



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

Thursday, July 11, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Board Members (BMs) Present: M. Brockelman (Chair); G. Monahan (Secretary); J. Berling; E. Davis (virtual); C. Dawson; F. Jones; and T. Lee

Board Members Excused: L. Ott and J. Loretta

DIA Staff Present: Susan Kelly, Redevelopment Coordinator; Guy Parola, Direction of Operations, and Ava Hill, Administrative Assistant

Office of General Counsel: Terrence Harvey, Esq. and Jason Teal, Esq.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Brockelman called the meeting to order at **2:01 p.m.** He announced that two action items would be flipped; DDRB Application 2024-006 would be heard before DDRB Application 2024-003. After approval of the June meeting minutes (refer to II.A below), he asked for introductions from Board Members and Staff.

II. ACTION ITEMS

A. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 13, 2024, DDRB REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The Chair asked for a motion regarding the June 13th regular meeting minutes. Board Member Monahan made a motion to move the meeting minutes, and Board Member Berling seconded the motion.

The June 13, 2024, meeting minutes were approved, 7-0.

B. ORDINANCE 2024-0478: CHAPTER 656 AMENDMENTS

Susan Kelly with the Downtown Investment Authority (DIA) provided a staff report, explaining that the ordinance is a companion to approved Ordinance 2024-904, the stadium development agreement. The legislation would allow temporary parking on any Downtown parcel designated as CCBD for no longer than four (4) years on a site that is used primarily for government use or to satisfy the parking needs for NFL games. Ms. Kelly stated that staff recommends approval.

Board Members had no questions for staff.

Board Member Monahan moved the item, and Board Member Jones seconded. There were no comments from the Board.

Ordinance 2024-478 was recommended for approval with a vote of 7-0.

C. DDRB 2024-006: PEARL STREET DISTRICT BLOCK N5, CONCEPTUAL

The Chair opened the public hearing and requested a staff report. Ms. Kelly provided the staff report, explaining that the applicant wishes to renovate the existing “lighthouse” parking garage by adding commercial storefronts along the Beaver Street frontage. Staff recommended approval with four (4) conditions:

1. Prior to submittal for final review, the developer shall meet with staff to identify any deviations sought.
2. The developer shall continue to work with Staff to coordinate District Specific Standards related to site furnishings, hardscape and landscape palette and similar.
3. Development shall be consistent with the multi-phase site plan, DDRB Application 2023-017.
4. Any subsequent roadway changes shall be approved by the City’s Traffic Engineer.

Seeing no questions from the Board for staff, the Chair invited the applicant to walk through their proposal. Cyndy Trimmer, representing the developer, provided the presentation, noting that the lighthouse would stay and be used as a public art piece and that the garage structure would be painted. Chair Brockelman asked if the Board had any questions for the developer. Seeing none, he asked for public comment. Seeing no public comment, Board Member Monahan moved the item with staff conditions. Board Member Davis provided the second.

The Chair asked for discussion from the Board. The item was favorably received. Board Member Jones mentioned the broad goal of making Union Street more walkable. Board Member Dawson was curious about any pre-leasing and how the development team was connecting with potential tenants. Board Member Berling clarified that signage would come later and was not included in this proposal. Seeing no further discussion, the Chair called for a vote.

DDRB Application 2024-006 was approved with a vote of 7-0.

D. DDRB 2024-003: LOFTS AT SOUTHBANK, CONCEPTUAL

The Chair opened the public hearing and requested a staff report. Ms. Kelly provided the staff report, noting that this item had been deferred at a prior meeting so that the design team could meet with staff to improve the overall design of the project. Staff recommended approval with five (5) conditions:

1. Prior to submittal for final review, the developer shall meet with staff to identify any deviations sought.
2. The structure shall be designed to create an architectural transition from the height and scale of surrounding buildings to the ultimate height of the proposed structure.

3. Additional articulation (deeper scoring or reveals, material or color additions, etc.) shall be designed for the Home Street elevation.
4. The metal louver screening material shall be reconsidered, or more detail shall be provided, to ensure that the screening material is architecturally compatible with the overall structure. Material specifications, including color selections, of the spandrel glass and louver screening shall be provided with the final submittal package.
5. A shade study or shade calculations shall be provided with the final submittal package.

Seeing no questions from the Board for staff, the Chair asked for ex parte communications from Board Members before inviting the applicant to walk through their proposal. Karie Kovacocy, architect with Group 4 Design, spoke for the project and provided a presentation. Chair Brockelman asked if the Board had any questions for Ms. Kovacocy. Board Member Lee asked about the height of the structure; Ms. Kovacocy responded that the building was about 120 feet. Seeing no additional questions, the Chair asked for public comment. Two (2) members of the public spoke in opposition to the design; concerns included a perceived lack of parking and an abundance of blank wall space. Seeing no additional public comment, the Chair closed the public hearing. Board Member Monahan moved the item with staff conditions. Board Member Berling provided the second.

The Chair asked for discussion from the Board.

- Board Member Lee commented that the structure still feels too big for that space given that it is a transitional building. He noted that the massing has improved, but that overall, the building still feels very tall. He suggested that the design team look at the MD Anderson building as a model for scale and massing, and that the blank walls would benefit from more study. He added that he supports the mixed use of the building, but not the architecture.
- Board Member Monahan commented on the improvement but would like the windows to continue down the Prudential façade, and that the walls could be treated.
- Board Member Berling said that the design team had done a successful job of improving the massing and incorporating registration lines. She appreciated the attention paid to the ground level and to the perspective of the pedestrian. She commented favorably on the recessed living units at the top of the structure and how, in general, the structure reads as three (3) parts. Further, Ms. Berling found that deeper reveals and a shadow/light study could add more interest to the blank facades.
- Board Member Dawson stated that he understood the developer's need to keep costs down but also agreed with public comment regarding the blank walls. Overall, he felt that improvements could still be made.
- Board Member Jones noted that he supports the mixed use of the building but agreed that the architecture and blank walls could use more attention. He also appreciated the Public Realm improvements.
- Board Member Davis would like the design team to consider the design from the point of view of I-95. Additionally, he would like the design team to apply the same design

considerations to the Home and Hendricks frontages that have been provided on the Prudential frontage.

- Board Chair Brockelman echoed the comments of the other Board Members and staff and added that the ground floor is responsive to pedestrians.

Seeing no further discussion, the Chair called for a vote.

DDRB Application 2024-003 was approved with a vote of 5-2 (Board Members Lee and Davis in opposition).

III. OLD BUSINESS

None.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. DDRB OFFICER ELECTIONS

The Chair reminded the Board that Linzee Ott was nominated at the June meeting, and she accepted the nomination. He then opened the floor to any new nominations from the Board. Seeing none, he asked to move the item of electing Ms. Ott as Chair.

Board Member Monahan made a motion to elect Linzee Ott as the DDRB Chair; Board Member Davis provided the second.

Linzee Ott was elected Chair with a vote of 7-0.

Mr. Brockelman asked that Ms. Kelly connect with Ms. Ott to establish the Nominating Committee so that the remainder of the officer slate could be decided.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

In closing, the Chair thanked Mr. Monahan for his service as this meeting is his last as a Board Member. There being no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at approximately **3:08 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.