

History

Before the Branson Landing existed, there was a lush, green park along the Taney-como lakefront. The old L&J (the J stands for "Justus", as in Jeff Justus's father) Plumbing and Supply steel building was there; not looking its best, but it was a true part of Branson local history. There were a few blocks of homes sitting right where the Hilton Hotel and Convention Center is sitting now. The homes were not in the best condition either, but again; were part of local history. Anything presently on the south side of Long St. remaining is roughly the same time period and condition that those houses used to be in. Also, the parking garage downtown only took up one block, with no elevators.

Around 2003, the City of Branson employed its power of eminent domain to kick those people out of the district that would soon contain the Branson Landing, Hilton Hotel and Convention Center, and the parking garage expansion. L&J was relocated, the people that lived there moved, and all of those buildings were knocked down. What was once a neighborhood, park, and supply store became a pile of rubble. This rubble was shipped out and groundbreaking on the new developments began. Branson City Council declared the area a "Community Improvement District (CID)" and paid for the project using TIF (Tax-Increment Funding). The area was zoned a TIF district, which explains why sales tax is so high.

Since construction is boring, we'll fast-forward for three years. In May 2006, the ribbon was cut and the retail stores were opened for business. It is worth noting that the interior construction of the condos above the stores was still occurring, and on rainy days; it kind-of rained inside the store. Anyway, 48 of the then-104 stores were open.

In June of 2007, the entire development was declared finished. All stores were open and condos were fully-roofed and going up for sale. It has been the same ever since, except the original arrangement of stores. I heard it was hard to be profitable there.

The Hilton Hotel/Branson Convention Center was built and opened during the same timeframe. It also falls in the TIF district and as a result, suffers from the 12.6% sales tax rate.

Trivia

- It was actually really hard to find most of the information in this brochure. Most of it was recalled from memory.
- Want to buy a condo in the Branson Landing? A one bedroom, one bath, 772 sq. ft. condo will start at \$119,000.
- Want to rent storage or commercial space in the Branson Landing? We couldn't find out how much it costs without trying to pretend we're interested in it. This leads us to believe the cost is really high.
- The entire development cost \$420 million. Most of that came from taxpayers in the city of Branson, though bonds from the state helped pay for transportation and infrastructure. This will be repaid through heightened sales taxes.
- There is more than one TIF district in Branson. The area known as "Branson Hills" (where the new Wal-Mart Supercenter, Best Buy, and other major retailers are) is also a TIF district and as such, falls under the 12.6% sales tax rate.
- If you stand in a long hallway in the Hilton Hotel, you can notice a slight lean to the walls. This is because the building is actually leaning! The building's foundation was built on fill dirt.



We Are Change Branson
www.wearechangebranson.com

Bringing the Truth to Branson, MO

The Truth Behind the Branson Landing, the Hilton, and the Convention Center



**The Publication the Branson Media
Gestapo Warned You About**



What This All Means To Us

Sources:

Our Lady of the Lake Parish: http://www.ladyofthelakeparish.org/m_h/history.htm

Springfield News-Leader: <http://www.news-leader.com/article/20060527/NEWS02/605270352/-I-am-just-amazed->

SBJ.NET: <http://sbj.net/Main.asp?SectionID=18&SubSectionID=23&ArticleID=83608>

City of Branson Organization: <http://www.cityofbranson.org/ecodev/index.htm>

Jones Lang LaSalle Branson Landing Fact Sheet: http://www.joneslanglasalle.com/microsites/retail_pdfs/factsheets/Branson%20Landing.pdf



Taxpayer eviction for Private Business

It would be different if eminent domain was to be used for the public good (you know, because that's what it was *designed to do*); like designating the area as an infrastructure expansion, renewing the park, etc. However, the city council used eminent domain to kick taxpayers and citizens out of an area in the interest of private business. Not a good maneuver for public relations, if you ask us.

Promotion of a Materialistic Lifestyle

Materialistic lifestyles no longer need promotions. It has permeated into the youth society in the 80s and now that the executive chairs of major corporations and public offices are being filled with the generation that grew up during that time, this lifestyle will be pushed on us like never before. The problem is, the lifestyle often leaves those that live it vapid and empty, as the stuff they accumulate loses value over time. As people become less responsible, pricy jewelry will get lost. Everybody knows that things with integrated circuits in them lose value from the moment they leave the factory. Instead of investing in some luxury; people should begin investing in things and technologies that empower themselves (good examples include canning machines, books, etc.).

Higher tax rates

As we face ever-increasing encroachment from the federal and state governments, the last thing we need is a higher sales tax rate. Federal and state taxes already take a fair amount of our paychecks, why should we have to pay extra for the development to be there in the first place?

What Can You Do About This?

Well, since the thing is built and has been open for three years, it's too late to do anything about it. About the only thing we can do now is find out why there is a high turnout of stores in that general area. We suspect it's because the lease is too high. You can then educate those that may want to set up a store there.

The real thing to do is protest this kind of behavior in the future. Educate yourselves about TIFs (Tax Increment Funding districts) then go to the proposed districts and rally against them.

Learn What's Up Next:

Believe it or not, they aren't stopping at the Branson Landing. Visit <http://www.bransoncompplan.com>.



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