



## Public Affairs Committee

August 8th, 2023 – 9:00 -10:30 a.m.  
Hybrid, In person and via Zoom

### MINUTES

#### In Attendance

Committee members: Donald R. Thomas, Tammy Brock, Timothy Falvey, Darcy Brown, Beau Simon, Russ Keil Jr., Spencer Sechler, Stephen Brett, Pamela Mendelsohn, Erik Murray, Lauren Ellis.

Staff: Marisa Rodriguez (CEO), Ken Rich (COO), Melanie Medina (Executive Assistant), Caitlin Keller (Intern).

Guests: Marc Babsin (Emerald Fund), Marie Hurabiell (ConnectedSF), Erica Sandberg.

#### 1. Call to Order and Introductions

Marisa Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Introductions were made.

#### 2. Public Comment

Marisa called for public comment. Erica asked how artists could get involved with the Summer Music Series that the Alliance has been hosting at Union Square Plaza. Stephen Brett noted busier streets in and around the downtown corridor.

#### 3. Announcements

- [Union Square in Bloom 2023](#)  
Union Square in Bloom has been trending well and will go until September. Marisa announced the soon to open Corzetti restaurant in Hotel G and a boom in the bar scene in Union Square. Discussion took place regarding restaurant trends in San Francisco.
- [Economic Development Summit](#)  
The Retail Safety and Economic Development Summit took place on July 28<sup>th</sup>. Speakers included Pamela Mendelsohn with Maven Properties, Mark Purdy with Grosvenor Americas-Investment, DA Brooke Jenkins, BART police department, and the SFPD. They spoke on the safety efforts in around Union Square from their departments as well as the economic development trend of Union Square
- [Powell Street Task Force](#)



A Powell Street Task Force was formed to focus on enhancing and beautifying the lower blocks of Powell Street to attract tenants and provide a positive experience to all. On August 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Alliance will be hosting a Powell Street Promenade Improvement Project Public Forum at CK Contemporary. All property and business owners along Powell Street are encouraged to join.

- **APEC**

The Alliance is waiting for logistical details concerning APEC including information from the Secret Service for further action. Discussion took place regarding APEC impacting the timeline of the Macy's Christmas Tree

- **SFPD- Gator Update, LT. Hall**

Marisa informed the committee of the new dedicated Lieutenant for Union Square, Lt. Hall. The Gator will soon be deployed as it is undergoing final safety checks and officers are receiving Gator training.

4. **Action** to approve the June 13, 2023, minutes.

**Action**: The committee unanimously approved the minutes from June 13, 2023, as motioned by Spencer Sechler and seconded by Timothy Falvey.

5. **Marc Babsin; Emerald Fund**

Marc spoke to the committee about policy moves the city could make to encourage commercial real estate conversions. He presented the results of three past conversion projects, displaying the feasibility gap between costs of conversion and the economic gain for developers. He noted that key policy to incentivize policy development includes a one-time transfer sale rebate and eliminating or decreasing inclusionary housing requirements.

The committee asked questions on the nature of the property tax rebate, profit margins for developers, the feasibility of this project in Union Square, and the political sphere surrounding these policy aims.

6. **Marie Hurabiell; Founder of SOAR and Executive Director of ConnectedSF**

Marie Hurabiell addressed the committee, introducing her organizations, SOAR and ConnectedSF. She spoke on her background which included time in the media industry, tech industry, and education boards. Her organization works with various neighborhood groups to influence city policy and to monitor activity in City Hall. She talked about her organization's opposition to current Board of Supervisors candidates, as she hopes her organization will aid in flipping some of the seats to more centrist candidates. She noted



that those who wish to support the organization can join the newsletter or make a large financial contribution.

**7. Adjournment 10:35 AM**

**Next Meeting: September 12, 2023, 9:00am**