

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD

April 3, 2013 – 5:30pm – City Hall – 3rd Floor Council Chambers

Members Present:	David Allbritton	Chairman
	Craig Rubright	Treasurer
	Thomas Wright	Member
	Dennis Bosi	Member
	Paris Morfopoulos	Member
	Tony Starova	Member
	John Herndon	Member
Also Present:	Paul Gibson	Ex-Officio/Councilmember
	Jay Polglaze	Ex-Officio/Councilmember
	Geri Campos Lopez	Director, Economic Development & Housing
	Anne Fogarty France	Board Administrator

The meeting was called to Order at 5:30 p.m.

1. Citizen Comments – Items Not on the Agenda

Jack Mortimer, Water's Edge resident and President and Founder of the Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA) brought another citizen and asked for additional time. The board granted the additional time.

He advised that he was there to talk about an idea and to ask for the board's support. The DNA has two issues, one was the future proposal for the Clearwater Marine Aquarium which they were supportive of and wanted additional information about traffic and parking garage location. The other was the current aquarium attraction at the Harborview Center which would be there for a few more years. He advised the board about a survey conducted by DNA members during the President's Day holiday weekend. He was disappointed that only 2% of the attendees at Winter's Dolphin Tale Adventure crossed Osceola Avenue to visit Cleveland Street Businesses.

He reported that the CMA was working with merchants on a brochure rack and video. Volunteers are providing information about downtown businesses and more people are coming.

He is looking at ways to help get more people into the downtown. He was advised to survey the merchants. The merchants that were surveyed agreed the trolley should drop off on Cleveland Street. He proposed that the CMA Jolley Trolley come into downtown and use two spaces on Cleveland Street.

Additionally, Mr. Mortimer proposed that drivers act as tour guides, advising the people where the great food is.

He reported that Frank Dame was on board as long as the City approved. Also, e-mails have been sent to City Manager Bill Horne and Assistant City Manager Rod Irwin.

He added that the DDB was on record that they support the CMA proposal, however Mr. Mortimer said it would also be good to have the board's support in that this is a good thing to have happen in the downtown area.

Members commented that they liked Mr. Mortimer's proactivity and felt the more people on Cleveland Street and thanked him for supporting the downtown.

Member Morfopoulos moved that the DDB support the DNA proposal to have the CMA's Jolley Trolley drop attendees off on Cleveland Street. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

2. Approve the Minutes from the March 6, 2013 Regular Monthly Meeting

Member Bosi moved to approve the minutes from the March 6, 2013 meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

3. Adopt February 2013 Financial Statement for Filing

Member Wright moved to adopt the February 2013 Financial Statement for filing. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

4. Adopt FY 2012-2013 Mid-Year Budget Amendment

Ms. Fogarty France provided clarification of the budget amendments:

- a. There was a \$129.00 increase in the Downtown Streetscape Maintenance line item. The overage was a result of a higher cost being charged by a new pressure washing contractor. The CRA will fund the next pressure washing service. She requested that \$129.00 be transferred to this line item from Revenues in Excess of Expenditures.
- b. A CRA refund in the amount of \$2,233.40 for DDB's share of CRA tax increment revenues for fiscal year 2013 will show in the upcoming financials. The refund is noted in letter from Jay Ravins, Finance Director which advised that the final tax roll information received was \$132,183.29.

Member Wright moved to adopt the FY 2012-2013 Mid-Year Budget Amendment. The motion was duly seconded and questions ensued. Upon call for vote the motion carried unanimously.

5. Adopt Budget Resolution 01-13

Member Morfopolous moved to adopt the Budget Resolution 01-13. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

6. Sign Discussion – Michael Delk, Planning and Development Director

Mr. Delk said that they have worked with both the Clearwater Regional and Clearwater Beach chambers and an outside sign code attorney from Jacksonville over a 2 year period. They reviewed the sign code and replaced some of it. The revised sign code was approved last August, 2012. The handout is a summation of the code changes.

Mr. Delk explained there is more of a design oriented approach with two options:

- 1) Minimum standard for common requests – which does not include the design review (walk in/walk out with a permit)
- 2) Comprehensive sign program (for more or larger signs) – which involves a sign review, for higher quality appearance.

Mr. Delk commented that one thing they do not do as part of the process, the chamber never asked about quality of signage, so the changes were process oriented. The key is that it is a two tiered approach. They don't get involved with the design of the signs. This separates them from other cities and their sign codes.

Member discussion ensued:

Member Bosi asked if discussion ever came up regarding different ordinances for some areas of the city. Some areas are different and could receive more flexible requirements.

Mr. Delk responded that this had not been discussed.

Chairman Allbritton asked about the possibility of having a minimum standards guide that would tell what the businesses could do so that they don't get in trouble.

Ms. Gina Clayton responded that although they don't have a brochure, they do have a Development Review and Comprehensive Sign Program section of the code which is on the website.

Chairman Allbritton asked about whether character districts (i.e. the Beach and Downtown) could have different ordinances in the future.

Mr. Delk commented that the use of some small area plans have been successful (i.e. Beach by Design). He explained that although they are not as far along as other cities (i.e. St. Petersburg), there are reasons for that, it's usually more organic than just one thing.

Member Bosi commented that one problem is the Cleveland Street buildings were built back in the 20/30s- they are small along the front and deep. The bigger buildings with more frontage along the street have different codes and are allowed a bigger sign. They are not looking at the square footage.

Mr. Delk responded that Beach By Design is governed by the same requirements.

Member Starova showed photographs of signs from Clearwater and from other cities. He said that the bypass, wayfinding, parking garage and event signs we have are not good. He suggested a mural on the side of a building to say "Welcome to Downtown Clearwater", 3D signs and banners – bigger, nicer signs put up periodically to help make it easier to find downtown Clearwater.

Councilmember Gibson commented that the problem isn't being able to find downtown, but that there are limited activities to bring people here. The Capitol Theatre and the Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) will be a big draw. Signs can be put in several places and the sooner the better. He suggested having Rod Irwin look into this.

Member Bosi commented that signs would be nice to get the people out from the aquarium to the rest of downtown.

Members commented that Tony's is getting the traffic because Member Starova was doing a good job. He is an example of what to do and the size of the sign isn't going to make the business successful.

Mr. Delk commented that they like 3D and projection signs. Projection signs to show free parking can be used such as the Hyatt Parking sign. There is a wayfinding sign program and they will work with the board.

Member Bosi asked how to go about getting these things done.

Ms. Campos Lopez stated the way finding signs can be done, but funding is the issue. They can discuss this with the CRA. The colors on the way finding signs need to be approved by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

Member Bosi suggested a DDB subcommittee to meet more frequently and move things along.

Chairman Allbritton added that having knowledgeable staff on the subcommittee would be helpful.

Councilmember Polglaze said this is a perfect time to consider addressing the signs. Every one of our entryway signs would need to be updated with new information delineating our assets and be aesthetically appealing. It would be expensive, but a good investment.

Chairman Allbritton said to put a list of recommendations together and work with the CRA on this during the window of opportunity.

Member Morfopoulos suggested picking one item (i.e. parking signs) to start with and get it done. People are paying \$10 to park because they don't know where the free parking garages are.

Member Starova added that regarding the Jazz Holiday, the board paid for event parking signs (Free Parking). If the people parked in these garages, they would be coming through the Cleveland Street District and passing through the businesses. He personally put the 16 signs out directing people to the garages. He asked if the detour signs could be changed as this was of the biggest problems.

Member Herndon asked about the use of banners and if approval was needed.

Mr. Delk cited an incident where another city was sued because a fallen banner caused an auto accident. Putting banners in a public right of way can pose a potential hazard.

Councilmember Polglaze said that when Blast Friday began the request was for banners on Myrtle Avenue. Additionally, monoliths to hold the banners were expensive and even if the banners had air slits the wind created a lot of tension. He felt this was still an opportunity waiting for a solution.

Ms. Campos Lopez said that banners were tricky as the right infrastructure was needed to support them.

A member asked if sidewalk signs needed a permit. Mr. Delk responded there was a \$25 annual fee, but most wanted them for street side signs that looked bad and felt that it wasn't a good economic development tool.

Treasurer Rubright asked whether colored lights or signs under awnings were allowed. Mr. Delk stated that awnings are allowed, but if they are backlit, then the whole thing becomes a sign.

Treasurer Rubright asked if it would be possible to change verbiage from “Expect Delays” to “Possible Delays” as the latter is more positive. Staff advised that they would look into this.

Mr. Delk said in closing that we can do more than people think we can and there is an organic part to it. He suggested this was an opportunity to bring before the City Council in order to broaden the uses for downtown.

7. Discuss DDB roles/responsibilities for next Joint CRA/DDB/CDP Meeting

Chairman Allbritton read the memo regarding the DDB roles/Responsibilities. He said that the DDB had been taking on a promotional role and with the current budget, they needed to discuss what they could do.

Member Bosi suggested that now was the time to switch from event promoter to something that would help, like the wayfinding signs with the Cleveland Street logo. These would be working 365 days a year, not just a few nights. He was interested in signs to promote events as people come into the downtown area; possibly a wrought iron “Welcome” arch across the road.

Chairman Allbritton suggested having a committee with the CRA and other groups.

Member Wright suggested hiring professionals to review the situation and give them guidance on the best use of funds and noted he was on the board to be a steward of the tax payers’ money.

Treasurer Rubright agreed in part with both Members Bosi and Wright, but wanted to wait until November to see what happened first. The CMA may come, or it may not and that would affect how they spend the money and the CMA coming downtown would change everything.

Chairman Allbritton said that the branding of the “Cleveland Street District” may change as the downtown grows. He felt that now was not the time to be looking at a brand change. However, if the brand changes, then the wayfinding signs will need to be changed and agreed that they were very expensive.

Councilmember Polglaze asked Ms. Campos Lopez how the parking garages were funded.

Ms. Campos Lopez responded that funding came from the parking funds that purchased the space in the condos.

Councilmember Polglaze suggested that signs on the parking garage would be an appropriate use of the parking funds.

Member Bosi said he has heard conflicting ideas on the brand “Cleveland Street District”. Some were using it and some were not.

Councilmember Polglaze said he wasn’t very big on the brand but added that the key would be to focus on preparing for when the CMA opens, because he was confident they would be able to raise the money.

Ms. Campos Lopez gave background on the branding project for the new members. She suggested they haven’t given it enough time because of the recession in between. They could make better use of the website , i.e. for use as a merchant’s tool and needed to get the merchants to buy into it as it’s still new.

Member Bosi said they needed to have everyone buy into it and promote the Cleveland Street District. Blast Friday was started to help build the brand. They should have the district logo on all the event promotional material.

Chairman Allbritton said they've been mostly a promotion board and should work with the merchants and businesses directly helping them promote themselves.

Member Bosi and Chairman Allbritton were in agreement to move from funding events to promotion.

Member Wright suggested hiring an advertising agency to design and place the ads.

Member Herndon asked to get the merchants involved with funding advertisements.

Chairman Allbritton said the first meeting of the Cleveland Street Business Alliance would be held next week, to help the merchants have a voice, a consensus and a unified voice. A partnership (private stakeholders), not a merchant's association, to do what the board does – oversee big functions and events. The DDB can match their ads to help give them a jump start and get off the ground.

Member Starova said the business community will bring people to the downtown area and making the businesses successful will help the community. Façade grants, matching dollars for advertising and hiring of bands, provide "Yes We're Open" signs to the businesses are all good ways to help the businesses. If we need a consultant, then get a consultant.

Chairman Allbritton summarized that events are important to keep on the street, as well as advertisement funding and working with the merchants on promotions.

Ms. Campos Lopez suggested defining specific responsibilities for the DDB and CDB as part of the joint venture. She can see the DDB as still heavily involved in promotion of events, CSD, and merchants.

Chairman Allbritton said that's all they can do with the board's budget. He asked if there was a consensus that the DDB's focus was to find the best ways to use money for promotion.

8. Review of DB FY 2013 Sponsorship Request Form

Chairman Allbritton referred to the Sponsorship Request Form and reviewed proposed changes, specifically to "#1 Reimbursement of one day events will occur after the event is held", commenting that the goal was to pay for the event with sponsorships so there were no out of pocket expenses. He suggested inclusion of a clause for the board's protection.

Ms. Fogarty France responded that this item would be removed.

Members wanted to keep the requirement that the event organizer must report back to the board, and discussed a time limit for reporting, income vs. budget statement, display of banner and dimensions.

Member Wright recommend to add language to the application for the vendor to provide 2 banners (minimum size- 2 ft x 6 ft) and to remove #1 and to note that the organization must pick up the parking barricades, place them in required places and return the barricades to the parking garages.

Chairman Allbritton added that they must give a final report within 90 days of the event.

Member Wright moved to amend the Sponsorship Request Form for the event applicant to include: 1. Each organization is responsible for picking up and placing Event Parking Signs before the event and for returning these signs to the Parking Garage after the event. 2. Purchase two banners, minimum size 2' x 6', announcing event that is taking place to be installed on barricades on each end of the event. And give a final report to the board within three months after the event. The motion was duly seconded. Members Allbritton, Morfopoulos, Herndon, Rubright, Starova, and Wright voted "Aye"; Member Bosi voted "Nay." Motion carried.

9. Final Comments

Treasurer Rubright stated that he was excited about Capitol Theatre renovations and the possibility of CMA moving here. It was a game changer with more people and more restaurants will come.

Member Wright said the board needs to look outside this group for help for promotions. He also asked where our dolphins were. Ms. Fogarty France responded that the dolphins were painted, clear coated and in storage until they could be put on the bases. She stated that they should be placed out on the street next week.

Member Bosi was excited about the aquarium. He asked what the cost would be to change the way finding signs and was concerned that we could fall behind the curve if we waited too long.

Member Morfopoulos would like to see the Jolley Trolley stop moved, which would cost zero dollars and would help the businesses and felt if that occurred it would be a good thing.

Member Starova would like to build up the welcome sign and change the "By Pass" sign.

Member Herndon commended Chairman Allbritton for going after the business community for the Cleveland Street Business Alliance. He also asked if Cleveland Street could be closed Saturday mornings for kids events.

Councilmember Polglaze said it was a good meeting.

Ms. Campos Lopez announced that they were restructuring CRA staff and that Anne Fogarty France has been promoted to Downtown Manager. Her former position will be moved to the Economic Development Department.

Chairman Allbritton offered thanks to all board members for all they do, and to Jack Mortimer for what he is doing.

10. Adjournment at 8:08p.m.

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Action Agenda
April 3, 2013

04.03.13.01

Member Morfopoulos moved that the DDB support the DNA proposal to have the CMA's Jolley Trolley drop attendees off on Cleveland Street. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.

04.03.13.02

Member Bosi moved to approve the minutes from the March 6, 2013 meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

04.03.13.03

Member Wright moved to adopt the February 2013 Financial Statement for filing. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

04.03.13.04

Member Wright moved to adopt the FY 2012-2013 Mid-Year Budget Amendment. The motion was duly seconded and questions ensued. Upon call for vote the motion carried unanimously.

04.03.13.05

Member Morfopolous moved to adopt the Budget Resolution 01-13. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

04.03.13.06

Member Wright moved to amend the Sponsorship Request Form for the event applicant to include: 1. Each organization is responsible for picking up and placing Event Parking Signs before the event and for returning these signs to the Parking Garage after the event. 2. Purchase two banners, minimum size 2' x 6', announcing event that is taking place to be installed on barricades on each end of the event. And give a final report to the board within three months after the event. The motion was duly seconded. Members Allbritton, Morfopoulos, Herndon, Rubright, Starova, and Wright voted "Aye"; Member Bosi voted "Nay." Motion carried.