



MINUTES
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING
Friday – July 19th, 2024 – 9:00 AM
Fairfield Inn & Suites Delray Beach
910 West Atlantic Ave., Delray Beach, FL

Members Present: Vera Woodson, Harold Van Arnem, Jim Knight, Brian Rosen, Cole Devitt, Aaron Hallyburton.

Members Absent: None.

Staff: Laura Simon, Liliana Fino, Suzanne Boyd, Danielle Morien, Devin Dewane.

Welcome & Meeting Overview by DDA Executive Director Laura Simon

DDA Executive Director Simon introduces the DDA Team (Executive Director Simon and Susanne Boyd) and the Organization. Introduction by new DDA Board members Harold Van Arnem and Jim Knight.

9:15am – Board member Aaron Hallyburton arrives at the meeting.

Overview of DDA

After introductions, the DDA team gives an overview of the DDA history and scope of work as well as the past year's efforts and future goals.

- Goals & Accomplishments from FY23:
 - Enhance the Downtown Experience
 - Create a Resident Engagement Strategy
 - Focus on West Atlantic Avenue District
 - Create a Plan for Old School Square

Discussion on Strengths and Opportunities for Growth

The DDA team and DDA Board proceed with the meeting with identifying the strengths of the organization and of the downtown and also the opportunities for growth.

➤ **Strengths:**

- Nimble - very responsive;
- Actively engaged with the community;
- Proactive response to needs;
- Professional and personable;
- Fabric & community;
- Interest in what is happening;
- Events are well thought;
- Strong team;
- Strong downtown;
- Approach hurdles with determination;
- Main street runs from 95 to the beach;

- Leaders in the past were visionary;
- Great marketing tools and reach;
- Diverse and unified community;
- Great history;
- Provides opportunities for everyone to be heard;
- Leadership with history;
- Limitations on height limits on buildings – no high rises;
- Downtown is designed for people;
- Great understanding of the community’s needs.

➤ **Opportunities for growth:**

Visitor Information Center:

- Create a satellite Visitor Information Center on the West Atlantic area;
- Use the library for a satellite Visitor Information Center;
- Seek grants for the Visitor Information Center;
- Create revenue streams for the Visitor Information Center;

West Atlantic Avenue:

- Create more activations on the West Atlantic area, collaborating with the businesses on that area to host events;
- Create low-impact constant activations;
- Create a program for Libbey Wesley plaza;
- Leverage vacant parcels on West Atlantic;
- Re-energize the Frog Alley Festival;
- Communicate West Atlantic projects;
- Communicate new happenings on West Atlantic (new businesses opening...);
- Create a (strategic) plan for activations of the West Atlantic area;
- Expand the Entertainment District;

Old School Square management:

- Seek sponsorships for OSS;
- Create a transition plan for the OSS management;
- Leverage the history of the campus into historical celebrations;

Parking:

- Create parking incentives to bring visitors to downtown during low season;
- Using the South County Courthouse garage for employee parking;
- Communicate better the multiple parking options;
- Create a Parking management plan with the City;
- Enhancing the parking garages (signage, add murals...)
- Create parking opportunities on the West Atlantic area;
- Communication on event parking.

DDA in General:

- Improve economic development;
- Improve business recruitment and retention programs;
- Seek sponsorships for the DDA;
- Rename OSS foundation to seek grant money for the DDA programs;
- Organize a forum with developers;
- Liaison with City entities and developers;

Clean and Safe/ Placemaking:

- Seek grants for TPA, Discover The Palm Beaches;
- Seek grants for Clean and Safe;
- Understand the financials.

DDA Team priorities discussion:

Afterwards, from the recent discussion, the DDA team identifies the following key goals for the coming year:

- Enhance programming on West Atlantic Avenue. Activate Libby Plaza on a regular basis;
- Focus on business development and sponsorships;
- Increase parking marketing and promotion;
- Produce celebrations for historical milestones (Crest Theatre, Vintage Gym and VIC);
- Continue the momentum while generating revenue for Old School Square;
- Strategic Plan FY2030.

BOARD MEMBERS PRIORITIES:

All board members contributed to the discussion to share their priorities:

- Promote Economic development in the West Atlantic Avenue area;
- Improve Clean and Safe and Placemaking;
- Improve and collaborate in resolving Parking issues;
- Create a transition plan for OSS;
- Strategic development of the right shops on Atlantic;
- Promote overall Economic Development within the DDA district;
- Improve lighting.

BOARD MEMBERS DIRECTIONS:

Following the previously highlighted priorities the DDA board members discuss directions for the goals' execution. The summary is outlined below.

West Atlantic area enhancements:

- ✓ Beautify and Activate Libby Wesley plaza engaging and collaboration with the community;
- ✓ Revive the Frog Alley Festival;
- ✓ Communication of what is happening in the area;
- ✓ Enhancing the look and feel of West Atlantic area to make it appeal (enhance lighting);
- ✓ Create community meetings with the DDA;
- ✓ Create more events to enhance walkability between east and west Atlantic avenue;
- ✓ Create a plan for public parking at South County Courthouse;
- ✓ Engage with the CRA;
- ✓ Create a Main Street program including East of the Intracoastal bridge to A1A, and Swinton to 95;

Transition Plan for Old School Square:

- ✓ Implement FY24-25 programming;
- ✓ Guide capital improvements to the campus;
- ✓ Re-engage interested groups;
- ✓ Work with the City to create an efficient transition plan with the mission to keep OSS open and activated;
- ✓ Give interested groups access to program Amphitheatre.

Clean and Safe/ Placemaking:

- ✓ Apply for grants – TPA;
- ✓ Enhance lighting on West Atlantic;
- ✓ Beautification of Libby Wesley plaza;
- ✓ Work with property owners to beautify their spaces; offer a vendor list (for pressure cleaning services and others);
- ✓ Promote the Delray Beach app amongst business managers and owners;
- ✓ Create Art opportunities in the West Atlantic area.

Economic Development Strategy:

- ✓ New businesses open/close tracking and engagement;
- ✓ Empty storefront tracking;
- ✓ Enhance empty storefronts;
- ✓ Be more involved with the process of leasing storefronts;
- ✓ Inventory list (Ginkgo);
- ✓ Engage city's Economic Development Manager.

PARKING:

- ✓ Create a plan for public parking at South County Courthouse;
- ✓ Railroad lot to be free only during the day;
- ✓ Improve signage;
- ✓ Invest in communication and marketing;
- ✓ Understand the in-lieu parking fund;
- ✓ Advocate to have the profits from parking fees to be re-invested into the Downton area;
- ✓ Improve lighting at the Gladiola lot.

12:02PM - Aaron Hallyburton leaves the meeting.

Breakdown of DDA Board Members main comments:

Board Member Knight comments that the redevelopment and activation of the West Atlantic area should be the first priority. He also comments that it is important to heavily communicate the existing parking options in downtown Delray Beach.

Board Member Van Arnem comments that the DDA should focus on inventorying the existent assets in downtown Delray Beach to promote them and improve economic development within the community. He also comments that the Old School Square campus management should not be under the DDA purview (except for the Cornell Art Museum) and suggests the DDA create an exit strategy plan. He also advocates the DDA to participate in a development plan for the West Atlantic area, with initial focus on NW 5th Ave.

Brian Rosen suggests the DDA prioritize placemaking and clean and safe initiatives, focus on the west Atlantic area, and prioritize business recruitment and retention to support the businesses and improve economic development. He also suggests moving the Visitor Information Center to the west Atlantic area and procuring ways to monetize the Visitor Information Center. Regarding parking, he suggests some of the free public surface lots be metered and make the garage lots free of charge.

Board Member Hallyburton advocates for prioritizing placemaking and clean and safe initiatives. He also adds, regarding parking, that changes should be made to the Railroad lot, to have metered parking during the evening to allow for more turnover.

Board Secretary Devitt suggests the DDA collaborate with the city team and other interested parties in an OSS exit strategy plan to allow for a smooth transition. He also suggests procuring sponsorships for the DDA initiatives. He adds that it is important to communicate not only the events that are taking place throughout downtown Delray Beach, but also to promote the new businesses as they open.

Board Member Woodson suggests that the DDA plan, sooner rather than later, for on an exit strategy from the management of OSS. She advocates for more activations in the West Atlantic area, but also East of the Intracoastal bridge. She also suggests actively engaging the developers to recruit meaningful projects for the downtown area. Regarding parking, she suggests lowering the rates during low season to incentive visitors to come downtown.

When Board members were confronted about timeline for the end of the management of OSS campus by the DDA, Board Chair Rosen suggested a two-year plan.


Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:07PM through board consensus.

Respectfully submitted,
Liliana Fino



Cole Devitt, DDA Secretary



DATE