

1 **Public Market Advisory Commission Minutes**

2  
3 Tuesday, June 1, 5:30 pm

4  
5 **Meeting Agenda**

6 1. Call to Order

7  
8 The meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm.

9  
10 2. Roll Call

11  
12 Members Present: (4) D. Barkman, D. Black, P. Pollack, G. Service.

13 Members Absent: (1) S. Brines

14 Staff Present: (1) M. Notarianni

15 Guests: (0)

16  
17 3. Approval of Agenda

18 4. Special Presentations

19 5. Public Commentary – Agenda items only (3 minutes per speaker)

20  
21 G. Thompson: Approximately every other meeting, or maybe every third meeting, you are  
22 presented with complaints against one or more of the vendors. The history of this dates back 10,  
23 20, or perhaps even as much as 30 years. At that time, the market manager and the market  
24 commission often made decisions without formal rules. A few vendors and their friends  
25 perceived that some were given advantages that they were not. The hostility remains, and the  
26 complaints continue. My concern is that you may be reverting to this pattern of personal  
27 decisions rather than by rule. As an example, the Commission has stated that a special sign will  
28 be designed to designate certified organic growers, but there is nothing in the market rules that  
29 implies that the market manager can, or should, supply special signs to one class of vendors.  
30 Rather, the rules for organic produce are law. I transmitted the document “Organic Food: What  
31 Farmers Market Managers Need to Know.” I urge this Commission not to consider the creation  
32 of special signs, but rather to follow the existing written market rules requiring certification be  
33 posted and requiring honesty in advertising and the Michigan state law. Another example is that  
34 seems some vendors might be invited to attend the market only on Wednesday. There is nothing  
35 the market rules to support a Wednesday-only vendor. Clearly, a vendor coming only on  
36 Wednesday is at a strong disadvantage at acquiring seniority. It is also unfair that they are  
37 charged the same fee as a Saturday and Wednesday vendor. Wednesday-only vendors may be a  
38 good concept for the market, but it’s not provided in the rules. If you want to create this class of  
39 vendors, I urge you to modify the rules to address the issue of fairness. If you do not, you are  
40 planting the seeds of another 10, 20, or 30 years of complaints.

41  
42 6. Approval of Minutes

43 a. Meeting of May 4, 2010

44

45 P. Pollack: I did mention that one closing comment, at the end, to be added.

46

47 7. Commission Business

48 a. Old Business

49 (1) Event Planning

50

51 M. Notarianni: As we discussed last month, this year I have decided to focus on several larger  
52 events, instead of many smaller events. I think the annual birthday celebration, as well as a  
53 Halloween event, would both be great to focus on. Another event idea is a winter holiday  
54 market, either on a market day or not on a market day, to draw people to the Kerrytown area to  
55 shop. I did speak to a representative from Slow Food who was really excited about forging some  
56 collaborations with the market, which will create more cohesion with the Farmers Market, the  
57 HomeGrown Festival and Slow Food. This is great!

58

59 P. Pollack: One follow-up question: what might you need, in the way of assistance, for those  
60 events?

61

62 M. Notarianni: Actual help on the day of the events would be the most useful for me. One idea  
63 you had suggested earlier, Peter, which I would still like to follow through on is a small “show-  
64 and-tell” of the vendors.

65

66 P. Pollack: Yes, it’s really just deciding what that would consist of, and then finding a few  
67 volunteers to start the process!

68

69 (2) Market Property and Shed Improvements

70

71 P. Pollack: This pertains to the market site itself-the shed-and simple, straightforward  
72 improvements that might be made. Any suggestions?

73

74 M. Notarianni: The much-anticipated signs are being created! Flowers have been planted along  
75 the 4<sup>th</sup> St side of the market, and I am in the process of coordinating gutter repairs.

76

77 P. Pollack: You had mentioned the electrical upgrades?

78

79 M. Notarianni: Yes, it hasn’t gone out to bid yet, but the design is underway. Another relatively  
80 simple idea, which would have a great impact, is paving the sandlot.

81

82 b. New Business

83 (1) New Vendor Discussion

84

85 M. Notarianni: Applications are actually slowing a little bit. I have one for a food cart vendor  
86 who would like to bring sausages, a food cart vendor who would like to bring a crushed ice  
87 flavored fruit drink, and a vendor who would like to bring plants pre-planted in containers.

88

89 P. Pollack: We haven't really done any more thinking yet on whether there is a way to expand  
90 the stalls we already have. I think that is still a longer-term discussion to consider.

91

92 8. Reports and Communications

93 a. Market Manager

94

95 M. Notarianni: No vendors were inspected in the past month. The market has been promoted in  
96 the Old West Side News and the Ann Arbor Observer in the past month, as well as in various  
97 Avalon Housing sites. A collaboration between Republic Parking and the KDA has resulted in  
98 several lovely large ceramic planters of flowers in the beds along the Fourth St side of the  
99 market. A canning demonstration took place on May 8, and another is scheduled for June 12.  
100 Weekly plastic planter pickup starting May 29, and was very well-received! Zipcar was at the  
101 market several Wednesdays this month, and volunteers will begin to offer free face painting to  
102 youth several Saturdays a month in June. I have begun to meet with Kerrytown merchants to  
103 plan this year's Kindlefest. Gutter repairs are underway, and the new signage for the market is  
104 being manufactured by the City. I will be hosting market field trips for Avalon families through  
105 the Edible Avalon program, as well as several middle schools in Dexter and UM classes in the  
106 next month. I have been also working with several volunteers, focusing on special event  
107 planning, taking daily market photos, and creating an updated vendor map! Some of these  
108 market pictures will soon be featured on Real Time Farms, a great new website that allows  
109 marketgoers to see, and contribute, pictures of farmers markets in real time! The library has  
110 confirmed that their website focused on the market's oral history project will go live in time for  
111 the market's 91<sup>st</sup> birthday! Finally, Wishing Tree Gardens, a local farm and compost project, has  
112 agreed to help provide the market with more comprehensive composting services-for free!

113

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

115 c. Items from Commissioners

116 M. Notarianni: Shannon would like us again, this year, to make a resolution in support of the  
117 Homegrown Festival.

118

119 d. Transmittals/communications received

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

121

122 L. Vasquez: I wanted to direct you to a website where you can find information about farmers  
123 and vendors-not just at Ann Arbor's Farmers Market, but a lot of the markets around the area. It  
124 is called [www.realtimefarms.com](http://www.realtimefarms.com). They also have addresses of farmers, photos of all the  
125 markets, and I find it a very useful website. Also, I just wanted to say, about closing off Detroit  
126 St, you would probably want to talk to the DDA as well as the KDA, since the DDA maintains  
127 the parking. Also, I believe paving the sandlot is probably a more complicated proposition than  
128 paving it over. There's probably permits involved, you'd need to consider what that would do in  
129 terms of water retention and such.

130

131 G. Thompson: In the subject of market improvements, I would like to point out that there is still  
132 a dropoff on the pedestrian sidewalk on the Kerrytown side. Kathy Griswold commented about  
133 that at the Cobblestone Farm meeting. The top of the curb has been painted yellow which does  
134 make it more visible, but it is still irritating to some people, and I guarantee the City would not

135 allow a curb of that size in a citizen's sidewalk. I think that the most difficult aspect of the  
136 market is the parking, and I think that some of your biggest enemies in the parking problem are  
137 the City, the DDA, and the County. I'd like to point out that there is a City parking lot across  
138 from City Hall. Until a week ago, that was permit parking during normal business hours, but it  
139 was free parking on Saturdays, and it was usually quite full of market vendors. The last two  
140 Saturdays that I have gone by, the signage has been changed so it is just permit parking only, at  
141 all times-and it's been completely empty. There is also a county lot, effectively kitty-corner to  
142 the market, that tends to be heavily used by the vendors. Any effort or encouragement to make  
143 the vendors park elsewhere would make that very convenient customer parking. At one time the  
144 parking structure was free on Saturdays, but you cannot park a large vehicle in the structure. At  
145 least in the morning, when I go to the market, that area is very, very empty. I would certainly  
146 encourage anything that could be done to move vendors away from the market, to make more  
147 room for customer parking in the vicinity of the market. Until that happens, I would discourage  
148 closing Detroit St, just for the parking reasons. I think parking is your biggest problem, and  
149 decreasing it would hurt the market more than adding vendors would help. But what I would  
150 consider is, as Nina Plank says, "one market cannot support a market manager" It requires more  
151 than one market to support a fulltime market manager. I would consider or encourage looking at  
152 methods of partnering with other markets. This would be a system where overflow vendors  
153 could be sent initially-a great deal of opportunity for expansion, without a significant amount of  
154 additional overhead.

155

156 10. Adjournment

157

158 The meeting was adjourned at 6:15.

159