

DSCA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 1, 2023

Broadway Promenade and Zoom

Board Members Present: David Lough, Patrick Gannon, Clark Lauren, Bob Pirolo, Ken Shelin, Catherine Sellers, Peter Fanning, Jaime Still, Roger Barry, Judy Mower.

Board Members Absent: None

Member Representatives Present: Bill Diehl, Condo on the Bay; Sue Lehrer, Embassy House; Tamara Logan, Renaissance; Peter Blanton, Ritz Carleton Residences; Curt Schantz, Rivo at Ringling; Fran Lambert, Bay Plaza; Susan Michl, San Marco; Jim Lampl, Jewel; Steve Mannik, Royal St, Andrew; Victor McTeer, BLVD Sarasota; Misty Smith, Palm Place; Janice Hetland, 101 Condominium; Irving Ross, Bay Plaza

Associate Members Present: Fred Grady, Alderman Oaks; Melissa Rodriguez, Brown & Brown of Sarasota; Kristin Fourie, CORE Marketing Solutions; Don Fitts, Cornerstone LifeCare; Annika Mantius, Burg Simpson Eldredge; Michele Sidlasky, City National Bank; Steven Roskamp, Sarasota Bay Club; Terry Phelps, Socotec; Michelle Colburn, Tannenbaum Lemole & Hill

Guests Present: Marlon Brown, City Manager, City of Sarasota; Bristen Groves, Sarasota Contemporary Dance; Kafi Benz, CONA; Barbara Campo, Alinari.

1. David Lough opened the meeting at 4:03 and determined a Quorum was present with all board members in attendance. The minutes of the January 4th meeting were approved on motion made by Peter Fanning and seconded by Roger Barry. Treasurer Clark Lauren reported that the DSCA account held \$14,771.31.
2. **Membership Renewals:** Only one condominium member chose not to renew membership in DSCA. Two or three were still in the process of renewing, and from two to four new condominiums were expected to apply for membership. The DSCA website will be edited to reflect the latest list of member buildings. Among associate members, three at the Platinum level and some Gold members may not renew. All the listings will be corrected by the March meeting.
3. **New Gold Associate Members:** Bristen Groves gave a brief presentation about Sarasota Contemporary Dance, and that organization as well as Rapid Response were both unanimously approved on motion made by Ken Shelin and seconded by Clark Lauren.
4. **Presentation by Marlon Brown, Sarasota City Manager:** Mr. Brown, City Manager in his second year in office, commented that this was his second visit to a DSCA board meeting as City Manager. He overviewed the progress the City has made on the following list of projects.

- Restoration of Bobby Jones golf course, to reopen this fall, and conservation of 160 acres of greenspace, in partnership with Sarasota County.
- Progress on noise abatement downtown from late night/early morning music venues and muscle cars – working with other cities to refine the City’s noise ordinance to address in particular bass decibel levels hard to measure.
- Sarasota Performing Arts Center under discussion by the Commission – among next steps will be assessment of cost elements of the financial plan, operational plan, and business plan. A Blue Ribbon Committee will address stabilizing the Van Wezel building, physically and financially, and planning for its reuse. Tours of the building should resume in some fashion once the season of performances ends.
- Payne Park: discussion about leased use of various Payne Park venues, including the auditorium, continues. Granting of any lease for more than ten years requires a 4-1 vote of Commission members. More tennis courts in Payne Park will be built by the school district for use by the school next door, but those courts will be open to the public after school hours.
- Affordable/attainable housing zoning text amendments will be the subject of Town Hall meetings, the next one to occur on March 1; the Commission gave the green light to allowing four times the current 50-unit per acre maximum for building projects in the downtown zone.
- Another project underway is to come up with proper definitions for bars, restaurants, night clubs, so there can be zoning changes to regulate them properly.
- Also under discussion are regulations concerning special events – allowed decibel levels, number of people, time limits, etc. These discussions exclude events such as the Farmer’s Market which meet regularly and have done so for some time.
- The Public Art Master Plan is being implemented and a number of art pieces are now on display at City Hall.
- The Planning Board will review the development agreements and any zoning amendments concerning the One Park project and Quay Commons structure. All elements will go before that board.
- City Hall is creating a “one stop shop” for those seeking information or permits for building or re-building – by situating together Permitting, Utilities, Engineering, and Parks & Rec departments.
- Standards are being revisited to assure that the problem of Hotel Housing is addressed City-wide, including the keys, downtown, and downtown side of the Bay, so that codes and standards are clarified and enforced.
- Parts of Central Coconut Avenue are being rezoned from industrial to residential.
- The Commission has approved extending until March 31st the use of street parking spaces for dining by downtown restaurants (more than 20 originally but the number is down to 11 or 12, and they are being charged \$25 per day per space). Some nearby retailers are complaining that their customers cannot find parking. Research is being

done to find out what other cities are doing about the issues related to allowing on-street dining.

- To address the problem of homeless people sometimes blocking sidewalks, the City is trying to see if the existing ordinances, along with retraining police officers, will work to alleviate the problem without having to create any new “sit/lie” ordinance.
- Parking staff are looking at allowing some exceptions to the usual “front in” parking requirement, which allows parking staff to see license plates without getting out of their vehicles. In certain sections of Gulfstream Avenue “back in” parking may be safer.

Board members asking questions of Mr. Brown after his presentation dealt with city garage elevators not always working reliably, and the problem of pedestrian access past construction sites where sections of the sidewalk get blocked off. Mr. Brown was praised for the City’s handling of those bypasses, and he explained that the elevator maintenance company is hard to reach and difficult to work with. He was also praised for the quality of communication made available to residents about the work plan and progress of the Gulfstream roundabout construction. When questioned about the continuing problem of “hotel houses”, Airbnb’s rentals to vacationers – Mr. Brown replied that owners are fined if they are caught renting for less than the 7-day minimum. Owners who use an ADU (accessory dwelling unit) as a vacation rental (or for any other commercial use) lose any property tax exemptions they may be entitled to on that part of their property. As for the general development plan at the Quay, Mr. Brown said that all proposals for new buildings must go before the Planning Board. He mentioned the lawsuit being brought by current Quay residents concerning protection of “air rights”, and discussion that followed touched on “imbalance” among developers (favoring one developer over others), limited opportunity for nearby residents to have input, and opposition to the design of one particularly large building proposed to arch over the roadway. The last item raised concerned prospects for building a roundabout at the intersection of US41 and Boulevard of the Arts, and Mr. Brown explained the City does not have access to enough land to be able to do that – even though it was talked about in the past. He added that the intersection will be made as safe as possible.

5. Old Business:

Annual Meeting Agenda: The draft agenda for the DSCA annual Members meeting, Wednesday, April 5, 4 to 6:30 with reception to follow, was shared with the board. [Members Meeting date later changed to Tue Apr 4th] The membership town hall-style meeting will be preceded by the election of directors and a brief organizing board meeting to officially welcome new board members and elect officers and committee chairs for the coming year. Bylaws permit up to 25 directors. The board approved the agenda, on motion made by Patrick Gannon and seconded by Peter Fanning.

6. **President’s Report:** Mr. Lough restated that the board is looking for more involvement on committees. Participation of volunteers working on zoning issues has picked up and shows promise for the future of the Zoning Committee. A brief discussion that followed concerned

ways condo representatives report on DSCA matters to their condo boards. Given that so many downtown residents are seasonal and perhaps still civically engaged in their former home communities, it's a challenge to get them to welcome engagement on Sarasota issues. Getting the DSCA newsletter to individual condo residents is critical and condo representatives can help to do that, for example by attaching the newsletter PDF to whatever they distribute in writing or via email to their condo neighbors.

7. **Arts & Culture:** Ken Shelin mentioned the newspaper coverage of Cheryl Mendelson's resignation as Van Wezel Foundation CEO. He also said the fund raising for the Performing Arts Center is going really well. Mr. Shelin attended the play *Silent Sky* at the Asolo and expressed confidence in the Asolo's new Producing Director, Peter Rothstein, who had directed other plays at the Asolo before being appointed to his new position. Mr. Shelin attended a recent presentation by two speakers (one very opposed to replacing the Van Wezel with a new performance hall) and commented that information shared by the speakers was confusing, controversial, and unconvincing. Tours of the Van Wezel have been paused, but if asked, Ken can still arrange such tours for small groups.
8. **Associates & Events:** Jaime Still reported that the grant application was turned in and we will learn in March if it will be funded. The Church of the Redeemer's Robinson Center Goewey Hall used for the last DSCA workshop has been chosen as the site for the March 16 workshop. Flyers will go out soon, and its title will be "The Exploding Cost of Living in Sarasota". Panelists will come from DSCA Associate member firms. Publicity will be sought to welcome attendance by representatives of condos outside of downtown (e.g. Longboat Key). There is already a lot of interest in purchasing tables for the event. Her committee is still in the planning stages for the town hall meeting at the April membership meeting.
9. **Greenspace:** no report
10. **Homeless:** Peter Fanning reported that he and David Lough had met with the City's homeless coordinator and will continue to seek information on the City's activities concerning its homeless population. Mr. Fanning has also been in contact with Chris Johnson, of the Suncoast Partnership, according to whom the last population census seriously undercounted the homeless. Manatee County's task force on the homeless came up with a substantially greater number than had been reported after the census. The recount took many volunteers working over a five-day period. Plans are under discussion in Sarasota to include one count "in season" and a second count in the summer. The number arrived at is directly related to the amount of money made available to assist the homeless, so getting an accurate count is important.
11. **Health & Safety:** Roger Barry began his report with news about future lane closings at the Gulfstream Roundabout, mostly at night, to allow for concrete replacement. Despite the construction-related problems, traffic flow has increased 30 – 50% through that intersection. A letter was sent in support of a grant proposal for more funding from the City's Department of Transportation for Complete Streets enhancements along 10th Steet

and Boulevard of the Arts. Traffic lights will be modernized and improved along Boulevard of the Arts. Timing for those upgrades will depend on supply chain issues for components.

- 12. Zoning Code:** DSCA's zoning group has arranged a meeting with planning staff on February 15 to gather information that can be used in future meetings where attendees are interested in zoning issues. On the matter of "air rights" at the Quay, DSCA has not stated a formal position. DSCA advocates for more transparency in the explaining/communicating/revising of zoning policies affecting developments.
- 13. Bay Park Conservancy:** Bob Pirollo reported that at the quarterly board meeting it was stated that implementation of Phase II, already approved by the City, would begin in April. Funding is at \$65 million, 60 of it from a City Government bond. That phase will take 1 year of continued planning and design work, followed by 2 years of construction – requiring 3 years altogether for completion. The Phase II design for the pier has been somewhat changed, and had to be approved by the Corps of Engineers. One issue raised was the need to protect public access along the channel and to other parts of the area during construction.
- 14. CCNA:** David Lough will be DSCA's representative, at least temporarily, to CCNA, which meets the first Saturday of every month. The new President of CCNA is Richard Harris.
- 15. Rosemary District Association:** Lough reported progress on park renovations has been painfully slow. Planning is still in the design stages, hampered by things such as not delays in renderings, but association leadership is still hopeful that the park will be complete by year's end.
- 16. Platinum and Gold Member Presentations:** Representatives of Brown & Brown, Socotec, City National Bank, CORE Marketing Solutions, and Tannenbaum, Lemole & Hill made brief presentations.
- 17. Condo Member Representative Input:** Request was made for more information on what DSCA committees do. Response was that efforts will be made to get out that information to all member reps and their condo boards.
- 18.** The meeting adjourned at 5:36 PM. Next meeting will be March 1, 4 PM, same location.

Respectfully submitted, Judy Mower