



Public Affairs Committee

March 8, 2022 – 9:00 -10:30 a.m.
Via Zoom

MINUTES

In Attendance

Committee members: Don Thomas, Wes Tyler, Corinna Luebbe, Beau Simon, Erik Murray, Russ Keil Jr., Kelly Powers, Stephen Brett, Spencer Sechler, Tim J. Falvey, Carie Yox, Lauren Ellis, Jason Dyer, and Benjamin Duverge.

Staff: Marisa Rodriguez (Executive Director), Ben Horne (Deputy Director), and Melanie Medina (Intern).

Guests: Ken Rich (KJR Consulting) and Pamela Mendelsohn (Maven Properties).

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Marisa Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Introductions were made.

2. Public Comment

Marisa called for public comment. Seeing none, she moved to the next agenda item.

3. Announcements

- Goals of Retail Summit- Save the Date 3/29
The next retail summit will be on March 29th, 2022, at the Westin St. Francis. The summit will be an update and discussion with the city on how they can support the business community in Union Square.
- Calendar Hold next 6 months
A calendar hold will be sent out to the committee for future PAC meetings for the next 6 months.
- Powell Street Promenade
No current updates.
- Broker Discussion
Marisa, Ken Rich, Kazuko Morgan, Pam Mendelsohn, and Julie Taylor met after the previous PAC meeting to discuss how to move forward with the city and the state of retail. Ken Rich agreed to give a set presentation in today's meeting.



- SFPD Updates

The command van has moved from Geary Street to Post Street and will remain there until further notice.

- Lighting Updates

Chris Larsen has generously offered to fund the addition of bistro lights to all alleys in the district. There was further discussion of also adding lighting along Powell Street and other innovative lighting options.

4. Action to Approve the February 8, 2022, Minutes

Marisa directed the committee to the minutes of the last meeting and provided a summary.

Action: The Committee unanimously approved the February 8, 2021, minutes as motioned by Stephen Brett and seconded by Spencer Sechler.

5. Presentation by Ken Rich; Working alongside with the city, strategies, and advocacy methods

Ken Rich has worked with the City of San Francisco for 25 years and has experience in planning and development. He is here today to speak about how to emerge from this pandemic from a retailer's perspective. Ken will discuss the economic impact Union Square has to the city of San Francisco and how to reactivate spaces with the city's help. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the city's focus was on public health but today is shifting its attention to the downtown district and its economic recovery.

Imagining Union Square in the 21st Century:

- Upper Floor Activity will become comparatively more important to meet the economic needs for the building
- Allow office or residential spaces above floor 1
- Expand types of businesses to include eateries and food markets, which have popularized in recent years and are sparse in Union Square

Retaining key anchors such as Westfield and Macys are valuable in appealing to a large audience in Union Square. Parking has become an ongoing issue. The best approach is asking the SFMTA for small favors such as discounted rates rather than free parking.

Potential issues that may come with these actions include: the rise in e-commerce, structural obstacles with transforming retail space to food spaces; lower rent for restaurants, and outdated zoning laws preventing upper-level changes. In the meantime,



the Alliance can continue to focus on short term activations while building relationships with the city to continue to make Union Square a priority.

Questions and concerns asked by the committee:

- Structural obstacles with transforming empty retail space to restaurants.
- Issues surrounding labor and rent for restaurants
- Streamlining the permit process
- Public transportation discounts for workers

6. Other Legislative Updates

- Illegal Vending
Topic not discussed.
- SF Crime Survey
Topic not discussed.
- Supplemental Police Budget- Hotel Council
Marisa had asked the community, committee, and board members for a letter of support of the supplemental police budget. The action was retracted due to the police having enough budget due to overall decrease staffing.

7. Adjournment and Next Meeting: April 12, 2022, 9:00am

Marisa adjourned the meeting at 10:32 a.m.