



**Off River Neighborhood Meeting  
May 16, 2007  
NPN**

Allen Eskew introduced the team and invited the group to attend the follow-up meetings. He explained that New Orleans Building Corporation, an agency that manages city-owned property, is the client, and that NOBC and the Port of New Orleans have a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement that was negotiated so that development could take place.

Allen presented the organizing principles and talked about the “hybrid” solution – creating different landscapes in different areas, in some places with architecture and in others by allowing the river to reclaim the area.

He talked about the primary nodes of development:

- 1 – Jackson Avenue – carve away platform to create a green edge
- 2 – Riversphere/Convention Center – Neighborhood uses along with academic village and residential towers. Rethink the expansion and use of space.
- 3 – Julia Street – 900-room hotel already planned, but create ability to go up over RR tracks to access river.
- 4 – Spanish Plaza – Create something appropriate as the terminus to Canal Street. This plan is now in advanced stages
- 5 – Jackson Square – Expand the plaza to rivers’ edge and put in a pier.
- 6 – Elysian Fields/Esplanade – Notch out a place in the working wharves
- 7 – Piety Street – neighborhood use
- 8 – Press Street – neighborhood use
- 8 – Poland Avenue – Residential opportunity with recreational uses at the point. Possible larger structures. Restore the last three blocks of boulevard.

Carol Bebel said that she is working on creating ways to connect sociologically and psychologically and provide a values-add to the communities near the river as well as those who want to make their way to the river.

Allen said there will be 8-10 piers, sanctuary space and some iconic art displays to represent the cultural components of the river.

Question:

A woman with a bed and breakfast seven blocks from Poland said the tall, modern buildings are not appropriate. Her clientele tell her that they come to New Orleans and particularly Bywater because of the old-time charm. Why not look at what was there historically and build something compatible?

Response:

The team has responded to those concerns and will continue to do so, and we know traffic is an issue. The new drawings will reflect more of that.

Question:

Are you working with the Corps of Engineers so we can be assured that these openings are not just doorways for the river to get in?

Response:

There are only 6 or 7 new cuts. None will affect the levee system.

Question:

Have you looked at other riverfronts that have done this?

Response:

The group has done some of the most prestigious work around the world.

Question:

What is the timeframe for the project?

Response:

We finish with a presentation of July 1 so we can get into the funding streams that Dr. Blakely is working on. There are some financial triggers to create an impact. The Mayor and the City Council have made it clear they want it implemented.

Question:

What happened to the proposed amphitheatre at Governor Nicholls?

Response:

The space is too narrow to build anything.

Question:

What about the expansion of the cruise ship terminals?

Response:

The Port just opened Erato with 1000-car garage. They can berth 2 or 3 ships there. If the industry comes back and continues to grow, Poland is where the Port has considered expansion. We have asked the port to explore other sites.

Question:

Is this the right time? Shouldn't this be on the backburner until people rebuild...until the city rebuilds? These are just for rich people who don't even live here. We need to provide housing for the working class...the ones who will provide the workforce for these types of developments. We aren't in a position to do that now.

Response:

This is a master plan, a roadmap for development for the next century. There are things already happening at Riversphere, World Trade Center etc. We need to make sure that it is done within the context of what is right for the city.

Sean:

That is a valid position, but the only way to address poverty is to increase economic growth. The money we will use will not compete for any projects for rebuilding. Largely, we are addressing quality of life issues, and it can trigger \$1 billion in private development that will expand the tax base.