

# Notes from June 26 Meeting of EMCAC

(Eastern Market Community Advisory Committee)

The June meeting of EMCAC focused on four topics: (1) review and evaluation of the “Rediscover Eastern Market” activity; (2) vendor leases; (3) capital improvements, and (4) strategic plan.

## 1. Rediscover Eastern Market

A weekend of activities to commemorate the 10 year celebration of the reopening of the EM commenced on Friday June 7. A highlight of the celebration activities was coverage by a local TV station, Fox 5 Good Day DC, which sent a team of reporters and provided extensive coverage on its morning program, Fox Five Zip Trips. The activities included live music, culture and architecture tours of the market, food programs, and children’s activities. While many were enthusiastic about the outcome of the events to call attention to the EM, vendors had reservations. Sales for the day actually were down and the distinction was made between bringing people to the market and bringing shoppers to the market. One unanticipated problem was that the broadcast activities tended to focus on events that occurred on the plaza area rather than in the market. The vendors agreed that music programs seemed to be well-received and encouraged more of them.

It was understood that DGS was going to evaluate the experience in advance of additional special market days being planned for the fall.

## 2. Vendor Leases

The agenda included discussion of a meeting held on May 21 to explore rent for leases. This was not a successful discussion as it was determined early on that there were insufficient vendors attending to support a comprehensive discussion. The stipulations made by DGS at the May meeting was re-stated: (1) move forward with rent rates established by a previous appraisal of market rates; (2) have the vendors conduct their own appraisal, “which would be used in conjunction with the DGS appraisal to determine a final rent rate; or (3) base the rate on a reasonable percent of gross sales, a plan requiring vendor to open their books. Merchants were to provide a reply to the stipulation from DGS by July 1, but an extension has been provided.

## 3. Capital Improvements

The problematic air-conditioning system has been repaired; it is now functioning adequately and should be improved further with minor repairs underway. However, aspirations to install a Building Automation System have been challenged by the \$60,000 cost of the installation.

The reduced parking vouchers available from vendors at 700 Penn has not yet taken off. Only 15 of the 700 available have been used to date.

A very general conceptual plan for signage at the EM was approved. Brick and Story, a design firm, will present the final design including proposed fonts, colors and sizes at the July EMCAC meeting. In

addition to approval by EMCAC, the plans must be approved by the Commission on Fine Arts and the Historic Preservation Review Board.

#### 4. Request for Proposals for Strategic Plan

A \$300,000 RFP has been issued by the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development. The submission deadline is July 22. The plan is available at <https://dmped.dc.gov/node/805872>. Along with even more generally stated objectives, the purpose of the plan is to:

Provide a strategy that includes recommendations for managerial and marketing best practices with consideration, analysis, and projections of Eastern Market and its surrounding areas past, present and future (a “Business Plan” for the next 5 years).

*The next meeting of EMCAC will be held on July 24 in the North Hall of the Eastern Market. Meetings are open to the public.*

July 8, 2019, Gerald Sroufe, ANC6b Representative to EMCAC