

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
May 6, 2015 – 5:30 PM – City Hall – Council Chambers

Members Present:	Paris Morfopoulos	Chairman
	Craig Rubright	Treasurer
	Thomas Wright	Member
	Tony Starova	Member
	Stu Sjouwerman	Member

Also Present:	Bill Jonson	Ex-Officio/Councilmember
	Jay Polglaze	Ex-Officio/Councilmember
	Anne Fogarty France	Board Administrator
	Geri Campos Lopez	Director, Economic Development & Housing Department

Absent:	Dennis Bosi	Vice-Chairman
	Chelsea Allison	Member

1. Chairman Morfopoulos called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The Chairman asked the Downtown Development Board (DDB) members and Ex-Officio members to introduce themselves.
2. Citizen Comments – Items Not on the Agenda. There were no comments.
3. Approve the Minutes from the April 1, 2015 DDB Meeting

Member Wright moved to approve the minutes from the April 1, 2015 meeting. The motion was duly seconded. Upon roll call, the vote was:

“Ayes”: Chairman Paris Morfopoulos, Treasurer Craig Rubright, Member Starova, Member Sjouwerman and Member Wright

“Nays”: None.

4. Adopt March 2015 Financial Statement for Filing

Member Wright moved to adopt the March 2015 Financial Statement for Filing. The motion was duly seconded. Upon roll call, the vote was:

“Ayes”: Chairman Paris Morfopoulos, Treasurer Craig Rubright, Member Starova, Member Sjouwerman and Member Wright.

“Nays”: None.

5. Discussion Regarding Messages on Ft. Harrison Electronic Message Boards. Paul Bertels, Traffic Operations Manager addressed the board and prefaced the discussion by stating that the message boards are operated under the standards of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

Chairman Morfopoulos stated that the Downtown Development Board’s intention, by assisting in the purchase and operation of the message boards, was to promote events in the

downtown district. Could the Downtown Development Board (DDB) provide the traffic department with a list of events coming up to be mentioned on the boards?

Mr. Bertels described what is already posted on the variable message boards. They operate from 6:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. There are messages about Downtown, the Downtown Farmer's Market and the City's Special Events calendar is followed closely. Sometimes, events that do not go through the special process but will present a traffic impact will also be added. Generally, the messages are posted one week ahead of an event and asked if there were some specific events that didn't get to the message board.

Members did not believe that Blast Fridays are on the message boards, however, Mr. Bertels stated they were. Fun n' Sun events are also on the boards. Each message is on display for five minutes then the sign rotates the message "Cleveland Street District, possible traffic delays".

Members asked if it was a city sign ordinance or FDOT. Mr. Bertels responded that it is a county ordinance. Any sign over the roadway can only name an event if it involves traffic issues.

Bill Jonson, Ex-Officio/Councilmember suggested the DDB invite the planning department to come in and discuss the sign ordinance. The City of Clearwater has been sued in the past for having certain messages on the public right-of-way.

Mr. Bertels advised that the state will be redoing Court and Chestnut Streets from Missouri Avenue to the Courthouse. The railroad crossings will also be done at that time.

Members asked if this would be a good time to request from FDOT a downtown sign be placed there. Mr. Bertels advised that they will put in a request but felt there was a better chance of getting a sign on City property at Court and Myrtle.

The DDB requested Anne Fogarty France request a staff member with sign ordinance knowledge from the Planning Department and from the Legal Department to address this issue at a future meeting.

6. Adopt 2014 Annual Financial Report and Audit Results. Laura Krueger Brock and Sue Pagan; CBIZ MHM, LLC addressed the board

Ms. Brock and Ms. Pagan distributed copies of the Clearwater Downtown Development Board 2014 Financial Statements and provided a presentation of the results of the 2014 Audit to the DDB. Ms. Brock verbally reviewed the report.

Ms. Brock advised that the DDB will need to have its own investment policy. Monica Mitchell, Assistant Director of the City of Clearwater Finance Department noted that DDB attorney Elise Winters has been asked to provide an opinion on if the DDB could adopt the City's investment policy.

7. Appoint Treasurer Rubright to Committee to Review Annual Independent CPA Audit Request for Proposal/Qualifications (RFP/Q) Submittals

Member Wright moved to appoint Treasurer Rubright to the Committee to Review the Annual Independent CPA Audit Request for Proposal/Qualifications (RFP/Q) Submittals. The motion was duly seconded. Upon roll call, the vote was:

“Ayes”: Chairman Paris Morfopoulos, Treasurer Craig Rubright, Member Starova, Member Sjouwerman and Member Wright.

“Nays”: None.

8. Second Reading – Approve funding of four months of the “Art in the Park” event by the Clearwater Center for the Arts in the amount of \$2,635 using funds from reserves.

Ms. Shelley Jaffe advised that the June 20 event will be a centennial event with a poetry reading, a wine tasting by Trader Joe’s and a scavenger hunt on Cleveland Street. The Center will submit a request for additional events for next year and there will be live music for all events. She also reported that their website domain Clearwaterarts.com was secured.

Member Rubright moved to approve funding of four months of the “Art in the Park” event by the Clearwater Center for the Arts in the amount of \$2,635 using funds from reserves on second reading. The motion was duly seconded. Upon roll call, the vote was:

“Ayes”: Chairman Paris Morfopoulos, Treasurer Craig Rubright, Member Starova, Member Sjouwerman and Member Wright.

“Nays”: None.

9. Chairman’s Report

Chairman Morfopoulos announced that the Clearwater Downtown Partnership’s Momentum Awards will be presented on Tuesday, May 19 at the Capitol Theatre beginning at 5:30 p.m. along with Taste of Downtown by eight different restaurants.

He reminded members that the next DDB Meeting will take place on Tuesday, June 2, 2015 due to a conflict with a City Council meeting.

He stated that there were two new merchants that have opened up in our district that he would like to welcome: La Fondita de Leo, 528 Cleveland Street, and offers Puerto Rican and Caribbean cuisine and CruiseOne, a new travel agent, at 629 Cleveland Street.

He noted that most of the DDB members attended the ULI meeting a couple of weeks back. Now that the Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) has made their decision not to move to the bluff, he reached out to interested parties and asked if they want to present their ideas to the board at a mutually convenient meeting. The board will not be making any motions at this meeting, just hearing the information. Chairman

Morfopoulos asked members to please consider what they would like to take place here and on the bluff before the next meeting.

10. Topics for Future Meetings

- Mailing list for the use of the DDB. Ms. Fogarty France advised that she would make an appointment with member Sjouwerman before the next meeting to discuss this item.
- Moving the Directory/Kiosk Sign at Turner Street.
- Information on the usage of the parking garage on a daily basis and during special events.

11. Final Comments

Treasurer Rubright stated that now that the CMA has made their decision not to build on the bluff it gives a wonderful opportunity for our councilmembers to start a comprehensive plan for Coachman Park. He would like to see the plan to tear down the Harborview Center expedited and thought that the library could be put anywhere. He feels the building would be a great place for shops, restaurants and activities for kids in the park. He ended by thanking to Ms. Fogarty France and staff for getting the audit done with no problems.

Member Wright noted that he had visited the Downtown Vaporium and it was clean and well-lit. He added that he learned a lot about vaping and that they are able to dial-down someone's nicotine content. He suggested all DDB members stop in to meet the owner. Member Wright stated that he was interested to find out that our signage is governed by the FDOT, the County and City ordinances. With Ms. Fogarty France's help, he will commit to learning more about the rules governing signage.

Chairman Morfopoulos stated that he would like to see a list of the ULI recommendations and what the City has chosen as priorities. He is going to make a list of things that he would like to see on the bluff and downtown and forward it to Ms. Fogarty France.

Member Starova stated that the Farmers Market was blocking the front door of the new restaurant, La Fondita de Leo. He added that he would like someone to talk to the Farmer's Market manager and ask her not to block the door when there is enough room across the street. He noted that there was a Kentucky Derby event on Saturday on Cleveland Street and the only business that was open was the Downtown Vaporium and felt that businesses should stay open when there's a special event. He reported that a Parks and Recreation Department representative went door-to-door asking businesses to stay open.

Member Sjouwerman stated that he would like to reinforce Treasurer Rubright's vision of the ULI recommendations. He felt that we need a master plan for our bluff sooner rather than later. He added that he was recently a judge at a Hack-A-Thon at the Dali Museum and had a talk with their marketing people. The museum brings

over 400,000 people a year to downtown St. Petersburg by itself and this was the type of attraction we could have here.

Bill Jonson, Ex-Officio/Councilmember stated that when discussing vision, the publication, "Cities Ascending" was mentioned. He added that he would be providing Ms. Fogarty France with a link to this publication and to "Ten Principles for Building Healthy Places" from ULI to forward to the board. He also suggested that if the DDB members had not visited Nature's Food Patch lately they should do so. In response to Member Sjouwerman's question regarding the status of the branding, Councilmember Jonson advised that was is in Phase II. NorthStar gave a presentation and will present a summary of what they heard from people in the city, outside the city, outside the state which will be presented to us, likely in September. In June, the redevelopment plan will be discussed. Demolition of the Harborview Center would be great and there may be some things they want to keep or repurpose in the Harborview Center footprint.

Member Sjouwerman asked if the DDB could get a copy of the presentation that was discussed in the branding meeting. Ms. Fogarty France advised that she would provide a copy to the board.

Jay Polglaze, Ex-Officio/Councilmember stated that improvements to Coachman Park were a ULI recommendation. It was previously lower on the list but since the CMA decision, it has been added to the top thirteen. He added that the city was working diligently on the North Marina Basin Plan and repurposing the library is currently being looked at and possibly shared space considered. He noted that he recently had the opportunity to meet the principals of La Fondita de Leo and they were an incredible group of passionate people. He feels they are going to do really well and encouraged everyone to visit the restaurant.

12. The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.