

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD

August 1, 2007 – 5:30 p.m.

Members Present:	David Allbritton	Chairman
	Dennis Bosi	Treasurer
	Josee Goudreault	Member
	Dean Nichols	Member
	Geri Aranjó	Member
Absent:	Bob Fernandez	Vice-Chairman
	Beth Coleman	Member
Also Present:	John Doran	Ex-Officio/Councilmember
	Carlen Petersen	Ex-Officio/Councilmember
	Bill Horne	City Manager
	Rod Irwin	Assistant City Manager
	Geri Campos Lopez	Economic Development & Housing Director
	Anne Fogarty	Board Administrator/Main Street Coordinator
	Tracey Bruch	Parking Facilities Manager

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. at City Hall.

Chairman Allbritton advised members that he would be starting to provide the board with a Chairman's Report in order to provide more effective communication between board members. He reminded board members that they were elected officials and as such had a Code of Ethics to uphold.

To provide continuity for research, items are in agenda order although not necessarily discussed in that order.

2 – Citizen Comments – Items Not on the Agenda

Frank Cataldo, Spotlight Theater, addressed the board regarding the theater coming to downtown Clearwater. He provided background information, distributed information to members and requested financial support. Chairman Allbritton advised Mr. Cataldo that the board would be holding a Special Budget Worksession and that this request would be considered at this time.

Terry Schmidt, Parks and Recreation Special Events Manager, addressed the board about possible future events downtown. He reminded the board that the streetscape would be done at the end of the year and that he was looking at types of events that would be successful to incorporate downtown. Mr. Schmidt reiterated that he would like to have events that are scheduled for Coachman Park kick off in the downtown the night before. He distributed a list of events.

Dwight Matheny, Clearwater Downtown Partnership Chairperson, addressed the board with a proposal to send out postcards to 20,000 residents in surrounding areas that promoted the downtown and its merchants. He asked the board to help with funds for postage and printing.

Members questioned if merchants would be providing any funds and who would be funding this postcard besides the DDB.

Chairman Allbritton advised Mr. Matheny that the board would be holding a Special Budget Worksession and that this request would be considered at this time.

Doc Shillington, owner of the Rabbit Hole, 425 Cleveland Street, addressed the board about homeless and vagrancy issues and noted that he would like to see some attention given to this situation.

Members noted that the Clearwater Police Department is quick to respond and were unsure if the DDB could do anything further. They questioned if a modification could be done to the benches.

City Manager Bill Horne noted that the completion of the streetscape would bring a higher level of enforcement. The benches are not homeless proof and the Downtown Bike Patrol is doing a good job.

City staff added that benches have been ordered and that we did not want to hurt the integrity of the benches by modifying them. The situation will be monitored to determine if anything new should be done.

Mr. Horne suggested that Mr. Shillington talk to Deputy Chief Dewey Williams about additional signage for businesses to allow police to do more.

Mr. Shillington also was concerned about outdoor tables and wheelchair access needed on sidewalks.

Members noted that ADA access was something they had no control over. City staff advised that they had spoken to Mr. Shillington about this issue and public meetings were held prior to his business locating in downtown.

George Bruce, Bruce Consultants, addressed the board on behalf of a new group called Artists in Action. He offered their help with fairs and events. He stated that he felt that a schedule of events was needed downtown.

3 – Approve Minutes from the July 11, 2007 Regular Monthly Meeting

Member Nichols moved to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2007, meeting as submitted in written summation to each board member. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

4 - Adopt Budget Amendments and June 2007 Financial Statement for Filing

Geri Campos Lopez discussed the budget amendments.

Member Bosi moved to adopt the budget amendments. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

Member Aranjo moved to adopt the June 2007 financial statement for filing. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

5 – Appoint a Nominating Committee for October 9, 2007 Election

Chairman Allbritton advised the board that three of the current members: Bob Fernandez, Geri Aranjo and Josee Goodreault were all up for re-election this year. He noted that the remaining members would be appointed to a nominating committee and were required to go out and find people interested in running for office on the board. The nominating committee would provide names to the board administrator and adopt the nominating committee's report at the September meeting.

6 – Parking on Cleveland Street – City Manager Bill Horne

Mr. Horne addressed the board and stated that he knew from watching the last meeting that there were concerns about parking. He asked Tracey Bruch, Parking Facilities Manager to provide the background on parking and meters on Cleveland Street.

Ms. Bruch discussed the history of metered parking in the downtown, the parking study that was done, and the plan for providing turnover of the spaces to allow for more vehicles to use the spaces. She advised that cost for personnel to enforce the timed spaces versus meters was more costly.

Members questioned the number of spaces lost with the new streetscape, the length of meter times, if electronic meters were considered, enforcement costs, the Park 'n Go card, validation stickers for parking garage.

Ex-officio member Doran stated that the meter issue had been thru three different cycles of council changes. He wanted to specifically talk about turnover and how to deal with it as had been discussed with Tracey. He stated that it is a money issue and enforcement of timed spaces is more costly than meters. He noted that if the merchants of DDB wanted to come up with more money to fund this it could be a solution.

Christina Higgins, manager of Starbucks, addressed the board and stated that 15 minutes was not too long for her. She spoke to the owners of Tony's and the Rabbit Hole and they did not want their customers to feel hurried. Ms. Higgins stated that she knows that we need some enforcement and balance. Another concern was that the city was trying to get other businesses to locate downtown and this could be an obstacle. Customers may go into other businesses instead of shopping downtown and paying for metered parking. She suggested that the city table the meters until the businesses come in and have one hour parking signs versus meters until the downtown is established with businesses.

Doc Shillington addressed the board and felt that half an hour is too short for dinner or coffee and noted that the signs were antiquated and meters are ugly. He advised the board to put signs in now that the city has made the streets beautiful.

Dwight Matheny addressed the board and stated that he was on the board when the decisions were made and parking was always a problem.

Ex-officio member Petersen reminded the board that they were elected officials and were there to represent the merchants but would never make everyone happy.

Member Nichols moved to leave parking on Cleveland Street as was planned by the city. The motion was duly seconded and opened for discussion. Chairman Allbritton asked that the motion be modified to recommend as the DDB can not make this decision. Member Nichols moved to recommend to leave parking on Cleveland Street as was planned by the city. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

7 – Downtown Vision – CRA Executive Director Rod Irwin

City Manager Bill Horne addressed the board and stated that after watching the last DDB meeting he thought it would be good to hear what the CRA's vision was. He advised that CRA Executive Director, Rod Irwin would walk you through this discussion.

Mr. Irwin addressed the board with his vision on how the relationships of the CRA, DDB and Partnership to grow. We want to create an 18 hour a day/7 day a week downtown. We want a healthy downtown and to have the supporting customer base to do that downtown. He felt we were in a better place than Tampa or St. Petersburg to have a mix of people who work downtown during the day and just need the merchants and residents downtown. We want to create a live, vibrant place and we are building the infrastructure to make that happen.

Mr. Irwin noted that the Lambert Market Analysis looked at the radius around downtown and found that we have a huge amount around downtown that is not being absorbed. He noted that we have had large companies look at downtown and they have all said we need build the residential base.

He advised that he had just met with respondents for the RFP on the Town Lake project. We have the role to leverage larger projects off the ground and we have the interest to do the retail recruitment aggressively. The façade design analysis that the DDB funded made the recommendations for the café district approach. We are at a critical point in moving things forward and need to step in to leverage more through façade improvements and development agreements. The DDB's role is to provide the forum for retail/merchant issues, support events downtown and help us to recruit businesses.

He further noted that how we see the Partnership's role is that we had meetings early on, and that we need independent support from Bill West of OPUS. Mr. Irwin stated that he is viewed as a government employee as well is Geri, but if the developer can call on Bill West it would be more successful.

He noted that downtown redevelopment was a priority and the CRA is the focal point for negotiation and had a focus on the retail recruitment efforts. He stated that Economic Development is a citywide focus and lately we haven't done the business recruitment. We want to bring more technology firms, citywide as well as downtown. Affordable housing is also important as is infill project packages. The new Assistant Director will have a strong focus on that project. The East Gateway and redevelopment of the Jack Russell stadium are community processes that will be going on for a while. He also noted that Saturn Avenue is an emerging commercial strip.

Mr. Irwin will be moving downtown development into the CRA and want to be supportive with the DDB and look for ways to suggest DDB projects that could leverage success as well as further your mission. We want to keep the focus on the downtown rollout. We have met with larger property owners and they want to get things rolling and we want to try to help.

He plans to hire a downtown manager to help with all three groups, work with property owners, expand the downtown façade program and recruit businesses downtown.

Regarding the logo, Mr. Irwin stated that we don't want to take the process away from the DDB. The DDB took the lead and the logo you chose looked good and everyone needs to be involved. He wanted to get more iterations for people to look at, get testing done with the key phrases being lively, vibrant and new.

Members noted that they felt more people should have been involved in the beginning and didn't care for the way it was handled. They thought the CRA and City took over and it was not brought back to the DDB.

8 – Proposed Budget Discussion – David Allbritton

Chairman Allbritton discussed the Vice Chairperson's request for a Special Budget Meeting. Anne Fogarty advised that she would send an e-mail to members with the announcement of the date that was chosen.

9 – Project Updates – Geri Campos Lopez

Ms. Campos Lopez discussed the following projects and noted that the goal was to make sure that she provided clear communications.

- a. Cleveland Street Branding (Logo Testing). Ms. Lopez noted that Mr. Irwin provided the big picture and that Vaughn Wedeen staff recommendations were provided with CRA budget recommendations.
- b. Cleveland Street Business Directory (Kiosk). One kiosk can be done immediately and is planned for the south side of the block between Osceola and Ft. Harrison Avenues and the other will be at Station Square Park when it is complete. We need a decision on what text to place at the top, Cleveland Street or Downtown Clearwater. Members all agreed that Cleveland Street was best. Ms. Lopez stated that it is an approved line item on this year's budget and that we would be moving forward to purchase.
- c. Downtown 3D Model. The model will be viewed by visitors at the City's booth at the ICSC Conference and will be shown to members at the September meeting.

d. Façade Improvement Program. We are working with consultants to write the regulations for the program. There are three components; façade improvements, architectural design fees and sidewalk furniture proposed to be funded by the DDB.

e. Cleveland Street and Prospect Lake RFP. We received nine responses and the selection committee met and chose the top three firms. Two interviews were held today and one is scheduled for tomorrow. We were very excited with the presentations and all are presenting rental with retail. She noted that all proposals were in the Economic Development office if anyone was interested in viewing them. The final selection will be tough and will be presented to the CRA at the second meeting in September.

10 – Final Comments

Ex-officio member Doran stated it was a long meeting but the board did a good job.

Member Bosi offered congratulations to Geri Campos Lopez on her marriage.

13 – Adjourn

Member Bosi moved to adjourn the August 1, 2007 Regular Meeting of the Clearwater Downtown Development Board at 8:20 p.m. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING ACTION AGENDA
Wednesday, August 11, 2007 – 5:30 p.m.

08.01.07.01

Member Nichols moved to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2007, meeting as submitted in written summation to each board member. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

08.01.07.02

Member Bosi moved to adopt the budget amendments. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

08.01.07.03

Member Aranja moved to adopt the June 2007 financial statement for filing. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

08.01.07.04

Member Nichols moved to leave parking on Cleveland Street as was planned by the city. The motion was duly seconded and opened for discussion. Chairman Allbritton asked that the motion be modified to recommend as the DDB can not make this decision. Member Nichols moved to recommend to leave parking on Cleveland Street as was planned by the city. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.