



MINUTES
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING
Monday – March 13th, 2023 – 12:00PM
Downtown Development Authority
350 SE 1st Street, Delray Beach, FL

1. Call to order/Roll Call – 12:12pm

Members Present: Mavis Benson, Dr. John Conde, Vera Woodson, Rocco Mangel (via Zoom), Mark Denkler.

Members Absent: Alan Costilo and Frank Frione.

Staff: Laura Simon, Suzanne Boyd, Liliana Fino, BJ Sklar, Marusca Gatto.

Guests: Sgt. Schmidt, Sara Maxfield, Griban Garcia, Paulo Matos, Jackie Boileau, Mwangi Hudson, Melissa McKeown, Cole Devitt, Bruce Leish, Lee Cohen, Glayson Leroy, Josh Nichols, Sean McCabe, Richard Jones, Heather Batson, James Batson, Tom Warnke, Nancy Stewart-Franczak.

Zoom: Maxwell Zengage, Eric Fernandez, Roberta Wein, Missie Barletto, Amy Alvarez, Jennifer Buce, Didier Follain-Grisell, Jeff Dash, Joe Josemond, Josh Abrams, Mitch Amir, Shaun Zitani, Alexis Rosenberg, Grisel Rodriguez.

2. Approval of Consent Agenda:

Motion by Mark Denkler, seconded by John Conde, to approve the consent agenda (Items A. – Feb. 13, 2023, Regular DDA Board Meeting Minutes, B - Finances of Feb. 2023, and C - Safety Ambassador Report, DDA February Report) adding who dissented on the 8A item vote (ILA – City & DDA Old School Square Campus Agreement). Motion carries (5-0). Frank Frione and Alan Costilo not present.

3. Approval of Regular Agenda – March 13, 2023

Motion by John Conde, seconded by Vera Woodson, to approve the regular agenda. Motion carries (5-0). Frank Frione and Alan Costilo not present.

4. Public Comments and Delray Beach Partner Reports (City, CRA, Chamber, etc.) – Comments limited to 2 Minutes

City Partners Reports:

- Report by Sgt. Schmidt, Delray Beach Police Department, Sergeant.

Public Comments:

Mr. Bruce Leish (Meridian Delray Condominium Association, President) suggest that instead of having only public comments at the beginning of the DDA Board meetings, to allow for public to comment after each city planning and zoning item is presented. Also, he suggests bringing to the table (on future meetings) the following items:

- To restore the light up Artwork composition that is located under the Atlantic Avenue Bridge;
- To add railings on the sidewalks along the Atlantic Avenue Bridge to prevent pedestrians to step out to the roadway;
- To change the parking time limits at the Gladiola parking lot (that is now a 9-hour limit) to allow for more parking turnover;

Ms. Nancy Stewart-Franczak (Festival Management Group, Executive Director) gives details on the Delray Affair happening on April 14, 15 and 16, 2023.

5. DDA Marketing & Activation Presentation – DDA Team

Ms. Suzanne Boyd gives updates on the DDA Grant Program (grants were given to KOP Mentoring and Spady Cultural Heritage Museum), on the DDA Health and Wellness Social Media campaign, DDA initiatives (First Friday Art Walk, #LoveDelray Fashion Experience, upcoming DDA events), on marketing and rebranding initiatives regarding Old School Square, on the DDA digital advertising initiatives, social media initiatives results, on the Tourism marketing campaign, on the DDA website analytics, on e-mail marketing results, on the DDA public relations placements and interactions, on the downtown economic development updates and on the DDA summer marketing plan.

Ms. Vera Woodson gives updates on the Evening of Black Excellence under the Stars event (took place on February 11th, 2023), on the Black Elegance Fashion Show (took place at Throw Social on February 1st, 2023) and on the Jam and Jazz event at Libby Wesley Park (took place on February 26th, 2023).

Ms. Marusca Gatto gives updates on the Cornell Art Museum future initiatives (new Water exhibition to debut on April 7th, 2023, new activation “Music at the Museum” will take place every Wednesday from 3pm to 4:30pm, future “Surf Florida” exhibition related talks and movie nights) and current initiatives (ongoing, by reservation, group tours, museum promotion) and visitors data.

Ms. B.J. Sklar gives updates on the Visitor Information Center activities and stats.

Ms. Laura Simon gives updates on the Safety Ambassadors report and coordination with the city Clean and Safe Department.

6. Development Services: Downtown Delray Beach Site Plan review and approvals:

A. 131 East Atlantic Avenue - Mural application “Pineapple Dreams” – Lee Cohen

Mr. Lee Cohen (Manimal Land LLC - Vice President) and Glayson Leroy (Galera Collective – Owner) present item 131 East Atlantic Avenue - Mural application “Pineapple Dreams”.

Mr. Glayson Leroy observes that this mural is composed by 6 different themes, and therefore each one may become a distinct photo opportunity.

Ms. Vera Woodson questions if some type of text can be added to the mural to provide reference to the location of the mural, in case photos of it are made public.

Mr. Glayson Leroy answers that they will discuss with the City team what legally can be added for that purpose.

Ms. Laura Simon suggests the use of colors are rich and vibrant as sun quickly fades away outdoor wall colors.

Motion by Vera Woodson seconded by Mark Denkler to approve the 131 East Atlantic Avenue - Mural application “Pineapple Dreams” as presented. Motion carries (5-0). Frank Frione and Alan Costilo not present.

B. Subculture Coffee - 302 NE 6th Avenue - In lieu Parking request - Rodney Mayo

Ms. Jennifer Buce (City of Delray Beach, Development Services Department, Planning & Zoning Division, Planner) presents item Subculture Coffee - 302 NE 6th Avenue - In lieu Parking request.

Mr. Mark Denkler enquiries about how many workers work at this business.

Mr. Shaun Zitani (SubCulture Coffee Roasters, Chief Operating Officer) answers that between 10 and 12.

Mr. Mark Denkler shares his concerns, seeing that there is a total of only 8 parking spaces on-site, and those will be shared between the patrons and the employees.

Mr. Shaun Zitani answers that, as of now, there are only a few employees that drive to work, and that there are, only, 3 employees working per shift.

Mr. Mark Denkler observes that, usually, parking in-lieu requests are approved if there are alternative parking options in the surrounding areas.

Ms. Jennifer Buce confirms that there are, indeed, alternative parking options in the surrounding areas.

Motion by John Conde seconded by Mark Denkler Conde to approve the Subculture Coffee - 302 NE 6th Avenue - In lieu Parking request as presented. Motion carries (5-0). Frank Frione and Alan Costilo not present.

C. Valhalla Condominiums – 235 SE 5th Avenue - Class V Site Plan - Josh Nichols & Schmidt Nichols
Alexis Rosenberg (City of Delray Beach, Development Services Department, Planning & Zoning Division, Long Range Planning, Senior Planner) and Josh Nichols (Schmidt Nichols - Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning, Josh Nichols, LEED AP, Planner Principal) present item Valhalla Condominiums – 235 SE 5th Avenue.

Ms. Vera Woodson enquires about the number of parking spots allocated per residential unit for this development.

Mr. Josh Nichols answers that each residential unit has 2 assigned parking spots (total of 7 units) and that the full development counts with 17 parking spots total, providing spots, also, for guests of the residents. Public comment: Mr. Bruce Leish (Meridian Delray, President) observes that he is in favor of this project seeing that it will bring value to the area.

Ms. Mavis Benson suggests the use of a different color for the building exterior walls (which are white on the proposed project).

Motion by John Conde, seconded by Vera Woodson to approve the Valhalla Condominiums – 235 SE 5th Avenue - Class V Site Plan as presented. Motion carries (5-0). Frank Frione and Alan Costilo not present.

7. NEW Business

A. DDA Financial Policy – M. Denkler, Treasurer

Mr. Mark Denkler presents item DDA Financial Policy on review for DDA's Board approval.

Mr. Mark Denkler suggests adding the executive director of the DDA (Laura Simon) to act as the liaison on the bank accounts functions especially due to the rise in suspicious activity and therefore, the executive director to serve as a backup signer for the Seacoast Bank account in case of emergencies. He also suggests opening new checking accounts in multiple different banks during the following fiscal year.

Motion by Mr. Mark Denkler, seconded by Dr. John Conde to have the Executive Director, Laura Simon, be added as an authorized signer for the Seacoast Bank account. Motion carries (5-0). Frank Frione and Alan Costilo were not present.

Mr. Mark Denkler suggest dividing the DDA capitals through different bank entities for added security.

Mr. Rocco Mangel suggests moving some capital out of the Seacoast Bank DDA account and instead use those funds to capitalize through investments in Treasury Bills.

Motion by Rocco Mangel, seconded by Mark Denkler to transfer out a part of the funds at the DDA's Seacoast Bank account and instead use those funds to capitalize through investments in Treasury Bills.

Ms. Vera suggests, before doing any changes, to take look into another banking options.

Motion withdrawn by Rocco Mangel.

Motion by Vera Woodson, seconded by John Conde to, explore another institutions of banking as well as the option of investing on Treasury Bills, before transferring out a part of the funds at the DDA's Seacoast Bank account. Motion carries (5-0). Frank Frione and Alan Costilo were not present.

B. Worthing Park – Challenges and Upgrades – L. Simon

Ms. Laura Simons updates the DDA board members on the latest issues at Worthing Park (issues with vagrants, loitering).

Ms. Laura Simons observes that the DDA is working together with the City's Park and Recreation Department on exploring other options of seating (bistro table seating, stone pebble seats or others). Once options are found, the DDA can present these suggestions to the City Team.

Public comment: Mr. Bruce Leish suggests that additional armrests could be added to the benches to prevent people from laying down on the benches.

Ms. Vera Woodson observes that bistro tables would fit better for the area, seeing that they will seem like an extension of the outdoor café seating that already exists outside the restaurants at this location. It is the DDA Board consensus to find options to solve this issue and present them to the City Team.

C. DDA Board Member Appointments

Ms. Mavis Benson updates the DDA Board members on the resignation of Mr. Alan Costilo (vice-chair). Ms. Laura Simon adds that the term of Alan Costilo, had him stayed, would just end in July of 2024 and, therefore, it is important to have this position filled. Consequently, according to the DDA By-Laws, the vice-chair position will open for the public to apply through the City, and the City Commission will choose and appoint the suitable candidate. She also notes that the remaining upcoming DDA Board appointments will take place in May/June, with the new terms starting in July. From these appointments, some of them can be reappointed.

8. OLD Business

A. DDA Programing Update – L. Simon

Ms. Laura Simon updates the DDA Board on the upcoming DDA events (Savor the Avenue, First Friday Art Walk, Mother's Day Orchid Giveaway, Art & Jazz on the Avenue, Restaurant Month) and other events happening in the City (Delray Affair, Billie Jean King Cup).

i. DDA Summer Marketing – S. Boyd

Ms. Suzanne Boyd presents the DDA Summer Marketing plan. The DDA Summer Marketing plan, in collaboration with the Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce and City partners, intends to bring more traffic to the downtown area during the low season through programs and activations and other marketing tactics (such as a VIP program for locals). This plan will be directed, majorly, to local residents and to residents living in Delray Beach surrounding areas.

B. Special Events in Downtown Update – L. Simon

Ms. Laura Simon reports on the latest City Commission determinations (discussed during one of February's City Commission meetings) regarding the Special Events Policy. During the discussion was mentioned that there are too many events taking place in downtown Delray Beach which is causing some issues regarding traffic and large crowds' gatherings. This Policy is now on review. She observes that Special Events are extremely important to improve Economic Vitality. Therefore, she recommends to the

DDA Board to create a survey directed to downtown businesses and residents, to perceive what events are or not important to them, or if they have suggestions for future activations and events.

Ms. Vera Woodson suggests using other streets for events apart from Atlantic Avenue, or NE 2nd Avenue. Mr. Mark Denkler also notes that most of the events take place during the high season which brings more traffic on top of the existent one during that time, meaning, if those events would take place during off-season the outcome would be different.

Ms. Laura Simon also adds that the construction road closures increase traffic congestion. Therefore, an effective communication of all road closures (for the purpose of events and constructions ones) is very important to help navigate the visitors through downtown Delray Beach.

It is the DDA Board consensus to move forward with creating and deploying the "Special Events review" survey to perceive downtown businesses and residents' feedback and transmit it to the City partners.

9. Non-Agenda items.

There were no non-agenda items.

10. Board Comments

Mr. John Conde asks if there are any updates on the Delray Beach Wayfinding project.

Ms. Missie Barletto (City of Delray Beach, Public Works Department, Director) answers that the invitation is ready but not published yet. Afterwards, there is a wait from 30 days to a few months out to execute the project.


Ms. Vera Woodson suggests adding signage to identify Libby Wesley Plaza, to explore the data on Airbnb accommodations in downtown Delray Beach, and make a revenue analysis, to request an "All-America City" signage to be placed at the exit of the Interstate 95, going East, on Atlantic Avenue (such as the one located on Linton Avenue). She also gives input on the Interlocal Agreement between the City of Delray Beach and the Delray Beach Downtown Development Authority regarding the Old School Square Campus management by the DDA.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:25pm though motion by Vera Woodson seconded by Mark Denkler. Motion carries (5-0). Frank Frione and Alan Costilo were not present.

Respectfully submitted,
Liliana Fino


Vera Woodson, DDA Secretary


DATE