

Pike Place Market Constituency General Assembly Minutes: May 19th, 2009

Attendees: Board Members: Tom Graham, Chair; Teagan MacDonald, Vice Chair; Gloria Skouge, Patrick Kerr, David Ghoddousi, Jill Andrews, David Ott.

Others: Tony Morigi, Zack Cook, Leo J. Dortina, Haley Land, Lisa Couchman, Joan Paulson, Skip Knox, Carol Binder (PDA Executive Director), Geof Logan (PPMC Acting Secretary)

Guests and Speakers: The Honorable Sally Clark, Chair, Seattle City Council Planning, Land Use and Neighborhoods Committee; James Haydu, PDA Marketing and Communications Director.

Chair Graham called the meeting to order at 6:01pm. Chair passed the gavel to the Vice Chair for a motion. Chair moved to change the order of agenda. Moved, seconded and passed unanimously. Gavel returned to Chair.

Chair announced that tonight's PPMC GA meeting was being held in conjunction with the PDA's regular Market Renovation Project (MRP) update public meeting. PDA Marketing and Communications Director James Haydu presented the MRP update on behalf of PDA employee John Turnbull, absent due to illness.

Mr. Haydu commenced by updating progress on the Hillclimb entrance off Western Avenue. He explained that the PDA's first attempts at providing directional signage for pedestrians and drivers proved inadequate and that more signage was being produced and implemented for installation by June 1st. Mr. Haydu solicited from the Board and attendees suggestions for signage improvement; discussed crosswalk concerns and proposed more Seattle Dept. of Transportation (SDOT) and Seattle Police Dept. (SPD) assistance in managing the safety of the construction environment for pedestrians. He also passed out a draft pedestrian route map and invited review and comment for map improvements.

Several issues were brought up during the general question and answer period, including construction noise concerns. One LaSalle resident mentioned that construction noise started as early as 7 a.m., and that a complaint about such was lodged with the PDA. Mr. Haydu replied that her complaint was received and that the Contractor (Turner Construction) was now directed to refrain from loud construction activities such as jackhammering until 8 a.m., as required by law.

Other audience comments addressed handicap access from Western impacted by construction, requests to City Council Member Clark for assistance in securing more SDOT and SPD assistance in the pedestrian/construction environment and communicating said needs to the appropriate city departments.

A question on placement of the Hillclimb elevator was presented. Mr. Haydu asked PPMC Board and PDA Council Member Patrick Kerr to address the question in his capacity as a member of the PDA Council Capital Renovation Committee. Mr. Kerr explained the past debate over elevator location; that an alternative proposal for different location that he and others supported was not the one selected, in part because the Market Historical Commission vetoed the alternative location.

Tony Morigi, representing Golden Age Collectibles, brought to the PDA's and Constituency's attention his concerns in re the loss of Down Under pedestrian traffic from Hillclimb stair closures and it's impact on his business, which he estimates at a 20 to 30 per cent decline. Mr. Morigi stated he could not see any rationalization for the closure of that stair section since it appeared to him to be uninvolved in any actual Hillclimb construction.

Mr. Haydu deferred to Mr. Kerr to explain the situation. Mr. Kerr stated it was the Contractor's decision based on the Contractor's assessment of project needs and that the decision was made some time ago. Mr. Kerr pointed out that Golden Age and others had been informed the past year of stair closure, and of several construction public meetings informing of the closure in which public comment and input was invited, and that Golden Age had apparently not attended these meetings nor commented. Mr. Haydu and Mr. Kerr stated that they would continue to work on improving signage and use other methods for assisting Down Under businesses and maintaining public access during construction.

Mr. Haydu announced that Mr. Turnbull would in June be scheduling meetings post Labor Day to discuss fall and winter construction impacts with Down Under tenants. This concluded Mr. Haydu's formal remarks and the Constituency thanked him for his presentation.

City Council Member Clark, in attendance as a Constituency guest, was asked for an update on Council and Mayoral appointments to the PDA Capital Renovation Committee, as required by the Levy ordinance as part of the City's oversight mechanisms for the project. Ms. Clark discussed the recently announced nominees, their qualifications and the search process. The names and resumes were presented in writing to the Constituency and are now on file. The Constituency thanked Ms. Clark for her participation and interest.

Other Business: Haley Land provided an update on current actions by a group organizing Market small businesses for advocating health insurance reform.

Board Member Jill Andrews mentioned marketing opportunities for Market businesses through the Washington State Dept. of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED website).

Chair Graham invited discussion on a possible change in the GA meeting day from the current Tuesday to another day in order to accommodate a schedule conflict of the current Secretary. No decision was made resulting from the discussion.

Several Members expressed concern over recent difficulties in achieving GA and EC meeting quorums. Questions were raised and debated as to reducing quorum requirements, increasing member participation, recruiting new Board and Constituency members and other related issues.

Chair adjourned the meeting at approximately 8 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Acting Secretary Geof Logan