

Lafitte Greenway Steering Advisory Committee
MEETING MINUTES
Friday, July 11, 2008

9:00 a.m. Urban League Of New Orleans
2322 Canal St. New Orleans

Attendees: Corinne DuCre, Leonetta Terell, Linda Landesberg, Tom Farley, John Moore, Dubravka Gilic, Billy Fields, Russell M. Fraise, Daniel Samuels, Valerie Moten, Dana Eness, Lake Douglas Phd, and Nolan Rollins.

1. The meeting was called to order by the President of Friends of Lafitte Corridor FOLC, Mr. Daniel Samuels, at 9:00 a.m. Roll call of Committee members was conducted.
2. Lake Douglas opens the floor with a motion to change Committee officer assignments.
 - a. Moving Lake Douglas from Vice Chair replaced by Edgar Chase and moving Edgar Chase from Secretary/ Treasure replaced by Dana Eness.
 - b. Seconded
 - c. Motion passed unanimously
3. A motion by Lake Douglas for approval of minutes with changes removing Jacob Wagner from attendees was passed.
4. ORDA representative, Dubravka Gilic updated the Committee members with the following information:
 - ORDA is submitting applications for funding for most design and construction in the Lafitte Corridor. There is also a grant that is covering the segment of the trail from Jeff Davis to Carrollton. For the remaining segments and the entire planning of the trail, ORDA is applying for CDBG money to cover the cost.
 - In order to move this project forward the grant was divided into several pieces.
 - Phase A
 - 1.) An application has been submitted for the \$300, 000 costs for the design and planning phase including survey and title search of the entire trail.
 - 2.) Implementation of first segment.

Phase B

- 1.) Apply for additional funding for the construction and the design
- 2.) Move forward on the required environmental review which will take a while.
- 3.) Issue of expediency in assigning A&E teams who are capable for development of all areas of the project.

- The city has structured all its street enhancement projects to be hooked into DPW's work order within the city, under capital administration. This is how projects are being moved through City Hall. If it remains in the DPW, we will have better abilities to be a part of the process and move the process a little faster. The Capital Administration is really involved in majority of the primary response. Leaving it with DPW, we will have better attention to the project. Secondly, DPW is structured in selecting contractors and A&E companies that will be working these enhancement projects. This project is larger in scale and does not compare to this one's complexity to the other enhancement projects. There is a team or pool of prequalified A&E firms of which the city and DPW can select and assign to different tasks. This is the fastest way. Instead of doing in a separate RFP process which will prolong the project, it is recommended that we give DPW a chance to select a qualified team for this particular project. Once the selection is made and assigned to the project, the A&E firm should make a presentation to the Steering Committee. They are required to make a presentation to display how they would tackle this project and give time for the committee to discuss, as well to review the qualifications of the team in order to determine if it is up to the task or giving them the opportunity for them to subcontract to reinforce their team. Valerie Moten noted that a company has been selected.
- Daniel Samuels requested a copy of the project description with the scope of work that went to Baton Rouge, for which the \$300,000 is targeted. The project description should be distributed among committee members. Dubravka Gilic agreed to provide a copy. Daniel Samuels questioned paperwork or documents that indicate that the \$300,000 has been released. Dubravka Gilic explained the CDBG application approval process. ORDA has developed a two part process with the state in order for them to assist us in expediting this process. It is a unique process that is not traditional for the CDBG applications process. The state has allowed ORDA to break the application process down into two segments. First, ORDA would submit a pre-application and will receive a preapproval

conceptually and agreed that ORDA will submit all the paperwork and a completed application later. This preapproval will allow the hiring of a contractor with a great deal of certainty that we will receive the funding; however, without falling out of the federal guidelines in tentatively selecting an A&E firm and to start working on environmental reviews, this is sort of a soft approval.

- Daniel Samuels recommended amending June 13th minutes removing Jennifer Ruley's statement about the funding being released without strings attached. Dubravka Gilic explained the funding is pre-approved, but not released. All funding is on the reimbursable terms basis. However, the selection of a contractor can start. This is the whole nature of this two part program.
- Daniel Samuels stated that the selection process of A&E firms has been in the News lately. The procedure according to the charter is that this selection process is made by a committee of three individuals: one the department head, two CAO representatives and a third person. He questioned who the third person is. Dubravka Gilic shared her thoughts of on the irrelevancy for need of this type of information to be provided by her. She states that it is outside of what we are doing and what we are trying to accomplish overall. However, if it is something that the committee believes it is relevant and is needed, it may be obtained through a request to the Mayors office. Daniel Samuels disagreed stating that it seems like this is an appropriate piece of information. Dubravka Gilic reemphasized that it is up to the committee to request the information. She added that she will not be providing that for anyone. Daniel Samuels stressed that people want to know how this team gets selected. Dubravka Gilic again advised Mr. Samuel to seek that information through the Mayor's Office.
- Corinne DuCre asked on behalf of Edgar Chase a question about gap funding concerns, in the event that the projected cost of the development of the Corridor will be over budget, how would the difference be paid in order to have a completed project? Dubravka Gilic responded the work will have to stay within the budget and there's no other funding. There is a limited amount of funding there and nowhere to go to ask for more money in the event of a shortfall. The project will have to be phased to accomplish what we need to do with the funding we have. Corinne DuCre questioned at what point we may foresee that we are going over budget? Dubravka Gilic replied

that we know the money we have and it has been allocated into different phases. We have about \$ 2,300,000 for this total project.

- Daniel Samuels suggested talking about the cost of the total project at this time is a bit much for us to put our arms around . It is important that we look at the \$300,000 and the structure of the contract. Valerie Moten replied that we are currently in the drafting phase of the contract, and because this project is complex with many different entities and funding phases the contract has to be drafted with a unique approach from the other enhancement projects. Dubravka's team will iron out some things and hopefully have a completed draft within a week.
- Daniel Samuels referred to a meeting in June with the Director of DPW about the initial scope of professional services. An additional aspect that was mentioned is that we would much rather see coordination with this committee be written into the contract. There is the need of the design consultants to be advised in the beginning and because this committee was authorized by City Council to represent the community. Coordinate their work with the steering committee. Dubravka Gilic stated every single project will have a public participation component. Public participation and communication will be in the reviewing period of the contract. The Legal Department will determine the exact procedures and requirements regarding public review of the contract. She stated that she is not certain of the legal parameters of sharing contract information. She advised the committee to be very strategic how to choose to be a part of this process. It is foreseeable that the responses are going to be: "we don't want to slow this down; we don't want this to start dictating every step of the way and constantly going to contractors with changes." She recommended that this committee be inserted into stages that are logical and that include some approvals at certain stages that are meaningful to your goals as an advisory committee. Daniel Samuels stated that the committee can be very specific with each task. Dubravka Gilic suggested that if the committee already has an idea, its best that the committee sends it in advance to MWH and the DPW as they are drafting the contract.
- Billy Fields asked what role DPW plays. Dubravka Gilic commented that DPW is the primary manager of the City's capital projects. They will be signing off before the Mayor will award the contract

- Daniel Samuels proposed that integrating the committee at the front end to help shape the contract can also make sure that these projects have a scope that does not exceeds the budget.
- Dubravka Gilic stated that it is not a concern of potentially exceeding the budget; it is the concern that from the beginning the consultants may not fully understand the complexity of this project. It is important that the contract is tailor manage in a fashion that strongly emphasizes the overall scope which entails the many different phases and its complexities. The presentations that are required should happen before the final drafting process because we should not spend much time on drafting a contract.
- Daniel Samuels stated that the key aspects of the scope or work projection description were broken down into two broad categories.
 - 1) Trail implementation plan
 - 2) Corridor Revitalization Plan

Is it that, the revitalization plan is probably going to be very expensive and possibly a long term process which is more than likely going to exceed the expertise of a professional engineering firm? Who will be more likely selected as the prime design consultant? He stated the scope of the contract would refer to the overall scope; but, that the initial contract is going to be limited to the implementation plan and title search. Dubravka Gilic responded no, what was said is that there are going to be three different scopes components naming them "A.B and C." Any of the components can be picked up by a firm and can be told that they are not qualified and therefore will not be allowed to work on that particularly component. She suggested that the contract is reviewed by her to avoid signing a contract prematurely and later finding out later that unqualified contractors are in contractual obligations. This is critical!
- Dana Eness asked if a team been selected already. Valerie Moten replied the team has been selected under the parameters that the contractors would have to meet the qualifications in order to be awarded the contract. The contractors have been selected but the contract has not been signed. Dana Eness questioned who has been selected. Valerie Moten responded that she is not at liberty to disclose that information at this point in time. Lake Douglas questioned at what point would we know? Valerie Moten replied once the contract is formed and evaluations are done, then that information will be released. The

first draft of the contract is done. Most of the contract language is coming straight from the RFQ that FOLC developed with Jennifer Ruley. The requirements in terms of what the qualifications should be are in the contract without any changes or deviations.

- Daniel Samuels added that there is \$338,000 of transportation enhancement funding that has been approved for the construction of the path between Broad and Jeff Davis FOLC with the Mid-City Neighborhood, ORDA and DPW have focused on that segment from Broad to Carrollton as an initial stage for construction.
- Dubravka Gilic recommended moving forward first on the Jeff Davis segment because of land control and the simplicity of the construction.

5. Special Power Point Presentation Trail-Oriented Economic Development by Dr. Billy Fields, Director of Center for Urban Planning and Public Affairs, University of New Orleans.

6. FOLC board member Linda Landeberg updated the Committee on coordination with NOPD.

- Linda Landeberg requested a liaison from NOPD be on the board, and advised the task force to design and plan for safety along the corridor. She further described her meeting with Captain Gary Gremillion of the NOPD and Gloria Connelly, NOPD's Director of Grants Administration. They showed a great interest in the project and are pleased to be a part of the planning phase because NOPD will know which grants to apply for, might be available for placing sub-stations along the trail. Currently the NOPD is administering seventy grants and by having the knowledge now about the trail it will help them in their planning stages of the grant writing. She noted that the following week she, Lonnetta Terrell, Captain Gremillion and Captain Difilo are scheduled to ride the corridor to identify trouble spots, and to get an overall perspective of the trail. Hopefully, NOPD will assign a liaison at the end of that meeting. The possibility was also mentioned of having the horse mounted police center within the corridor verses having to transport the horses from City Park to downtown. Daniel Samuels requested that Linda find out NOPD's plans for the command post between the segment of Jeff Davis and Broad, so that the project can be coordinated with them. Linda Landeberg stated that NOPD knew nothing about the Greenway until recently.

7.) Daniel Samuels would like a timeline or status report on the demolition of the City's sign repair shop and vehicle inspection shop that have been decommissioned. He also proposed that the committee not meet in August.

- Dana Eness made a motion to defer the August Meeting, which was seconded by Lake Douglas and adopted.

Meeting Adjourned