

Regular Meeting of the  
Downtown Development Authority  
Thursday, March 12, 2009  
Broward Center for the Performing Arts  
New River Room West Side

**ROLL CALL**

**BOARD PRESENT:** Charles B. Ladd, Chair  
Alan Hooper, Vice Chair  
D. Fredrico Fazio, Secretary  
William R. Scherer, Board Member  
Dennis F. O'Shea, Board Member  
Gregory Durden, Board Member

**NOT PRESENT:** Peter Feldman, Treasurer

**ALSO PRESENT:**

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| John M. Milledge, DDA Legal Counsel               | David Zwick      |
| Chris Wren, DDA Executive Director                | Megan Purdue     |
| Elizabeth Van Zandt, Planning & Design<br>Manager | Anthony Williams |
| Marti Brown, Administrative Coordinator           | Robert Dugan     |
| Chadwick Blue, Urban Planner                      | Carola Hooper    |
| Neil Sterling                                     | Mike Ferber      |
| Alan Tinter                                       | Patsy Mennuti    |
| Luan Malushi                                      | Connie Correia   |
| Richard Mancuso                                   | Brittany Wallman |
| Charlie Palmer                                    | Alex Brown       |
| Kelley Shanley                                    | Karen Reese      |
| Jay Smith   | Heather Parnass  |
| Ron Centamore                                     | Ella Parker      |
|   | Linda Lewis      |

**PRESIDING:** Charles B. Ladd, Chair

Chairman Ladd called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m. Roll call was taken by Marti Brown. All Board members were present with the exception of Mr. Feldman and Mr. Durden, who arrived a short time later.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairman Ladd asked if there were any comments and hearing none, he asked if there was a motion approving the items on the Consent Agenda. *A motion was moved by Mr. Fazio and seconded by Mr. Hooper. All board members were in favor.* The following items were unanimously approved:

- C-1) Approval of the minutes and follow-ups from the February 12, 2009 DDA Regular Board Meeting.

- C-2) Amendment of Outdoor Event Application – Florida Turkish Festival, 4/18-4/19/09 (originally 4/12/09), Yasin Bagci
- C-3) Approval of Outdoor Event Application – 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Corn Toss Tournament and Family Fun Day, 5/17/09, Amy Miller

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

### **R-1 Police Report**

Major Williams said that in January and February of last year, there were 60 part one crimes in the downtown area and this year, there have been 36. Major Williams introduced two of the officers present to receive commendations, Officer Jay Smith and Officer Malushi. Chairman Ladd said there were issues at the DDA Park that the police were very responsive to and made arrests which prompted the commendations and he asked Mr. Wren to elaborate. Mr. Wren said people were avoiding the park and there were drugs being sold. He said the police apprehended the individuals involved within one week of being out there and they deserve today's commendation. At this time, Mr. Durden arrived. Chairman Ladd presented a picture of the downtown during the boat parade along with a humorous picture. A photograph was taken and the Board thanked the officers.

### **R-2 Omnibus Bill/New Federal Appropriations Update**

Mr. Wren said the bill has not been finished by the Senate nor signed by the new President. He said that Congressman Ron Klein called him recently and said he appropriated last \$712,500 for streetscape. He said Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz has allocated \$475,000 for transit consultant work. Again, he added that the bill still needs to be signed.

### **R-3 PACA Update**

Chairman Ladd introduced Charlie Palmer and Kelley Shanley, the new President of the Broward Center for the Performing Arts who were present to provide an update.

Mr. Shanley said they wanted to provide an update on activities in the Center and their role as an economic tool in the community. He said there are over 700,000 people per year attending events. He said that just this week alone, there were 12 performances with over 16,000 attendees. Mr. Shanley said that they are in the top 10 ranking on Pollstar on venues world wide. He talked about upcoming events such as Jersey Boys, Stomp, Paula Poundstone and the Opera. He went through revenue by type broken down into percentages: 70% Broadway, 14% Partners, 12% Other, 3% Community and 1% Education. He said when you look at activity by type in terms of percentages; the highest is community and education with Broadway representing 25%. Mr. Shanley said the Broward Center contributes over \$53 million to the economy annually and they actively promote tourism. He said cultural tourists spend twice as much as local. He added that the Broward Center leads the Riverwalk A&E Consortium.

Mr. Hooper asked what the status was with the Capital Improvement Program and Mr. Palmer said they did a study but they need to raise about \$50 million. He said that due to the economy, they put this on the backburner and are doing critical needs first with a smaller fund raising campaign. Chairman Ladd asked if there was discussion on expansion and Mr. Palmer said that is part of the major capital campaign. The Board thanked them for their update.

#### **R-4 Streetscape**

##### a) Site Circulation Study for SE/SW 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Streets

Chairman Ladd said they started with a traffic study on SE/SW 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets and asked Mr. Wren to give an update. Mr. Wren said that back in October or November of last year, Mr. Scherer talked to the Board about a partnership with the City. Mr. Wren said he met with the City Manager, George Gretsas and that he agreed to split the cost of the consultant study. He said a scope was prepared and that they received a notice to proceed from the City. Mr. Wren said he then contacted Mr. Tinter. He said he will be meeting with Mr. Scherer as a committee of one and will come back to the Board probably in April.

Mr. Tinter showed a map to the Board and pointed out his new logo and said he joined with IBI Group. He talked about the scope of services the City approved last week and said the purpose is to determine if further analysis is warranted to changing the roadway configurations on 7<sup>th</sup> Street. **Mr. Wren said he would disseminate a copy of the map and scope of services to the Board.** Mr. Tinter said the data collection efforts will be completed by next month with a preliminary report completed in April. Mr. Tinter said they looked at existing right of way and talked about this further.

Mr. Fazio talked about the new courthouse location and how it could impact these efforts. Mr. Tinter said he was involved in the original work done on the courthouse and will be looking at all the studies. Mr. Scherer said the parking garage will probably be located between 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Andrews and Federal. The Board asked Mr. Tinter to consider the new jurors parking and future rail system in his assumptions.

##### b) NE 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Street Update

Chairman Ladd said they have conceptual plans done. He said a civil engineer has provided an estimate for the two projects. He said the cost is \$3.5 million excluding power line burial and lighting. Chairman Ladd said this will be discussed in more detail next month, but the strategy is to come up with a funding plan that builds these streets through partnerships.

##### c) Las Olas Partnership "Treescape"

Chairman Ladd discussed a concept they are looking into which is planting approximately 12 Oak Trees along Las Olas (400') at an estimated cost of \$2,000/each. He said this item will also be discussed further at the next meeting.

##### d) Urban Oasis

Mr. Wren explained the potential Urban Oasis program (construction sites that can be turned into temporary open spaces and art exhibitions until they are developed on). Mr. Wren said they would set back the fencing to allow for vegetation, sculptures, and street performers, activating the space. He indicated he will be working with various stakeholders such as Stiles and Bentley Forbes. He said that Chadwick Blue has submitted two grants to the Knight Foundation and talked about this further. Mr. Wren showed a couple of pictures that were examples of these eye sore sites in the Downtown and brought up partnering with the City. He said they need to look at allocating money. Mr. Scherer said he thought the City imposed an ordinance requiring the owner to grass the site if it will not be developed on for a specified period of time. **Mr. Wren said he will look into it.**

***Mr. Hooper made a motion for a Resolution that the DDA supports the concept of converting the abandoned old One Stop Shop into a City Park. Mr. Fazio seconded. All were in favor. Mr. O'Shea***

emphasized the importance of considering the plans the City has for the site.

#### **R-5 Broward County Courthouse Task Force Update**

Mr. Durden said there will be a new courthouse downtown with civil and criminal courts together. He distributed a map to the Board. He said the County wants to purchase property as opposed to leasing. He said the original idea was 500 parking spaces and now the total is 900 parking spaces. Mr. Durden said they are looking at two choices but the one he's advocating for is the old Comcast building. He said there will be a walkway from the parking garage to the courthouse. Mr. Durden said they were looking at the 110 Tower as a temporary solution during construction of the courthouse but the rental rates are a bit high. Mr. Durden said the west wing will be torn down and he talked about what will happen during construction. Mr. Scherer showed concern about the process.

Mr. Durden said that parking will come first. Mr. O'Shea asked about the existing courthouse and parking garage footage and Mr. Duren said there's about 400,000 square feet at the old courthouse. Mr. Milledge said parking is the immediate need and an RLI is being done. Chairman Ladd wanted clarification that parking will be done first and that 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Andrews is the leading location and Mr. Durden said yes. Mr. Durden said a bond will not work so they will look at other financing. Mr. Milledge added that the RLI will not exclude any sites. Mr. Sterling said the County is in the process of paying off bonds and they are looking at additional resources. He said the RLI is the same as last year. Mr. Scherer asked why the bond issue was ruled out and Mr. Durden said it wouldn't pass. He added that the parking garage will be enhanced by retail or office space. Chairman Ladd said the entrance to the parking garage will have a critical impact on the 7<sup>th</sup> Street Study and what's in the RLI will have an impact. Mr. Sterling said he and Mr. Milledge met with the County Manager on transit and this issue and the County is looking at credit programs in the Stimulus Bill. Mr. Durden said there is enough money right now to build the garage. Mr. O'Shea said the cost of building parking structures is down 40% so they should be looking for Federal help. Chairman Ladd said to keep the Board informed and Mr. Wren said he would. Mr. Durden said their last meeting is April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

#### **R-6 Downtown Residential Unit Report**

Mr. Hooper said he really did not have anything to report today. Mr. Wren said they are waiting on the new leadership in Fort Lauderdale before an update can be provided and he recognized Ella Parker from the City who was in attendance today. Mr. Hooper said after the new Commission is in place, they will move forward.

#### **R-7 Downtown Demographics Update**

Mr. Wren summarized the new quarterly demographic updates staff will be providing, as directed previously by the Board. He said that since rental information was not presented to at the last board meeting, he introduced Heather Parnass with Hooper Realty to present this information and recognized Kate Sheffield for additional demographics questions the Board may have.

Ms. Parnass with Hooper Realty said there are approximately 3,130 condo units in the RAC (listed on through the MLS). She said there are 216 active listings for rent. She said they've rented 35% of those listings. Ms. Parnass said the average rental price is \$1.49 a square foot which has dropped 15% over the last two years. She added that 70 of the rental listings are for sale. Chairman Ladd asked how many buildings have first generation units. Ms. Parnass said only two buildings, Strada 315 and Las Olas by the River. Chairman Ladd identified Riverhouse as a building that should be reviewed. The Board talked about the buildings that have sold out. Chairman Ladd said that around 200 out of 5,500

units are first generation units, which shows that our market is healthy. Mr. O'Shea said that with the average rental at \$1.49 a square foot that the market is providing Workforce Housing. The Board said the information was very beneficial and they did a great job.

#### **R-8 Transit: PB WA 9 Accounting**

Mr. Wren said he will be bringing back some items in April. Mr. Wren said that he and Mr. Milledge just came back from Tallahassee attending State Legislative meetings and meetings with transportation staff. Mr. Wren said he then went to Washington D.C. to attend meetings on new legislation being proposed that seeks to evaluate streetcar systems more favorably. He said that Congresspersons in D.C. have said that streetcar projects are a great return on investment.

Mr. Hooper asked how they should approach the stimulus. Mr. Sterling said he read all 496 pages of it and there are various pots of funding and credit sources. He said he'd be happy to sit with anyone interested. **Mr. Milledge said the lobbyists have put together a summary and they will get a copy to the Board.** Mr. Scherer asked what the value to the DDA would be and Mr. Milledge said that the Wave project is on the County's stimulus list and that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Bridge could qualify for improvements but he's not sure that will happen. Mr. Sterling said that the Stimulus Bill items are subject to all current federal processes. He said Bertha Henry at the County will look at the bridge fitting into the program but there are so many projects that must be prioritized. **Mr. Wren said that Deborah Wilkinson from the County has a presentation and he would see if she can give an overview at the next DDA Board Meeting.**

#### **Other Business**

Mr. Wren said he wanted to let the Board know that he's been working with the City regarding regulations in Huizenga Plaza with regard to allowing dog owners to play Frisbee with their dogs off their leashes. He said the residents would like to be able to do this. He said he will be looking at past Board comments regarding skateboarders in the park as well.

Mr. Scherer asked if there will be monthly reports on residential and office rentals and Mr. Wren said he will brief him on the demographic information discussed at the last board meeting. Mr. Scherer commented on the demographics report and said it was excellent.

As there was no other business to come before the Board, Chairman Ladd adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m.