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MINUTES
Public Market Advisory Commission
September 1, 2009

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

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

Members Absent: (1) S. Brines

Staff Present: (1) M. Notarianni

Guests: (0)

3. Approval of Agenda

4. Special Presentations

P. Pollack: I'd like to welcome to our newest commissioner, David Barkman from TJ Farms. As a vendor at the Market for 28 years the perspective you bring to the commission is important. Thank you.

5. Public Commentary (Agenda Items Only)

6. Approval of Minutes

a. Meeting of August 4th

7. Commission Business

a. Old business

(1) Special Events

Molly: No special events planned for the Farmer's Market, but I think there's a possibility for more events that now we've gotten through the thick of the summer activities. Halloween falls on a Saturday this year, and maybe we could hold a Harvest festival in November as well, and some kind of festive holiday chestnut event in December.

b. New business

(1) New vendor discussion

Molly: Many applications from potential vendors this month: two vendors who want to sell photography, cut flowers, an orchard selling donuts and caramel apples, the Kerrytown spice shop, a new farm, a food cart vendor with a traditional Chinese medicine focus, pasta, a greenhouse, and a large farm with a variety of herbs, seeds, teas,

34 note cards, peppers, flowers and produce.

35 D. Black: Yes. I feel like adding more of the same is less profit for everyone

36 D. Barkman: When you see how much food goes to food gatherers at the end of the day,
37 it may be a better value for these applying vendors to seek a different market. There are
38 many markets in the area that need vendors.

39 P. Pollack: What about for a Wednesday?

40 D. Black: Peter, are you asking if we could use more vendors for a Wednesday? I know
41 we need more shoppers, but what about vendors?

42 M. Notarianni: I have that question too. Maybe bringing in more of the same thing is not
43 going to draw shoppers, but new things may draw interest.

44 P. Pollack: That's where the ones who seem different would come in: pasta, Chinese
45 medicine focus food cart.

46 P. Pollack: The comment most of us would offer then is that we are interested in
47 diversity, particularly on Wednesday, where diversity can facilitate more customers.

48 M. Notarianni: Is it helpful to keep bringing new vendor applications to the meetings?

49 P. Pollack: It's reassuring to see all the interest, and it fosters discussion. The companion
50 piece to that is that we need more customers on Wednesdays. We're entering a new
51 academic year, with new neighbors and students, so we could generate ideas on how to
52 promote to them.

53 8. Work Session Discussion

54 a) Goals and activities for the next year.

55 P. Pollack: We'll be discussing the need for committees and subcommittees, and goals for
56 2010. And we need to be a bit more proactive in setting an agenda for ourselves in
57 relation to policy and promotion and education. There is also a possibility of setting up
58 meetings with other organizational bodies like the DDA or the Parks department and
59 generally reaching out to other organizations involved in the public and farmers market.

60 M. Notarianni: I found it helpful to look at previous topics from earlier commission
61 meetings.

62 P. Pollack: It would be helpful to understand your goals, Molly. Could you bring them
63 to the work session so we could see specifically how we could assist you in reaching
64 them?

65 M. Notarianni: Many customers are very interested in vendor's stories.

66 G. Service: Football season draws so many new customers to the market. Perhaps we
67 could find a way to tell a story about that.

68 b) Work session meeting scheduled for 6:15 pm, 9/22.

69 9. Reports and Communications

70 a) Market Manager

71 M. Notarianni: Blandowski, Brock, Bliss, Kierczak, Koski, Vena, Dolores Gracia, Tony
72 Gracia, Bremmer were inspected in the past month. New vendors in the market include:

73 Vedic Village, Agrarian Adventure. Even though it was very rainy the 90th birthday
74 celebration was a successful event. Lots of people came out for the free snacks though
75 unfortunately the weather put a damper on the music and balloons. Project Grow's
76 annual tomato tasting on August 22 went very well, and this Saturday we will be hosting
77 a plastic planter/plant flat recycling pickup with non-profit Peace Love and Planet. Both
78 the mayor and the governor proclaimed September Local Food Month, which is very
79 exciting. We are working to promote and celebrate this in the market, offering challenges
80 and tips on eating local. The Market has been promoted in the Ann Arbor Chronicle, on
81 CTN, in the Current, A2 Journal, AnnArbor.com, some national travel blogs and
82 weddings. We also have new stickers, totes and buttons. Trunkapalooza is still going on
83 every Thursday until September 10. Nash Bash was on August 20; in September will be
84 the Homegrown Festival, the Bookfest and the Ozone house fundraiser, all in the same
85 weekend.

86 P. Pollack: Remind us what the two new vendors sell?

87 M. Notarianni: Vedic Village sells heirloom varieties of vegetables and Agrarian
88 Adventure is a partnership with Tappan Middle School, which involves teens growing
89 produce and bringing it to market.

90 P. Pollack: That's an academic version of the incubator farm that's been talked about
91 before which could be discussed during the work session; the ability of the farmer's
92 market to connect to land conservation and development.

93 M. Notarianni: Additionally, the renovations are still underway. The roof has been
94 repainted, and the posts are next. They'll be painted with decorative colored stripes to
95 help with market navigation. The lights have arrived and will be going up starting the
96 day after Labor Day. We hope to have all improvements finished by the fall.

97

98 b. Related Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces

99

100 c. Items from Commissioners

101

102 M. Notarianni: I have an item from Shannon, who is not here today. Passing an informal
103 resolution to support Homegrown fest had been discussed?

104

105 P. Pollack: Last year we passed a motion enthusiastically supporting the festival. I think
106 we could do another version of that this year. So moved?

107

108 Moved by P. Pollack.

109

110 Seconded by D. Black

111

112 Approved unanimously.

113

114 d. Transmittals/communications received

115

(1) Field Farms

116

117 M. Notarianni: The concern was the charge of a \$55 inspection fee. They felt they hadn't
118 been made aware of this, that the cost was disproportionate given their proximity to the
119 market. My response was that inspections have always had this fee, but we made the
120 decision not to charge vendors last year because it had been so long and we just wanted
121 to get everyone up to date, but now that they are going to be done on a regular basis the
122 market can't absorb that cost. Since there seems to still be confusion surrounding the
123 frequency and grouping together of inspections I sent out a newsletter on Saturday and
124 will continue to try to get the information out to all our vendors.

125

126 P. Pollack: So basically a reminder of what the process is and we're going on to an
127 approximate two year schedule.

128

129 D. Barkman: I think it would be useful for the inspector to communicate the fee and
130 scheduling when he calls to make the appointment.

131

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

133

134 G. Thompson: If you're looking for projects or concepts for the coming year one of the
135 things we had talked about in the past had been vendor identity at the stalls. I know
136 there's been some improvement but not as much as I would like. Another issue I would
137 like to comment on is pricing. Many vendors don't display prices, which doesn't bother
138 me so much as I know the vendors I usually patronize, but what does bother me is when
139 there's someone in front of me asking the vendor the price of many individual items and
140 holding up the sale. So I would encourage more display of prices also.

141

142 10. Adjournment

143

144 The meeting was adjourned at 6:20pm.