

1 Public Market Advisory Commission Minutes - October 6, 2009

2 Meeting Agenda

3 1. Call to Order

4 The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m.

5 2. Roll Call

6 Members Present: (3) S. Brines, P. Pollack, D. Black, G. Service, D. Barkman

7 Staff Present: (1) M. Notarianni

8 Guests: (0)

9 3. Approval of Agenda

10 Though on today's agenda under "New Business", the financial report will be moved to  
11 next meeting.

12 4. Special Presentations

13 5. Public Commentary (Agenda Items Only)

14 6. Approval of Minutes

15 a. meeting of September 1

16 7. Commission Business

17 a. old business

18 (1) Special Events

19 M. Notarianni: I had a meeting with Karen Farmer who runs Kerrytown, and since  
20 Halloween falls on a Saturday this year they are planning to do a festival there, so we co-planned  
21 some activities to have at the farmer's market as well. We were thinking of doing something  
22 with pumpkin carving, inviting kids to come in costume and trick or treat with any vendor who  
23 want to participate, and try and find some music.

24 G. Service: I do. A vendor suggested that market vendors dress up in costume and the  
25 customers vote for their favorite costumed vendor.

26 M. Notarianni: Another event that is happening-not in the farmer's market per se, but in  
27 the public market space-is a winter evening market. We're hoping to do it on the first Friday in  
28 December, during midnight madness, when all the shops in Kerrytown, and all of Ann Arbor are  
29 open late.

30 b. New Business

31 (1) New Vendor Discussion

32 M. Notarianni: I've received fewer applications this month. Applications I've received include  
33 an artisan who wants to make scarves, pillows and bags with picture transfers highlighting ann  
34 arbor; handmade soaps and baked goods; and dried spice blends and baked goods like tarts,  
35 cobbler, cakes, and bread pudding. Any thoughts?

36 D. Barkman: It seems like we have quite a few of those in the summer months, if they're  
37 willing to tough the winters and Wednesdays certainly I think let the customers choose who they  
38 like.

39 P. Pollack: The last couple months you have been giving us a report of potential new  
40 vendors. How has that actually been realized? Have some come on board and started to attend?

41 M. Notarianni: Yes, of the people that have been approved I think they've all decided to  
42 come.

43 P. Pollack: This is actually a good setting to announce who the new vendors are, literally,  
44 when they come in order to get some promotion. Not to forget about long term vendors, but for  
45 new vendors this might be a good place to announce who those are as a continued part of your  
46 application approval process.

47 M. Notarianni: Yes, new vendors in the last month are Stephen Kinnard, the  
48 photographer you mentioned; Pasta e Pasta, two women who make homemade pastas and sauce;  
49 and Cafe Japon, who sells bread and pastries. All have been well received I feel.

50 8. Work Session Recap

51 P. Pollack: The work session took place two weeks ago on Thursday night, and we  
52 wound up discussing a fair number of things. Agenda started with Molly reviewing her goals for  
53 the year, do you want to go through those?

54 M. Notarianni: They include increasing participation in the EBT program through  
55 outreach, focusing on promotion and development of the public and farmers market, and  
56 working with the commission in general to engage and activate the commission into projects and  
57 subcommittees.

58 P. Pollack: That actually led to a discussion that focused in two arenas. One was policy  
59 including operations and procedures and the second was outreach, essentially activities and  
60 events. The first one we focused on financial reports and what the schedule might be for those  
61 and how we might use them and at that point what we brought up was making sure the  
62 information available to the vendors is that money that does come in is in the farmers market  
63 account. It was part of the discussion about the market as a physical space being equitable, the  
64 funds that come in and the funds that go out being equitable. So the financial report is not only  
65 the health of the farmers market but beginning to track the record of what dollars are coming in  
66 and going out of the farmers money. We talked a little bit about making sure the application

67 content is up to date, and that was part of the notion of complaints, and that tracking to see what  
68 the complaints are in relation to policies. If there are complaints in other subjects, if there might  
69 be a sequence of tracking those and understanding them, there may need to be some policies  
70 adjusted by us. Some of that was also the discussion about baking, which brought up the  
71 definition of what constitutes the term "made". The bylaws use the term "made" but there are no  
72 definitions that describe what constitutes being made by the vendor. There's a whole question  
73 there about the relationship to the rules, the application content and the ability to follow through,  
74 and molly's point of view in enforcing those rules. We also talked about publicity materials  
75 under operations and procedures, the ability to have uniform information available that the  
76 opportunity exists to have vendors promote themselves and that we might even be able to use  
77 that promotion in different ways.

78 S. Brines: We also established subcommittees, which haven't met yet, but hopefully will  
79 before the next meeting.

80 P. Pollack: The other part of the operations and procedures is the notion that when you  
81 think about the PMAC, we do have a relationship to the DDA, the Parks Advisory Commission  
82 and to Molly, and Molly has a relationship to the public, the vendors, to us, the administration  
83 and so forth. What's important for us to do is to understand that we are not an administrative  
84 body, we are only an advice and suggestion body, so we have little to do with complaints except  
85 to track what they are to see if there's an impact on policy.

86 The second topic we discussed generally was activities and events, education and outreach. One  
87 important comment Molly made was that on market days she's really busy running the market  
88 and therefore too busy to also run special events. That's also where the opportunity for being a  
89 volunteer needs some organization from us and outreach to begin staffing activities.

90 M. Notarianni: I like the idea of having a volunteer orientation in the spring, to get  
91 everyone excited about the season, and maybe have a big book of events listing what people can  
92 sign up for. In the market in Portland we had a recurring event we called a "market tour" that  
93 was geared toward volunteers, but could be geared toward anyone to welcome new people to the  
94 market. It was at a set time every week, and someone would spend ten or fifteen minutes  
95 showing people around the market. It was a nice way to help people get acclimated.

96 P. Pollack: That's also a good opportunity to take advantage of the oral history project,  
97 and the stories we've started to accumulate. I'm not suggesting we broadcast them over the PA,  
98 but there may be times when there's a particular time or venue in which the stories could be  
99 made available.

100 D. Black: Could we ever hear those stories here in the Commission meeting?

101 M. Notarianni: Yes, it could be nice. We've been planning to burn some of them on a CD  
102 and have a listening booth set up at the market.

103 9. Reports and Communications

104 a) Market Manager

105 M. Notarianni: Sections are slowing down. Sansonetti and Prochaska have been  
106 inspected in the last month. New vendors are Stephen Kinnard, Cafe Japon and Pasta e Pasta.  
107 The inspector is going to start inspecting the artisans as well, probably in November. The FM  
108 solar project has been selected for the second year in a row as a stop on the Great Lakes  
109 Renewable Energy Association Solar Tour. September events included: plastic planter pickup  
110 with local nonprofit Peace, Love and Planet. It went over really well and they may try to set  
111 something up once a month in the summer. The Homegrown festival, Ozone House's  
112 fundraising dinner, and Kerrytown Bookfest. All went well. The Oral History Project was  
113 profiled in the AA Chronicle. A Rapid Market Assessment will be happening tomorrow at  
114 market, hosted by the MI Farmers Market Association, analyzing all areas of the market but also  
115 focusing on EBT usage. This the last month for project fresh, and EBT usage and participation  
116 is increasing. Collaborations with U of M students are happening as well. I'm also working with  
117 the ICC to try to get local food into their coop, and represented the market at the Rackham  
118 Health and Fitness Fair. As far as renovations go, they are almost done. The market is painted  
119 and the new florescent lights are a vast improvement, and the installation of the new PA system  
120 should be done by the end of the week.

121 P. Pollack: is the installation of the speakers the last piece of this first phase of  
122 renovations?

123 M. Notarianni: Yes. Eventually, the city will install induction lights down the center as  
124 evening security lights, but we don't have the lights yet.

125 P. Pollack: The reaction has been positive to the lights?

126 D. Barkman: Yeah, I walked around and it seemed nice down there.

127 P. Pollack: Is there any information about when anything is going to take place?

128 M. Notarianni: Not as yet, what I've heard is that it will be revisited by focus groups.

129 P. Pollack: There's the question too of the DDA's project for Fifth Ave, if you wouldn't  
130 mind checking on what the schedule for that would be. The work on division and fifth is  
131 supposed to make changes to the farmers market area and crosswalks.

132 b) Related Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces

133 c) Items from Commissioners

134 S. Brines: I feel like we need to publish the markets complaint handling procedure or  
135 protocol, perhaps on the website. So people understand the process. There might be a citywide  
136 procedure for complaint handling? People usually want some kind of response, and if we have a  
137 protocol we can say there was a response, and it has been documented to keep complaints from  
138 re-emerging. Sometimes we receive more comments and suggestions and not official  
139 complaints, so I don't know that everything gets responded to.

140 P. Pollack: In the operating rules there's a time specified for an appeal process but not for  
141 a complaint process. Some of the history behind the removal of the market's complaint process

142 came through the revisiting of the marketing commission, and its purpose and makeup. There  
143 was a complaint form that was quite specific, sent to the Commission, and in effect the  
144 Commission was doing something that was an administrative process and it was judged to not  
145 be an advisory body role, so it was removed not because it wasn't needed any longer, but because  
146 it was not appropriate at the Commission level.

147 D. Barkman: Maybe that just gets put back in with your policies and procedures review,  
148 as something that we really need to reinstate and re-clarify

149 S. Brines: That's a good point, it could be something we revisit and think about  
150 thoroughly. And this is not to say that there haven't been responses, as we're talking about it,  
151 which is already a response. But it's just a suggestion, and it sounds like the subcommittee will  
152 think about it.

153 P. Pollack: The appeal procedure is time specific and there's no reason that kind of  
154 structure couldn't be attached to the original quote complaint, so there is a process on paper.  
155 whether a form is necessary or not is a whole other issue. One of the difficulties with the  
156 previous process was that there were all sorts of behavioral complaints as well as operating rules.  
157 It's an important suggestion and let's put it into the policy subcommittee

158 D. Barkman: One other item, could we go around and look at some of the old metal  
159 signage? As long as we've repainted and cleaned up can we replace the old signs with newer  
160 signs in better condition?

161 P. Pollack: That's an invitation to do something larger. For example, the location of  
162 where the solar sign is seems very remote from where the panel actually is. There's a whole  
163 signage question then, where they are and where they might be. Should we proceed with a  
164 general discussion of sign cleanup and where they all might be?

165 S. Brines: That might be an educational and outreach subcommittee thing. It might be a  
166 change to revisit and think about some of the signs for sure, even just the main sign. I'd like it to  
167 say "open year round". The subcommittee could hash that out.

168 M. Notarianni: The reason they put the current sign where it is because they didn't want  
169 to block any vendors stalls, and also there's a kiosk that was recently put in by the benches and  
170 eventually the hands-on museum is going to do a whole interactive feature about the solar panels.  
171 And I think one or two of the other sides is available for market literature and news, etc.

172 P. Pollack: This is an opportunity to look at overall sign condition all over the market,  
173 and if there's a slightly more aggressive signage system at the ends of all the pavilions, the DDA  
174 does have some money we may be able to request be allocated for the market.

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176 d) Transmittals/communications received

177 M. Notarianni: I received on communication on Monday the 5th. I think we alluded to  
178 this regarding the baked goods issue as well as suggesting that several vendors don't have the

179 appropriate licenses. I need to follow up with the MDA on that, because I think there's a bit of  
180 confusion about what the various licenses mean.

181 P. Pollack: It is October now and as part of the master calendar discussion...last year we  
182 had an annual meeting with the vendors, so think about doing that again. Typically it's been in  
183 the winter. It's an opportunity to meet with the vendors and the general community. That one  
184 might be on the year-round schedule.

185 9. Public Commentary – General (3 minutes per speaker)

186 10. Adjournment

187 The meeting was adjourned at 6:43pm.

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