



**Downtown Development Review Board (DDRB) Meeting
Hybrid Virtual/In-Person Meeting**

Thursday, October 12, 2023 2:00 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Board Members (BMs) Present: M. Brockelman (Chair); L. Ott (Vice Chair); G. Monahan (Secretary); J. Berling; C. Harden; J. Loretta; and B. Schilling

Board Members Excused: F. Jones and T. Lee

DIA Staff Present: Susan Kelly, Redevelopment Coordinator; Guy Parola, Operations Manager; and Ric Anderson, Marketing Specialist

Office of General Counsel: Carla Lopera, Esq.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Brockelman called the meeting to order at **2:02 p.m.** Mr. Brockelman noted that the November meeting would be an in-person only meeting with no Zoom capability. Then, he asked for introductions from Board Members and staff.

II. ACTION ITEMS

A. APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 24, 2023 DDRB SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

The Chair asked for a motion regarding the August 24th special meeting minutes. Board Member Monahan made a motion to move the meeting minutes, and Board Member Harden seconded the motion.

The August 24, 2023 special meeting minutes were approved, 6-0.

B. APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 14, 2023 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The Chair asked for a motion regarding the September 14th regular meeting minutes. Board Member Ott made a motion to move the meeting minutes, and Board Member Monahan seconded the motion.

The September 14, 2023 regular meeting minutes were approved, 6-0.

C. DDRB APPLICATION 2023-011: RD RIVER CITY MIXED USE, FINAL REVIEW

(Board Member Schilling arrived to the meeting.)

Ms. Kelly with the DIA gave the staff report, recommending approval of DDRB Application 2023-011 with four conditions and noting that condition #2 should be revised to remove “Date palms shall be removed from the landscape palette.”

Prior to the applicant’s presentation, Board Member Loretta requested that staff explain their condition regarding removing the specialty pavers in the round-about. Staff responded that (1) maintenance might become an issue; and (2) the pavers gave the right-of-way a proprietary feel.

Cyndy Trimmer, representing the owner, introduced the project and the development team. Ms. Trimmer noted the changes from the conceptual application to the final.

Chairperson Brockelman asked if Board Members had any questions. Board Member Loretta asked about the installation of the Riverwalk at this location and asked about the status of the land swap. Ms. Trimmer responded that the installation of the Riverwalk improvements is subject to coordination with the DIA, and the land swap is being discussed with the DIA as well. Board Member Harden asked about the funding for the boat ramp, and Mr. Parola responded that the boat ramp is funded, and that the bulkhead completion is the lynchpin with regards to the overall construction timeline. Seeing no other questions from the Board, the Chair asked if there was any public comment.

Nancy Powell with Scenic Jacksonville commented that her organization would like to see a wider path along the western edge of the property; more shade trees; live oaks at the eastern edge of the property preserved. Carnell Oliver commented that the project should not receive economic incentives. Seeing no more public comment, the Chair opened the floor for Board comments.

Board Member Monahan moved to approve the item with staff conditions, including the amended condition #2. Board Member Schilling seconded the motion. Mr. Schilling commented that the applicant should double-check the light fixture specified as it does not appear to be consistent with the newly selected light fixture. Board Member Ott commented that the planters along the western edge of the property should be removable or flood tolerant. Overall, the application was well-received by the Board. The Chair called for a vote.

DDRB Application 2023-011 was approved with staff conditions, 7-0.

D. DDRB APPLICATION 2023-015: JTA AUTONOMOUS INNOVATION CENTER, CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Board Member Schilling had a voting conflict with the item, and Susan Kelly, with the DIA, read the conflict into the record. Ms. Kelly provided a staff report for the item. Staff recommends approval of the conceptual review with five conditions.

Jessica Shepler with JTA introduced the project and the development team. David Campbell with Balfour Beatty presented the project.

Chairperson Brockelman asked for questions from the Board. Seeing none, Board Members then declared any ex parte communications.

The Chair opened the floor to public comment. Carnell Oliver commented that the Board should deny the application because the U2C project is “not ready.”

The Chair asked for Board discussion. Board Member Monahan moved to approve the item with staff’s conditions. Board Member Ott seconded the motion.

Board Member Berling commented that the façade should be more “innovative,” with more specificity regarding the aesthetics and more façade articulation. She also wanted to understand the degree of transparency for the glazing system at the Jefferson and Water Street intersection. Board Member Monahan requested that JTA collaborate with the community regarding a tribute element and that pedestrian safety be reviewed along Jefferson Street, where the vehicles enter and leave the site. Board Member Ott commented that she agreed with Board Member Berling’s comments and that the lighting concept for the structure works and should be considered for other area’s of the site. Board Member Harden also agrees with Ms. Berling and would like to understand the fence material better. Board Member Loretta would like to see a narrower drive onto Jefferson Street with a smoother and more visually appealing transition to the public realm. The Chair suggested that the City look at improving the abutting city-owned property to reinforce a broader vision for the area. The Chair called for a vote.

DDRB Application 2023-015 was approved with staff conditions, 6-0 (Schilling abstained).

E. DDRB APPLICATION 2023-017: PEARL STREET DISTRICT MULTI-PHASE PLAN, FINAL REVIEW

Board Members Schilling and Harden had voting conflicts with the item. Ms. Kelly provided a staff report for the item and explained the multi-phase plan review process. Staff recommends approval of the final review with two conditions.

Cyndy Trimmer, representing the owner, introduced the project and the development team.

Chairperson Brockelman asked if Board Members had any questions. Board Member Ott asked about the possibility for two raised intersections, referring to the intersection of Pearl and Beaver. Ms. Trimmer responded that Beaver Street is owned by FDOT, and they do not have permission to raise the intersection at that location. Seeing no other questions from the Board, the Chair opened the floor to public comment.

Nancy Powell had very favorable comments and would like to see DOT involvement. The Chair stated that he would discuss the matter with staff to see how DDRB can encourage FDOT’s involvement in the project. Seeing no additional public comment, the Chair opened the floor for Board discussion.

Board Member Monahan made a motion to approve the item with staff's conditions. Board Member Ott seconded the motion.

All Board Members regarded the plan favorably. Board Member Loretta stated that he would like to see more detail and more engineering at the pedestrian level within the development pad submittals.

DDRB Application 2023-017 was approved with staff conditions, 5-0 (Schilling and Harden abstained).

F. DDRB APPLICATION 2023-020: PEARL STREET DISTRICT BLOCK N11, CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Ms. Kelly provided a staff report for the item and stated that Staff recommends approval of the conceptual review with five conditions.

Cyndy Trimmer, representing the owner, introduced the project and the development team. The architect provided project specifics.

Chairperson Brockelman asked if Board Members had any questions. With no questions from the Board and no public comment, the Chair asked for a motion to move the item. Board Member Monahan made a motion to approve the item with staff conditions; Board Member Berling seconded the motion. Board Member Loretta commented that he would like for the residents to have more direct access to the park space. Board Members were favorable to the proposal.

DDRB Application 2023-020 was approved with staff conditions, 5-0 (Schilling and Harden abstained).

G. DDRB APPLICATION 2023-019: PEARL STREET DISTRICT BLOCK N8, CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Ms. Kelly provided a staff report for the item and stated that Staff recommends approval of the conceptual review with six conditions.

Cyndy Trimmer, representing the owner, introduced the project and the development team. The architect, Ian Mills, provided project specifics.

Chairperson Brockelman asked if Board Members had any questions. Board Members Ott and Brockelman asked clarifying questions regarding the interior balconies and the market for furnished rentals. No public comments were presented. The Chair asked for a motion to move the item. Board Member Monahan made a motion to approve the item with staff conditions; Board Member Ott seconded the motion. Board Members were all very favorable to the proposal.

DDRB Application 2023-019 was approved with staff conditions, 5-0 (Schilling and Harden abstained).

H. DDRB APPLICATION 2023-021: PEARL STREET DISTRICT BLOCK N4, CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Ms. Kelly provided a staff report for the item and stated that Staff recommends approval of the conceptual review with six conditions.

Cyndy Trimmer, representing the owner, introduced the project and the development team. The architect, David Manfredi, provided project specifics.

Chairperson Brockelman asked if Board Members had any questions. Board Member Monahan asked a clarifying question about the retail square footage. No public comments were presented. The Chair asked for a motion to move the item. Board Member Monahan made a motion to approve the item with staff conditions; Board Member Berling seconded the motion. Board Member Loretta commented that he would have preferred a different design concept for this structure. Board Member Ott mentioned that public art might not be necessary for the blank wall portion of the structure because the architecture is strong. Ms. Trimmer requested input from the Board regarding the blank wall space. Staff will coordinate Board feedback with Ms. Trimmer. Overall, Board Members were favorable to the proposal.

DDRB Application 2023-021 was approved with staff conditions, 5-0 (Schilling and Harden abstained).

I. DDRB RESOLUTION 2023-10-01: AMENDMENTS TO THE ORDINANCE CODE

Mr. Parola provided an explanation of the proposed resolution.

Seeing no questions from the Board and no public comment, Chairperson Brockelman asked for a motion to move the item. Board Member Monahan made a motion to approve the resolution; Board Member Loretta seconded the motion.

Board Member Berling requested that the word “workshop” be removed or that a new word be introduced that adequately explained the process. It was agreed that this would be a topic to address later in the code revision process. Board Member Schilling commented that applicants redeveloping a historic structure should be allowed to have a conceptual hearing if they so desired; however, Mr. Schilling did not think a specific amendment to the resolution was necessary at this time. Board Chair Brockelman requested an amendment to the resolution, striking “or when replacing with same size and location a sign approved through grant of a Special Exception.” He stated that this was because of the findings of the Board’s Special Committee on sign code revisions. Mr. Brockelman made a motion to amend the resolution; Board Member Ott seconded the motion, and the amendment was approved 7-0.

A motion was made by Board Member Monahan to approve the resolution, as amended. Board Member Berling seconded the motion. DDRB Resolution 2023-10-01 was approved 7-0.

III. OLD BUSINESS

None.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

The Chair noted that this would be Board Member Schilling’s last meeting with the DDRB, and Mr. Schilling’s dedication and contributions to the Board were lauded by Board Members and staff.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Brockelman adjourned the meeting at approximately 5:20 p.m.

The written minutes for this meeting are only an overview of what was discussed. For verbatim comments for this meeting, a recording or transcript is available upon request. Please contact Susan Kelly at 904-255-5307 or ksusan@coj.net.