross reference websites when the new website rolls out. They are going to have a lot of analytics on the website so that they can find out what improvements they need to make. Some strategic marketing will be done after the website is implemented as well.

Member Elect Belanger asked if Ruth Eckerd Hall is responsible for the façade to which Mr. Irwin responded that the city owns it at this point.

Member Elect Belanger stated that he was in Palo Alto recently and it is a great place to have a business. The theater there was retro and everything looked like it belonged in the 1960's. The entire theater played old classic movies. Mr. Irwin stated that they are going to play old classic movies at Capitol Theatre as well.

Member Elect Belanger stated that there is nothing better than the volume of people you can get to come to events like that. When the right people are encouraged to come downtown it will be a success story.

Member Elect Starova asked if there was any way for new businesses to get help from the DDB for legal advice. Member Wright stated that this is one of the initiatives that the CDP is looking into. They are looking at the process that business owners have to go through to get their business started. They are at the very early stages of discussion so he does not have any more information. Mr. Irwin stated that University of South Florida (USF) provides business assistance. The CRA requires businesses to provide a business plan when applying for their grant. If they do not have a business plan and have no idea of what they are going to do then how is the business going to survive. Member Elect Starova stated that he was referring to cases where businesses go straight to the landlord instead of the CRA. Ms. Fogarty France stated that they suggest that businesses do their due diligence.

Member Elect Belanger asked if the empty properties are for sale in downtown Clearwater to which Mr. Irwin responded no. Ms. Lopez stated that the property owners have very unrealistic expectations of what they can accomplish with their properties. Instead of spending money to bring in higher attractive businesses, they do not make any changes to their properties and bring in mediocre businesses to get by with the hope that eventually higher performing businesses would want to lease their properties. Ms. Lopez stated that she would like everyone to attend the Miracle event this Friday and asked if they have a speaker for this event. Ms. Fogarty France stated that the mayor is going to speak. She also stated that she sent an e-mail to the board members asking if anyone would volunteer to speak at the event. Member Bosi stated that he will be attending the event. Ms. Fogarty France asked if Member Bosi would like to say a few words after the mayor to which Member Bosi responded yes.

Mr. Irwin stated that they had the Christmas event last year and it was very successful. They asked their volunteer group what they need to do to get twelve good events and they came back with a proposal to hire someone with that knows what they are doing to produce these twelve events so that they can be successful. They went to the council and were granted funding contingent on the DDB's participation as well so both groups got involved and this is the first year that they are doing this so hopefully they will all be a success.

Member Elect Belanger asked if the 2011 funding has been committed to which Member Bosi responded yes.

Member Elect Starova stated that on December 9th Tony's Pizza is having their grand opening from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and wants to invite everyone to attend. There will be free food as well as a cash bar. There will also be a local band performing at the restaurant.

Ms. Lopez stated that Peter Gillham's Nutrition Center will be opening this Friday, December 3rd.

Member Bosi stated that he had a friend come up with two opening songs for the DDB's radio show to help promote the Cleveland Street District and he would like everyone's opinion on them. He played both songs on a CD player and members stated that they liked the first pre-opening that Member Bosi played.

Member Bosi stated that they have promoted a lot of different organizations. The DCMA has been working on getting business on board to promote the Cleveland Street District. He stated that next year he would like to be the person appointed to make sure that the Cleveland Street District brand is being promoted. If everyone gets on board and tries to promote Cleveland Street then they will have a lot more going on. They have already made a lot of progress but time goes by quickly and they still have a lot to accomplish.

5. Final Comments

Ex-Officio/Councilmember Doran stated that this was a very productive meeting and that it was a good wrap up of what has happened in the last few years and what is coming up in the year ahead. He also stated that the board is governed by the Sunshine Law and as long as they do not discuss downtown business outside of the DDB they will be ok. He is optimistic that things will be better for downtown.

Ex-Officio/Councilmember Gibson agreed with Ex-Officio/Councilmember Doran's comments.

Member Elect Starova stated that he is happy to be a part of the board.

Member Elect Belanger stated that the DDB is a good group and he is happy to be a part of it.

Member Wright stated that he opened his business downtown in 2000, moved in 2003 but came back in 2008. He has seen what downtown Clearwater used to be and can see the

positive changes they are making. He can look at the streetscape from his office and is very blessed to be able to see that as well as Clearwater Beach.

6. Adjournment

Member Bosi adjourned the December 1st, 2010 planning session of the Clearwater Downtown Development Board at 7:30 p.m.

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING ACTION AGENDA
Wednesday, December 1, 2010 - 5:30 pm

12.01.10.01

Member Bosi moved to approve the minutes from the November 3, 2010 meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

12.01.10.02

Member Wright moved to adopt the October 2010 Financial Statement for filing. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.