

## **Pike Place Market PDA Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, August 23, 2023

4:30 p.m. to 5:45 p.m.

**Location:** Economy Building Classroom (1435 First Ave, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor) **OR**

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82556314489?pwd=a0JLWmJQTORHVkp4ZVVhNzJDK2dSdz09>

OR dial +1 253 215 8782 US (alternate number 253-205-0468), Meeting ID: 825 5631 4489, Passcode: 805342

Committee Members Present: Devin McComb, Paul Neal, David Ghoddousi, Gundeep Singh, Patrice Barrentine

Other Council Members Present: Russell Monroe, Ray Ishii, Jan Hendrickson, Margaret Norton-Arnold, Gordie McIntyre

Staff Present: Mary Bacarella, Karin Moughamer, EJ Griffin, John Turnbull, Amy Wallsmith, Deb Guenther, Rosemarie Gregoire, Sulin Carling, Candace Damon, Mike Rubin, Evan Bourquard

Others Present: Joan Paulson, Heather Pihl, Gina Karaba, Haley Land, Bob Messina

The meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m. by Devin McComb, Chair.

### **1. Administration**

#### **A. Approval of the Agenda**

The agenda was amended to move the Nomination Working Group Update to follow Announcements and/or Community Comments. The amended agenda was approved by acclamation.

#### **B. Approval of the July 19, 2023 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

The July 19, 2023 meeting minutes were approved at 4:32 p.m. by acclamation.

### **2. Announcements and/or Community Comments**

Haley Land commented he would like to hear a response from the Council on compliance with the state's open public meetings act. Devin McComb answered legal counsel has been consulted and there were no concerns about violations. Karin Moughamer added the act requires the PDA to post an agenda at least 24 hours in advance and materials for the meetings were always shared before, after, or during meetings. Mary Bacarella added this meeting would be a working session to carry into Council.

Bob Messina commented the comments on the open public meetings act violations was in regards to the PDA Master Plan group that meets with the consultant team that was not open to the public. He also commented on the Discussion Topic. He disagreed with the creation of a food district and felt the authentic experience was seeing a variety of things not grouped by ethnicity. He suggested the Chinatown International District could serve as an example of authenticity and was opposed to the Disneyfication of the Market.

Heather Pihl asked what would be done about the language in the scope of work stating "highest and best use" as it had been a point of concern. Devin McComb replied he could discuss this with her separately or at a later time. Heather Pihl suggested the Council could clarify the meaning of the phrase or remove it from the scope of work entirely.

Gina Karaba commented the Market has amazing food, but the issue to be addressed is lack of space to eat. She proposed the Pavillion could be used on days where vendors are not making use of them. She also suggested closing the street and using that space for seating on busy days.

*Patrice Barrentine joined the meeting at 4:43p.m.*

Joan Paulson commented the Council is again violating the open public meeting act.

### **3. Nomination Working Group Update**

Jan Hendrickson began by stating a full update would be given at next week's full Council meeting, but she would give a brief overview to the committee. These proposed changes would come in the form of resolutions for the consideration of the Council. She highlighted some potential amendments to the current situation, including:

- Separation of the Secretary and Treasurer position and making the Chair of the Finance and Asset Management Committee the Treasurer as well.
- Making the Secretary a voting member of the Executive Committee.
- Making the Vice Chair of the Council one of the at large members of the Executive Committee.

She added she would be available for questions and comments ahead of the meeting as well.

### **4. Discussion Topic**

#### **A. Preview of Food Life Nexus for August 31<sup>st</sup> Council meeting**

Devin McComb started the discussion noting this was a preview of the presentation and discussion that would be held in the full Council meeting next week. He added materials were not provided ahead of time as this was only a review of the materials that would be available next week.

Candace Damon took over the discussion, recapping the timeline and purpose of the discussion. She defined Food Life as it pertained to Pike Place Market.

Sulin Carling discussed why Food Life was a discussion topic. She highlighted its connections to several Master Plan goals, macro trends that show its importance, and data available showing its relevance from interviews, case studies, trends, and analysis.

Candace Damon reviewed the roles and goals of the Master Plan and how the project is advancing. She introduced an updated graphic showing how the roles interact with each other. She shared in this proposed model, Food Life Destination would play a larger role at the center of the plan, with each role having different levels of focus. Collectively, the eight roles would form Pike Place Market's role as the Soul of the City.

Mike Rubin defined Food Life. He identified eight resources and assets that make up food life, including:

- Regional sustainability
- Land based food sources and systems (terroir)
- Aquatic food sources (merroir)
- Accessibility and addressing food scarcity
- Multicultural interfaces and influences
- Diversity, connectivity, and inclusion
- Culinary techniques and innovations
- Food equity from production to consumption

He further discussed the Pacific Northwest's culinary culture as a cornucopia and rich multicultural influences. He cited the variety of regional dishes, culinary fusions, and evolving dining concepts as an example of this mix.

He went on to emphasize Pike Place Market's ability to take advantage of the northwest culinary in full with both its authenticity and sustainable food systems.

He reviewed a chart of markets around the world as potential case studies. The chart scaled from Destination to Local, Produce-Focused to Product-Focused. He noted the identified best practices of the various markets, which included:

- Commitment to tenant curation, specifically the mix of tenants.
- Shifts in dining patterns.
- Local connectivity.
- Unique regional experiences.
- Programming and animation through events.
- Producer participation.
- Partnership relationships.

He presented Granville Market in Vancouver as a case study and what their strategy has been to become a food life destination. Some of the strategies they employed were demonstration kitchens, culinary institute, food-related events, culinary innovation, underrepresented/emerging food concepts, First Nations' culinary traditions and chefs, evening operating hours, Market District, and mixing specialty markets.

He then compared the strategy of St. Lawrence Market in Toronto. He discussed their three areas of focus, which included building local appeal as basis of authenticity, food life as a destination strategy, and district level integration.

Mary Bacarella asked if any other markets had fresh fish on sale from the fishers. Mike Rubin answered Granville Market is doing so because it attracts locals, it has a higher profit margin, and facilities can be provided to those selling fish to help them ship out their products. Mike Rubin noted Sydney Fish Market is also doing so. Mary Bacarella noted this could be something implemented once a week.

Deb Guenther presented architectural drawings of the Down Under from 1929 and 2023, with space uses color coded. The shift from diverse tenants to a focus on retail was highlighted.

Sulin Carling presented a diagram detailing the Market's revenue sources. The chart showed 43% of the PDA's revenue was restaurant, food or farm. She argued this makes food life a driver of the PDA.

Mike Rubin then returned to the chart detailing markets around the world with an axis spanning Local to Destination, Produce-Focused to Product-Focused. This time the chart showed the shift of Pike Place Market as a more produce-focused and local market to a Destination and product-focused market. He proposed with intentional changes through strategies, the Market could shift to a more centered market appealing to both locals and tourists and offering produce and products more evenly.

Mike Rubin gave an overview of the ways locals and tourists think about food differently. For example, he noted food being an engagement for locals over an experience for tourists. For locals, the Market is seen as an asset over the tourist experiencing the Market as a destination attraction.

He went on to discuss threats and opportunities to the Market. He discussed two changes that would impact the Market: the redevelopment of the waterfront and the need to revitalize downtown. Both involved challenges and potential gains for the Market.

Mike Rubin reviewed a proposed food life strategy for Pike Place Market. The strategy had three points:

1. Curate food offerings and experiences

2. Renew “Meet the Producer” strategy
3. Adapt to changing context

Deb Guenther discussed potential physical strategies. She shared three ideas that had been collected from staff and tenants. She emphasized these proposals were not set yet, but were brainstorm ideas open to changes. This included improvements to the Soames Dunn Courtyard, improvements to the Economy Market Atrium, and Parking Garage/Waterfront connections.

Candace Damon returned to the slide detailing Food Life as a Focus with the diagram detailing the various roles the Market could take. She noted that in order for the Market to be successful, some roles would need to center the plan, and that Food Life Destination could serve as a support for the various roles. She added the five roles identified by the consultant team may differ from what the Council feels are the anchor for the plan, but that was open to discussion.

Paul Neal commented he was excited as this was a continuation of the Market’s identity and an amplification of what it could be. He noted the markets in Granville and Toronto relied on partnerships to be successful in being a Food Life Destination and was excited at what partnership could look like. He concluded with a comment that the presentation may be too long for the full Council meeting and would need to be careful to allow for a full discussion.

Patrice Barrentine thanked the team for their presentation and expressed excitement at further discussion.

David Ghoddousi commented he had been unable to view the presentation. He wanted the slides to be available to the public for a more informed discussion. He suggested reaching out to Chris Curtis about the farm program. He praised the Granville strategy and noted they had drawn inspiration from Pike Place Market. He proposed a system where the Market supported vendors like universities. He responded to an earlier comment on the street closure saying it had been implemented previously and had not been successful.

Gundeep Singh commented in favor of the plan to center Food Life Destination as a role for the Market. He felt it was the right approach and appreciated the actionable concepts where incremental steps could be taken. He wanted to add reasoning for why this felt like this correct approach. He concluded with noting he felt this was the helpful information he’d like going forward and earlier in the process.

Gina Karaba asked why the crafters were off to the side and felt as though they were overlooked as the face and liveliness of the Market. She would like to see crafters and part of the discussion.

Jan Hendrickson agreed this was a useful framework and she agreed with anchoring the Food Life Destination as a central role. She did not feel this precluded or minimized the other roles. She complimented Mike Rubin on his analysis and agreed with Gundeep Singh’s earlier comments and Paul Neal and Patrice Barrentine’s excitement.

Candace Damon responded to Gina Karaba’s comment noting the roles’ placements could shift and the consultant team would feel comfortable in making that recommendation. She added these meeting have felt rushed due to the passion of the participants and requested going forward there be less prefacing ahead of the discussion and greater trust placed in the consultants.

Devin McComb agreed and commented he had been tracking the length of time in the discussion and less introduction would allow for better discussions. He encouraged considerations of the larger picture of PNW food culture and other markets proposed by Mike Rubin. He asked what the Council should take away or use as guiding questions for the upcoming Council meetings.

Candace Damon and Sulin Carling said no, but they would think of potential ways the Council could prepare for a full discussion.

## **5. Public Comment**

Haley Land commented he felt the presentation was interesting and outlined issues that had been discussed over the last ten years. He noted he had previously sent in a letter with similar ideas. He added he felt the biggest challenge was pulling in locals and farmers to the Market. He expressed hope in ways to bring farmers back. He added that there had been a previous discussion of bringing a culinary institute to the Market Front. He concluded in addressing the idea of authenticity and noted that a Food Life Destination should not only be upscale and should consider low income diners. He liked the idea of a Saturday farmers market for locals and proposed offering better services to food service customers.

Bob Messina commented in response to the idea that tourists come to experience the food and locals engage with the food. He felt it was overthinking and had more to do with the popularity of a particular food. He noted in his personal experience he enjoys food at the Market and that for him it was an experience more than a ritual. He disagreed with the usage of the word bet. He noted there is a space in the Market that has had a few tenants cycle through a restaurant space and it was important to be careful in betting on larger spaces.

Joan Paulson commented it was not accurate to compare Pike Place Market to other markets given its uniqueness. She felt the planning process was internal and did not abide by the Open Public Meeting Act. She noted the meeting at the end of last month there were 400 pages of material to review and it was impossible to do so thoroughly. She added she felt the dissemination of information made it difficult for the public to engage meaningfully.

## **6. Concerns of Committee Members**

Devin McComb expressed frustration at the requests of providing materials and timing. He added the Council was a volunteer organization and that the Council worked to provide information as soon and accurately as possible. He highlighted that materials were intended to be presented during the meeting and not ahead of the meeting. He expressed thanks to those who participated in meetings and asked they consider if comments add to and improve the process. He concluded noting the PDA maintains transparency in the process and he was excited for the upcoming Council meeting.

Mary Bacarella commented she appreciated Haley Land's email from the week before and that he'd reached out previously. She noted she found it helpful and that members of the public could reach out with ideas.

## **7. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m. by Devin McComb, Chair.

Meeting minutes submitted by:  
EJ Griffin, Executive Administrator