

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD
January 4, 2006 – 5:30 P.M.
Regular Monthly Meeting

Members Present:	Bob Fernandez	Chairman
	David Allbritton	Vice Chairman
	Josee Goudreault	Treasurer
	Geri Arango	Member
	Dennis Bosi	Member
	Elizabeth Coleman	Member
	Bob Clifford	Member

Also Present:	John Doran	Councilmember
	Carlen Petersen	Councilmember
	Geraldine Campos	Director, ED & Housing
	Anne Fogarty	Main Street Coordinator
	Linda Byars	Board Administrator
	Elise K. Winters	DDB Council

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM at City Hall.

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

ITEM #2 – Citizen Comments – Items Not on the Agenda

George Kelly, owner and operator of the Downtown New Stand, 522 Cleveland Street, Clearwater, Florida, addressed the Board with a petition signed by a majority of downtown businesses opposed to the parallel parking proposed in the Cleveland Streetscape project. Mr. Kelly requested that the Board consider discussion, without time limits, at the next regular meeting. Mr. Kelly said, "To maximize parking is to maximize business", and suggested angled, rather than parallel parking, on Cleveland Street.

Chairman Fernandez asked Mr. Kelly to approach the City Clerk with his concern. The Cleveland Streetscape project is out of the control of the Downtown Development Board.

Pat Fernandez, representing the Downtown Farmer's Market, came forward with a schedule of coming events:

January 11th marks the date for the annual "**Super Soup Wednesday**" when downtown restaurants, and others, contribute their best soups for public sale. Soups will sell for \$1.50 a cup beginning at noon. All proceeds go to the Clearwater Arts Foundation.

On **January 25, February 22 and March 22** art of all kinds will be on display in the marketplace.

February 11th will bring the “**11th Anniversary**” celebration.

February 15th will bring the “**Strawberry Festival**”.

March 8th is the date for the very competitive “**Chili Extravaganza**”

On **April 5th** the market jumps into Spring with the annual “**Ice cream social**”; the market will wrap-up its 2006 season **April 6th**.

Mrs. Fernandez encouraged everyone to come out and enjoy Clearwater’s Downtown Farmer’s Market.

ITEM #3 – Approve December 7, 2005 Regular Meeting Minutes

Treasurer Goudreault moved to approve the December 7, 2005 Regular Meeting Minutes; Vice Chairman Allbritton seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

ITEM #4 – OPUS SOUTH – Water’s Edge Condominium Presentation – Bill West

Geraldine Campos welcomed and introduced **Mr. Bill West**, Real Estate Manager for Opus South and **Mr. Joe Ramsey**, Construction Manager for the Water’s Edge Condominium project, both of whom have graciously accepted our invitation to update the Board on the progress of their project soon to be located at the Calvary Baptist Church site.

Mr. Bill West began his presentation with an open invitation for all to visit the Opus Sales Center located on the corner of Cleveland Street and Osceola Avenue where a description, including graphics, renderings and photos, of the project are on display.

Opus recognizes the tremendous opportunity that the Calvary Baptist Church site offered and purchased the property in October 2004. In September 2005 Water’s Edge Condominiums went to market and has met and exceeded all “presale” requirements of the lender. Those that have interest in this project are excited about downtown Clearwater.

The Calvary Church property consists of two parcels, the high school, to the south of Pierce Street and the sanctuary, at the southwest corner of Cleveland Street and Osceola Avenue. The first phase of construction will take place on the sanctuary site. The foundation, which takes several months of planning in a project of this size, should be permitted in September 2006. Application for a building should be submitted before Christmas 2006. The Calvary Baptist Church is moving into another facility and should be out in a couple of weeks. Construction operations are underway and Opus is working with the city on permitting for demolition of the existing structure.

Treasurer Goudreault asked when construction would commence.

Mr. West stated that work would begin to dismantle the church later in January. After that, two to three months of foundation work would be necessary, bringing us to March or April to begin substantial construction. “This is the real deal”, he said. “We are geared up and ready to go. This project is truly a catalyst for downtown.” The timeline for construction of this project is about two years; expecting occupancy to take place in 2008, at which time Opus

will focus attention on other opportunities on the other parcel. Opus has been fortunate to have a great relationship with the church and the city has been extremely supportive. This project has been a big challenge. Development is a tough business.

Treasurer Goudreault asked if units were still available for sale.

Mr. West answered that not all units are sold, although sales have exceeded all expectations. Opus has not advertised in the past couple of months and is still enjoying great success. A new season is coming. Opus will be marketing some of the product not yet released.

Chairman Fernandez asked where Opus would be staging their construction.

Mr. West stated that they have been working with the city to use a portion of the right-of-way, which is typical on downtown projects and the high school parcel will be cleared.

Chairman Fernandez asked if consideration has been given the amount of dust that will be generated by this project.

Mr. West answered that Opus is building a 30 story building in St. Petersburg. The same issue was raised there. Everyone became involved to provide a solution. Opus is very conservative and works to keep everybody happy.

Chairman Fernandez asked how construction might affect the Farmer's Market.

Mr. West answered that **Mr. Ramsey** is working with that and other public safety issues. He assured the Board that he would take care of providing for the Farmer's Market.

Member Clifford inquired as to the demographics of the Water's Edge purchasers. Will they be seasonal or full-time residents?

Mr. West stated that Opus is not sure at this time. Indications are that there is a "good mix" of both. Compared to Sand Key, a downtown location would cater more to the permanent resident and a combination of seasonal and second homes. Some will live permanently in the 153 units that Opus offers. The exact number is not known. Opus appreciates the concern in having people living in the downtown, which is a very valid point. Surely, Water's Edge will not be as seasonal as Sand Key or the beach. Understanding that restaurants and retail must have folks in the downtown, Opus is focusing on other parcels; intensely looking at more retail and other services in another great project right around the corner.

Conversation ensued regarding the projects elevations, views, height, scale and access.

Chairman Fernandez welcomed Opus to downtown Clearwater, offering the Board's assistance and thanked **Mr. West** for his informative presentation.

ITEM #5 – Design Awards

A. Bellissima Salon and Spa – Retail Category

Anne Fogarty reported that the Design Committee of Main Street has been tracking the façade design improvements taking place in downtown during the past several years. This year two awards are being presented. The first to Bellissima Salon and Spa located at 101 South Fort Harrison Avenue in the retail category and the second to Café Milano in the restaurant category.

Chairman Fernandez presented Ms. Bonnie Jerenella with two plaques of appreciation for the commitment and investment she and her staff have made in downtown Clearwater.

Ms. Jerenella thanked the Board and the Main Street program for the recognition. She was very appreciative and thankful to the Board for being proactively involved in the community and with the merchants to make downtown the best it can be. She presented the DDB with a plaque that reads: Bellissima Salon and Spa and Café Milano gratefully acknowledge the Downtown Development Board, City of Clearwater, for their friendship and support. We thank you for providing an inspirational environment in which to contribute, flourish and prosper. January 2006.

ITEM # 6 - Business Milestone Awards

A. Trickels Jewelers

Chairman Fernandez recognized Ms. Lillian Trickel and Trickels Jewelers for 60 years of doing business in downtown Clearwater.

Ms. Trickel graciously accepted the award and is proud to state that she had served on the Downtown Development Board for 30 years; two terms a chairperson. She introduced her staff that was in the audience to support her. “As long as I live”, she said, “I will be in the downtown”.

B. Tack and Warren

Chairman Fernandez introduced Mr. Glenn Warren whose family company has been a presence in downtown Clearwater for 75 years. Mr. Warren had been a long-standing member of the Downtown Development Board and represented the Board as chairman for 8 or 9 years.

Mr. Warren thanked the Board for its efforts. “There will be a lot of dust and dirt coming in the downtown”, he said, “we must stay the track and keep on going”.

ITEM #7 – Memorial Causeway Bridge Award Presentation – Doug Matthews

Doug Matthews, Director of Public Communication for the City of Clearwater, brought forward a framed watercolor painting of the Memorial Causeway Bridge as a token of appreciation for the Boards participation in funding the artist, Robin Popp, whose painting was selected to commemorate the grand opening of the new bridge.

Conversation ensued regarding the August 27, 2005 grand opening event at the Harborview Center, the speeches and the art poster.

Chairman Fernandez thanked Mr. Matthews for all his efforts in providing for a very well plan event.

ITEM #8 – Downtown Marketing – Discussion – Doug Matthews & Geraldine Campos

Geraldine Campos referred to the January 3rd memorandum, contained within the agenda packet, wherein is explained the recommendation that the Downtown Development Board consider allocating resources to a third-party marketing company who specializes in defined marketing for downtowns.

In the DDB F/Y 2006/07 budget is a \$20,000 set-aside for Downtown Cooperative Advertising to assist businesses through Cleveland Streetscape construction. Newspaper advertising has proved to be costly and not the most affective method. How do we go about providing for the best value in advertising and marketing of downtown, is the question. With the cost and the concern to best achieve the goal of assisting businesses through the construction and to be most effective and efficient with the funds, it may be time to consider a professional marketing company to provide a focused campaign for downtown.

Doug Matthews stated that with the evaluation of the first round of advertising leading into the downtown streetscape project, it was apparent, early on, that a marketing or advertising campaign would require a focused approach. Public Communication's role with the project is communicating to the public its progress and is not set-up or mandated to support individual businesses. Mr. Campos and Mr. Matthews have talked about destination marketing, which encompasses a broad spectrum of possibilities. Companies offer a broad context to cities in general. The opportunity to bring people in who are professionals would provide focus and energy to approach issues specific to downtown.

Treasurer Goudreault asked the amount of the funding.

Ms. Campos stated that the Board has allocated \$20,000 in their budget for "Cooperative Advertising" and \$20,000 for "Market Study Update". Nothing has been allocated specific to marketing; staff is recommending consideration to allow these two funding sources for professional services proposals with formal selection.

Treasurer Goudreault asked for company suggestions.

Mr. Matthews suggested there might be local companies who would be interested, or a free lance individual. Staff is confident that a good range of companies will respond to the RFQ and asked the Board for any recommendations they may have. A copy of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was presented to the Board as a Public Communication sample document, which will be redefined specifically to address downtown issues.

Mr. Matthews asked the Board to approve the request for funding \$20,000 for marketing and public relations professional services for the purpose of providing a third-party to work on a

project basis, specifically to promote downtown and its businesses during an estimated 12 – 18 month downtown streetscaping project.

Chairman Fernandez stated his belief that the downtown needed to be professionally marketed in a systematic way. Private agencies may be the way to go. Advertising agencies can filter information in the right manner. The DDB can still make the decisions. “It’s a good plan to go forward”, he said, “We must start somewhere, even if only with a press release. We must let people know”.

Vice Chairman Allbritton said, “This is our role. We must help as much as we can”.

Ms. Campos expressed her concern regarding the time constraints in publishing the RFQ and the selection process. She was hopeful to have the RFQ out within the next two weeks with presentation to the Board next month.

Member Coleman suggested a sub-committee to “speed-up” the process.

Treasurer Goudreault moved to proceed with the process of publishing a Request for Qualifications for professional services to promote downtown and its businesses during Cleveland Streetscape construction, Vice Chairman Allbritton seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Member Bosi would like to see more input from the Board to define what it is that we are looking for. He would like to be assured that the company chosen to provide professional services communicates with the businesses and the sub-committee to understand the marketing needs for our downtown. The Board must be involved in the process.

Ms. Campos assured Member Bosi and others that she envisioned the chosen consultant would work for and with each member of the Board.

Mr. Matthews understood the next step after approval is to establish a sub-committee to work with staff in developing the Request for Qualifications and the selection process.

Treasurer Goudreault asked if those selected would be making a presentation to the Board.

Mr. Matthews answered that the selection would be much like interviewing an applicant for employment. One’s resume may be different than the person. Each firm selected would have an opportunity to make their presentation to the Board.

Councilmember Petersen suggested the Board consider an amount not to exceed \$40,000 for this project, which is a combination of funds set aside for the market study follow-up and cooperative advertising.

Treasurer Goudreault moved to allocate an amount not to exceed \$40,000 as provided in the F/Y 2005-06 budget set aside for Cooperative Advertising and Market Study Follow-up for the purpose of marketing downtown including funding professional services in the amount of \$20,000 for Request for Qualification as it pertains to the development of a marketing and implementation plan for downtown

Clearwater and to assist the DDB and the CRA in publishing the Request for Qualifications; Member Bosi seconded ant the motion carried unanimously.

Conversation continued regarding the expense of advertising and how the St. Pete Times has increased the cost by 6.5%; to advertise bi-weekly in the Times costs approximately \$61,000 annually.

Member Bosi agreed. Twenty thousand dollars is a “drop in the bucket”; an advertising campaign could cost \$60 to 80,000 to make an impact. Advertising is more than advertising in the newspaper.

Ms. Campos stated that the second part of the plan for marketing downtown and advertising for professional services by way of Request fro Qualifications is to set up a selection committee, which would consist of members of the DDB, Main Street and ED staff.

Vice Chairman Allbritton volunteered to serve on the committee and asked for another to serve as a subcommittee of the DDB.

Member Bosi volunteered to serve on the sub-committee with **Chairman Allbritton**

ITEM #9– Business Relocation and Expansion Grant – Discussion – Linda Byars

Elise Winters summarized the grant document changes outlined at the December regular meeting. The document has been revised to omit repetition and to add the requirement for a 5-years lease. Ms. Winters emphasized the importance of having businesses in place and established the term of the lease and reiterated that the grant is matching, dollar for dollar for eligible building improvements.

Vice Chairman Allbritton questioned the omission of painting as an eligible improvement.

Ms. Winters explained that eligible improvements are those of substance and not maintenance items, which painting may be considered and could be readily changed, where a fixed item such as lighting, plumbing, flooring and the like could not.

Member Goudreault stated that she expended nearly \$2,000 for painting her building and believes painting should be an eligible improvement.

Ms. Winters asked if the intent of the board was to include painting as an eligible improvement.

Conversation ensued regarding the board’s ability to review the grant every year as needed and change or terminate the program; the importance of requiring a licensed contractor to complete the work and funding permanent changes that are not superficial or cosmetic improvements to the project..

Member Bosi moved to accept the Business Relocation and Expansion Grant program guidelines as written including the requirement for a five-years lease; Member Coleman seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Member Goudreault moved to amend the motion to accept the Relocation and Expansion Grant program guidelines to include painting as an eligible improvement, with no second the motion failed.

ITEM #10 – Rear Entrance Improvement Program Draft - Discussion

Ms. Campos explained that given parking would be removed on Cleveland Street, the Main Street Design Committee has recommended providing for multiple entrances into businesses located in the alleyways.

Ms. Fogarty added that the Design Committee had recommended the DDB consider a 75/25 matching grant rather than 50/50 because many of the tenants may not have funds immediately available for the entrance improvements. She added that the committee members physically inspected the alleyways to determine what improvements may be applicable and will make recommendations to market the program to the businesses willing to participate.

Discussion ensued regarding those who may be interested; the number of entrances; the question of rear and side entrances being considered; grant amounts and the total.

Ms. Campos stated that this discussion was the first attempt of the committee to evaluate the possible grant program. She will bring the final draft to the DDB at the next meeting

ITEM #11 – Main Street Report – Anne Fogarty

Ms. Fogarty stated that the Main Street Promotion Committee has been hard at work with the themed monthly merchants events. Doug Matthews and Betsy Clement from the city's Public Communications Department have been designing the postcards. The January promotion will carry a "new year-new you" health and beauty theme. Postcards will be mailed to approximately 5000 people living within a 3-mile radius of downtown, mostly woman, with incomes exceeding \$40,000 per year.

Very Important Pet is opening at 1242 Cleveland Street, which provides for special pet needs including training, walking, sitting and pet adoption. Totally Board at 700 Court Street will provide everything for the skater and surfer. And, the Farmer's Market has announced the coming of the annual "Super Soups Festival" in February.

Chairman Fernandez asked about the Cleveland Streetscape Construction "tool kit".

Ms. Fogarty explained that the "tool kit" would be completed and distributed closer to commence of construction. Some items in the kit are going to have to wait until a schedule has been put in place and would be printed as the project progresses.

Ms. Campos stated that construction plans are 100% complete pending value engineering. The schedule for construction is pending early spring. A decision has yet to be made regarding the time of construction. Whether the project will be completed in 12 or 18 months has yet to be decided. We should know more in February.

ITEM #13 – Election of Officer F/Y 2005-06

Chairman Fernandez called for nominations to fill the position of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Treasurer for fiscal year 2005/06.

Chairman:

Member Coleman and **Member Clifford** nominated David Allbritton for Chairman.

Member Bosi nominated **Bob Fernandez** as Chairman.

By way of secret ballot Member Allbritton was elected and appointed as Chairman of the Downtown Development Board for fiscal year 2005/06.

Vice Chairperson:

Vice Chairman Allbritton nominated **Member Coleman** for Vice Chairman

Member Goudreault nominated **Chairman Fernandez** for Vice Chairman

By way of secret ballot Current Chairman Fernandez was elected and appointed Vice-Chairman of the Downtown Development Board for fiscal year 2006/05

Treasurer:

Member Coleman nominated Member Clifford for Treasurer of the DDB for fiscal year 2005/06. Running unopposed, Member Clifford accepted the nomination and appointment as Treasurer.

ITEM #14 – Final Comments

Member Clifford appreciates the opportunity and is hopeful that he will serve all the members well.

Member Bosi stated that the year 2006 should bring many opportunities for downtown Clearwater. He encouraged the board to become more active with the downtown businesses.

Member Aranjo stated that we all have the same goals and reminded everyone to support the businesses through the concerns of Cleveland Street construction, which is for the greater good of all.

Councilmember Doran thanked Bob Fernandez for his service as chairman and the entire board members for their dedication. All are examples to which Clearwater should aspire. Clearwater is becoming a 20-year “overnight success” that is, rebuilding and renovating, a process that is well underway.

Chairman Fernandez complimented all the effort of the ED Department than thanked Ms. Campos for keeping the Board informed. He thanked Ms. Winters for pointing us in the right

direction. A lot is happening and much we haven't delved into. The year 2006 will be an excellent year for downtown. He thanked everyone for support him. He enjoyed serving as chairman and will do his best as vice-chair.

Ms. Campos advised that the next CRA meeting will take place January 30th at 9:00 in the morning. Consultants will present the Design Analysis to the CRA.

ITEM #15 - Adjournment

The January 4, 2006 meeting of the Downtown Development Board adjourned at 7:21 PM

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Members Present:	Bob Fernandez	Chairman
	David Allbritton	Vice Chairman
	Josee Goudreault	Treasurer
	Geri Aranjó	Member
	Dennis Bosi	Member
	Elizabeth Coleman	Member
	Bob Clifford	Member

Also Present:	John Doran	Councilmember
	Carlen Petersen	Councilmember
	Geraldine Campos	Director, ED & Housing
	Anne Fogarty	Main Street Coordinator
	Linda Byars	Board Administrator
	Elise K. Winters	DDB Council

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS:

01.04.06.01

Treasurer Goudreault moved to approve the December 7, 2005 Regular Meeting Minutes; Vice Chairman Allbritton seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

01.04.06.02

Treasurer Goudreault moved to proceed with the process of publishing a Request for Qualifications for professional services to promote downtown and its businesses during Cleveland Streetscape construction, Vice Chairman Allbritton seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

01.04.06.03

Treasurer Goudreault moved to allocate an amount not to exceed \$40,000 as provided in the F/Y 2005-06 budget set aside for Cooperative Advertising and Market Study Follow-up for the purpose of marketing downtown including funding professional services in the amount of \$20,000 for Request for Qualification as it pertains to the development of a marketing and implementation plan for downtown Clearwater and to assist the DDB and the CRA in publishing the Request for Qualifications; Member Bosi seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

01.04.06.04

Member Bosi moved to accept the Business Relocation and Expansion Grant program guidelines as written including the requirement for a five-years lease; Member Coleman seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

01.04.06.05

Member Goudreault moved to amend the motion to accept the Relocation and Expansion Grant program guidelines to include painting as an eligible improvement, with no second the motion failed.