

# **City of Jacksonville**

*117 W. Duval Street  
Jacksonville, FL 32202*



## **Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, September 9, 2024**

**10:00 AM**

**Council Chamber,  
1st Floor,  
City Hall**

**Special Committee on the Future of Downtown**

Meeting convened: 10:02 am Meeting adjourned: 11:43 am

Attendance: Council President White; Council Members Carrico, J. Carlucci, Gaffney Jr., Daimond, Miller, Salem, Peluso, and Carlucci

Also: Mary Staffopoulos, OGC; Kim Taylor, Auditor's Office; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research Division

### **Meeting Call to Order**

Chair Carrico convened the meeting and called for introductions.

### **Welcome and Introductions**

### **Committee Members Opening Thoughts**

#### **History on Laura Street Trio**

Historian Wayne Wood gave a presentation about the Laura Street Trio history and architecture. He talked about Henry Klutho, his work and influences, and how he helped in the reconstruction after the Great Fire of 1901. Mr. Wood advocated for the preservation and restoration of the Trio buildings.

#### **Overview from DDRB**

Guy Parola, DIA, gave a presentation about the Downtown Development Review Board (DDRB) and its role and function. DDRB has 9 voting members with certain expertise, and 11 ex-officio members. DDRB acts as the planning commission for downtown and ensures consistency with design guidelines and use regulations. Mr. Parola explained the DDRB review process. Council Member Diamond asked about the length of the review process (45-90 days) and whether DDRB impedes efficiency. Council Member Peluso spoke in support of the DDRB's role downtown. Council Member Carlucci said the DDRB is important to retain downtown's distinct style and architecture.

### **Unfinished Business - (Laura Street Trio) Legal Conversation on Next Steps**

Michael Fackler, General Counsel, spoke about the separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches. There was a lengthy discussion about executive function related to contracts, the Mayor's veto power, and the implications from council overriding a veto.

Council Member Diamond asked a series of questions about methods by which council may incorporate a development agreement into legislation. Mr. Fackler indicated that under that circumstance the Mayor could elect to not proceed with the contract. Council Member Diamond said that signing ordinances is a ministerial duty of the Mayor.

Council Member Carlucci emphasized the need for unity and the importance of the Trio, and he shared some historical instances of Mayoral vetoes.

Council Member Joe Carlucci asked about equality between branches.

Council Member Peluso asked about DIA's autonomy. Ms. Boyer, DIA said it is semi-autonomous, acting as both the downtown CRA and a City department.

When asked, Mr. Fackler said that any outside counsel retained by council would not be permitted to negotiate a development agreement. Council Member Gaffney Jr. asked about the pending Trio foreclosure litigation. Chair Carrico spoke about a new partner working with Mr. Atkins, Live Oak, and how that may impact the negotiations. He asked whether the foreclosure lawsuit could be dropped. Mr. Wilson, Mayor's Office, said that the Administration offered to drop the suit with a few requirements, and they are awaiting a response. Jason Gabriel, Burr & Forman, said that the lenders want the lawsuit dropped and that the requirements are workable. Council Member Joe Carlucci suggested a negotiation timeline of a few weeks, to prevent further delays.

### **Committee Discussion - Additional Legislative Recommendations Moving Forward**

Council Member Diamond said recommendations should be finalized for the next meeting. Council Member Salem talked about downtown parking issues and how it affects retailers. Council Member talked about changes to the timeline for DIA and DDRB project approval. Alex Sifakis, JWB, spoke in support of DDRB and the design guidelines, and he said DIA needs more legal support and staffing. Council Member Peluso said that Ed Randolph, OED, could attend the next meeting to speak about the public investment policy (PIP) and potential changes to the ROI requirements for historic areas. He suggested waiving the ROI requirement if projects bring residences downtown.

Council Member Diamond proposed eliminating incentives for development on the Southbank. Council Member Joe Carlucci asked about incentives for residential development in the urban core, and for more information about completion grants.

### **Questions from Committee Members**

#### **Public Comment**

Mr. Nooney talked about the Disability Council and various waterways topics.

### **Meeting Adjournment**

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

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