



Downtown Long Beach Associates
Minutes of the Economic Development Task Force

Monday, July 31, 2009—9:30 a.m.

Bouchee's Bistro
515 Long Beach Boulevard
Long Beach, CA 90802

PRESENT

Voting Members: Rose Barrantes, Beck Blair, Loara Cadavona, Greg Gill, Pat Paris, Mark Schneider, Tony Shooshani, John Thomas

Guests: Kali Hanley (JLoop), Sandra Lentz (CityPlace), Janice Schuerman (CityPlace), Tony Zervas (Bouchee's Bistro)

Staff: Kris Larson, Vanessa McCollum

ABSENT

Voting Members: Phil Appleby, Amy Bodek, Steve Goodling

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Tony Shooshani called the meeting to order at 9:35a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

There was no quorum, minutes not approved.

III. PROJECT UPDATES

Tony Shooshani updated the task force on the BRE Seminars, noting that advertising is being done in the Press Telegram, DLBA e-newsletter, and the Long Beach Business Journal. Postcards have also been mailed to stakeholders. Kris Larson was interviewed for

Business Retention and Expansion: Larson briefed the Task Force on the upcoming visit of retail specialist Barbara Wold on August 11 and 12. Larson outlined a schedule of events to include a workshop for restaurants 8:00-10:00 a.m. on August 11, followed by lunch with the Task Force at 11:30, and then one-on-one appointments with ratepayers. On August 12, the workshop from 8:00-10:00 a.m. is proposed for general small businesses, followed by lunch with policymakers, and then additional one-on-one, on-site consultations. The Task Force was eager to assist with promoting

the workshops and recommending businesses to participate in the personal consultation

Larson agreed to provide Wold's information to the Task Force and clarified that Wold's visit would be focused on business retention, rather than recruitment, although prospective businesses would be welcome to attend the workshops. Greg Gill recommended creating a form for businesses interested in the consultations to submit along with their business plan to Wold in advance. It was felt that Wold's time would be best spent with businesses that had indicated their seriousness about participating by completing the requested information. Loara Cadavona recommended recording the workshops for archiving online to stream on demand. Appleby and Cadavona suggested creating case studies by industry sector and geographic area to public on the website; Gill and Schneider proposed adding industry ratios along with Wold's recommendations. Schneider suggested asking businesses to pay in advance for the consultation and then to be reimbursed upon completion in order to ensure participation. Shooshani and others thought that businesses that are already paying DLBA assessments should not be asked to make an additional contribution for this program.

Office and Retail Expansion: Larson reported that Steve Goodling had recommended expanding the Office and Retail Council from quarterly business meetings to include alternating quarterly social meetings to provide opportunities to network with peers as well as City officials such as the Mayor. The Task Force expressed interest in including several officials at one social event with the opportunity for a Question and Answer as well.

Celebrating New Business Openings: Larson announced that DLBA would organize special events to celebrate new business openings. Shooshani suggested that the DLBA offer a standard "new opening" package to all new storefront businesses, and Schneider recommended including all businesses since all pay assessments. Appleby recommended that DLBA staff personally greet all new businesses, at least, if it is not feasible to hold approximately 200 "new business" opening ceremonies. Schneider mentioned that such events may help dispel the notion that DLBA focuses inordinately on Pine Avenue retail businesses.

Development Map: Larson distributed a draft of the revised Development map, which will be displayed as a large poster in a vacant storefront in its first iteration, to be followed by an updated map that will include statistics on the back and be available for wide distribution. The Task Force provided suggestions for improving the map.

IV. STOREFRONT ACTIVATION

Larson noted that the Task Force would address the program in more depth at the next meeting, but noted that DLBA is working with the First Council District. Larson then spoke of creating entrepreneurial opportunities through a business incubator program, with the DLBA responsible for developing a call for entries and working with property owners of vacant space, which the Task Force discussed. Gill also suggested posting "leased" or "Coming Soon" banners in the windows of Farmers & Merchants' property at 3rd and Pine, Dev Mavi's space across the street, and at the Vault 350. Shooshani agreed to follow up with the Vault 350. Barrantes mentioned activating

vacant storefronts with advertising so that property owners could receive nominal income at the least from their sites.

V. NEXT MEETING

Shooshani recommended that the Task Force meet in various Downtown spaces such as Creama or Bouchees Bistro in order to be more visible in the community and provide business for other ratepayers.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.