



Planning News

City of Baton Rouge-Parish of East Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Winter 2010

FUTUREBR COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS BEGINS - CITIZENS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The new comprehensive planning process for East Baton Rouge Parish, called *FutureEBR*, was initiated with a Parishwide Kickoff Meeting held on Tuesday, January 26 at the Louisiana State Museum. Mayor-President Melvin “Kip” Holden and lead planner John Fregonese of Fregonese Associates were present to lead the presentation to the public and broadcast the message of “citizens planning for the future.”

FutureEBR is an 18 month planning process which will overhaul the existing Horizon Plan to meet the needs of Baton Rouge in the 21st century. Due to population changes and shifts caused by Hurricane Katrina and other long-term forces, the Horizon Plan requires comprehensive revision to reflect the current situation of the City and Parish. *FutureEBR* will be a 20 year blueprint designed to prepare for future growth and development.

FutureEBR is a community-wide planning project that will examine current development and economic trends through an inclusive citizen engagement process. In addition, it will determine a vision for how East Baton Rouge Parish residents want the city and parish to develop and grow during the next two decades and put a plan in place for achieving the vision of Baton Rouge citizens. The Plan will guide the physical development of the city and provide a framework within which individuals, businesses and public officials can make decisions

that are consistent with the community's vision for the future. The Plan will guide future policy decisions related to land use, urban design, housing, economic development, open space, and transportation in the Parish. The Plan will also layout immediate implementation actions – from the outset the plan is being designed with implementation in mind.

The Plan elements, as required by the Plan of Government, will include: Land Use, Transportation, Infrastructure, Conservation, Recreation, Housing, Public Services, Public Buildings, Health and Human Services, Urban Design, and Implementation/ Financing.

The City-Parish will use \$1.8 million in hurricane recovery funds to obtain the services of a consultant, Fregonese Associates of Portland, Oregon, and a team of talented professional planners who will develop the plan and guide its initial implementation. Mr. Fregonese has worked on numerous comprehensive planning efforts in major cities including Chicago, Dallas, Denver, and Tulsa. Previous efforts in Louisiana by this firm include the development of the Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the Pointe Coupee Parish Comprehensive Plan in 2009. The consultant team possesses a wealth of background and experience which will be used to best advantage to produce a planning document that will shape the future development of the Parish and stand the test of time.

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THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

By Herb Gomez
Planning Commission Chairman

The Planning Commission advises the Metropolitan Council on long range planning issues and current land development. The Commission has the authority to approve certain current planning items and advises the Council on other planning-related matters. The Commission is made up of nine members who are appointed to four year terms. One member represents the Metropolitan Council; one member represents the Mayor-President's Office; and the other seven members are selected by the Metropolitan Council from qualified citizens of East Baton Rouge Parish.



Since 1990, Frank Muscarello has served on the Planning Commission. Mr. Muscarello is a resident of the Riverbend neighborhood in Baton Rouge and is a retired employee of Albemarle Corporation. During his tenure on the Planning Commission, Mr. Muscarello has concurrently served on the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). He has also worked with the Planning Commission staff on the updates to the Horizon Plan and has contributed his knowledge of the planning process on many occasions based on his broad experience gained during his duration of service. Due to commission term limits established by parish ordinance, Mr. Muscarello retired from his seat on the Planning Commission at the end of 2009.

At the January 25 Planning Commission meeting, we recognized Mr. Muscarello for his nineteen years of service, dedication, and understanding in providing a contribution to improving the quality of life with sensitivity to the natural and man made environment of the City and Parish.

The Metropolitan Council has appointed Dr. Alison Neustrom as a new member of the Planning Commission, to fill the seat being vacated by Mr. Muscarello. Dr. Neustrom is an alumnus of the Louisiana State University School of Social Work and is currently Vice-President of Public Policy for the Louisiana Association of Nonprofit Organizations (LANO). She previously served in Louisiana state government as Director of Policy and Planning for the Department of Social Services (DSS) and Assistant Secretary for the DSS Office of Family Support.

Current Planning Commission member W.T. Winfield will replace Mr. Muscarello as Planning Commission representative to the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). The HPC serves in an advisory capacity in recommending landmark and historic district designations and advises the Metropolitan Council on proposed development activities which may affect the historical character of a designated historic district, such as building demolitions or new construction.

The Planning Commission and its associated advisory bodies are comprised of citizen volunteers from East Baton Rouge Parish whose dedication to public service is rooted in a desire to improve the community and grow Baton Rouge in a way consistent with the stated vision of the Comprehensive Master Plan. □

Planning News is published four times a year by the City-Parish Planning Commission to provide information to residents and assist them in better understanding the planning process. Comments should be addressed to:

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Newsletter Editor
Justin Priola

Planning Commission

Herb Gomez, Chairman; Kathleen Callaghan, Vice Chairman; Ervie Ellender; Audrey Nabors Jackson; Laurie Marien; Dr. Alison Neustrom; Roxson Welch; Tara Wicker; and W.T. Winfield.

Planning Commission Staff

Administration: Troy L. Bunch, Director; Ellen Miller, Assistant Director; Ryan Holcomb, Planning Project Coordinator; Jan Kirby, Administrative Assistant; Jane Wooldridge, Senior Clerical Specialist
Advance Planning and Research: Lael Holton, Manager; Barrett Chaix, Lenise Lyons, Regina Melson, and Jennifer Severson, Planners; Annette Chambliss and Kim Paul, Clerical Staff
Current Planning: Christopher Ferris, Glenn Hanna, Blair LeBlanc, Tiffany Johnson, and Gilles Morin, Planners; Sharan Thomas and Karrie Sept, Clerical Staff
Geographic Information System: Warren Kron, Jr., Acting GIS Coordinator; Indah Kusuma, Justin Priola, Quang Tran, and Jose Villalobos-Enciso, GIS Analysts; Zachary Collier, Matt Dalrymple, and Brooke Donahue, Interns.



FUTUREBR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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FuturEBR will be guided by active citizen involvement. In order to make the plan successful, public input is necessary. The first phase of the planning process will commence with three public workshops which will be held in early March 2010. A parishwide planning workshop will be held on March 2 at 6 p.m. at the River Center, and two regional parish workshops will be held on March 4 at 6 p.m. at Redemptorist and Woodlawn High Schools.

Please visit the website www.futurebr.com for news, information, and updates related to the Comprehensive Plan and the planning process. Available are announcements, planning documents, and a project calendar with upcoming events. Additional information about the comprehensive planning process may be obtained from the Planning Commission at (225) 389-3144 or via e-mail at planning@brgov.com. Comprehensive Plan information is also available on the CPPC website at <http://www.brgov.com/dept/planning/complan.htm>. □



Troy Bunch, Planning Director, presents Warren L. Kron, Jr., right, with the 2009 Planning Director's Award at the January 25th Planning Commission meeting.

PLANNING IN THE NEWS

“A vision of mixed-use, multiethnic Baton Rouge”
Greater Baton Rouge Business Report
 December 3, 2009

“Old South BR condos proposed”
The Advocate
 January 23, 2010

“BR starts makeover of development plan”
The Advocate
 January 27, 2010

Notes from the Director



PLANNING DIRECTOR'S AWARD

**By Troy L. Bunch,
 Planning Director**

Each year, the Planning Director recognizes one exceptional Planning Commission staff member

for outstanding efforts which have most contributed toward the success of the City-Parish planning program during the past year. Warren L. Kron, Jr., the ‘Acting’ Geographic Information System (GIS) Coordinator, is the recipient of the 2009 Planning Director’s Award. The award was presented to Warren at the January 25 Planning Commission meeting.

Warren is a native of Baton Rouge and started work with the CPPC in May 1998. He has worked in the GIS Division since 2003 and is currently responsible for the Planning Commission’s efforts to develop and manage the work related to the Parish-wide GIS program. Since January, 2007 he has coordinated the Project Development section of the GIS Division and was named ‘Acting’ GIS Coordinator in December 2009.

Warren has extensive experience in mapping, analysis, data development, application design, and project management. He plays a key role in a variety of projects including the Application Tracking System, Planning Advisor, the Land Development Application Search Tool, Document Management System, and the Watershed Characterization and Management Project. Warren also coordinates the technology needs of the CPPC with Information Services and works with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on tasks to advance the development of the Parish-wide GIS.

Warren has made presentations on behalf of the CPPC at national and state conferences. He has also presented GIS topics to the Planning Commission, the Metropolitan Council, LSU School of Landscape Architecture, as well as other venues within the community. In April 2010, Warren will be presenting the Planning Advisor at the American Planning Association National Conference in New Orleans.

Warren is one of the many dedicated and talented staff members at the Planning Commission who work together improving the quality of life for everyone in Baton Rouge. This award recognizes his superlative efforts. □

PLANNING AHEAD

- March 2** **FuturEBR Parishwide Planning Workshop**
Baton Rouge River Center
- March 4** **FuturEBR North B.R. Planning Workshop**
Redemptorist High School, 4000 St. Gerard Ave.
- March 4** **FuturEBR South B.R. Planning Workshop**
Woodlawn High School, 15755 Jefferson Hwy.
- March 17** **Metropolitan Council Zoning Meeting**
4:00 p.m., Governmental Building, Room 348
- March 22** **Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting**
5:00 p.m., Governmental Building, Room 348
- April 21** **Metropolitan Council Zoning Meeting**
4:00 p.m., Governmental Building, Room 348
- April 26** **Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting**
5:00 p.m., Governmental Building, Room 348
- May 19** **Metropolitan Council Zoning Meeting**
4:00 p.m., Governmental Building, Room 348

Field Notes

Jose E. Villalobos-Enciso, GIS Consultant, will attend a workshop entitled “Building Resilience: Implementing Innovative, Sustainable Flood Mitigation Solutions for the Gulf Coast” to be held from February 25-27 in New Orleans.

**Visit the Planning Commission
on the internet at
www.brgov.com/dept/planning.**

Staff Spotlight

Barrett Chaix, Economic and Environmental Research Coordinator, was “Employee of the Month” for December 2009.

Jane Wooldridge, Clerical Specialist, was “Employee of the Month” for January 2010.

Glenn Hanna, Land Development Planner, was “Employee of the Month” for February 2010.

**City-Parish Planning Commission
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