



Marketing Committee Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, November 6, 2024, 12:00 p.m.

Hybrid: 291 Geary Street or Zoom

Chair: Mark Sullivan

Minutes

In attendance: Mark Sullivan (Retail Consultant), Tammy Brock (Property Owner), Stefan Aronsen (Hilton/Parc 55), Blake McCall (Blake Charles Salon), Brian Fenwick (The Marker), Jerrel Brown (Dapper Down Barber Lounge), Liz Polo (Polo Promotions), Kelly Lukens (The Westin St. Francis), Caitlin O' Carroll (Back at the House), and Heiko Novak (Axiom Hotel), Joan Laguatan (Blatteis Realty), Jessica Rae (Rae Studios), Mark Hennon (Biederman Redevelopment Ventures), Azucena Pérez (Barnes Hotel), Sylvia Faison Wilkerson (Event Organizers), and Dominic Beecham (Yelp).

Staff: Dianna Cavagnaro (Consultant), Jessica Chilingirian (Marketing and Communications Associate), and AnaKatrina Cortado (Intern).

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Mark called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

2. Public Comment

Mark called for public comment. Hearing no public comment, the committee proceeded with the agenda.

3. **ACTION** to approve the September 11, 2024, meeting minutes

Action: The committee unanimously approved the September 11, 2024, meeting minutes as motioned by Blake McCall and seconded by Jessica Rae.

4. Introductions & Announcements: What's Happening in Union Square & Narrative/PR Updates

Mark reminded new committee members to stay engaged through the committee's Slack channel, where Jessica and staff share updates and business promotions in Alliance newsletters. He also provided an update on Biederman Redevelopment Ventures (BRV), which has finalized a contract with the Union Square Alliance for the economic development of Union Square Plaza, with the project set to begin the last weekend of January and run through October. Joan thanked the Union Square Alliance marketing team for their support of a recent Blatteis Realty event, and Brian shared that The Marker Hotel will host a book signing. Mark addressed the recent Louis Vuitton incident and noted Mayor Breed's press conference, committing funds for bollards and planters, with a discussion on the challenges of installation. Jessica also highlighted positive media coverage, including a KTVU2 segment on Union Square's revitalization and a feature in *SF Magazine*. Mark also mentioned the upcoming installation of the 50-foot-tall statue, *R-Evolution*, expected to be unveiled by early February, with an FAQ and launch event to follow.

5. Update: Website UX and Monetization Update

Jessica updated the committee on the Alliance's progress with website improvements led by the SEO team. A report showed a 20% increase in Union Square visitors from



August to September, and a further boost in website traffic is expected with the upcoming holidays and increased use of QR codes and signage. A whiteboard exercise was conducted with the Alliance and SEO team to reassess the website's design and practicalities, focusing on how to best use limited funds to maximize its impact. Due to budget constraints, the website redesign will be an ongoing process, with comparisons to other sites being explored for improvement.

6. Update: Union Square Foundation Holiday Party

Mark reminded the committee that the Foundation Holiday Party will be held at the Town & Country Club on December 5, 2024, with an optional festive black tie dress code. Tickets can be purchased via a QR code displayed on the screen, and exclusive sponsorship opportunities are also available. Mark emphasized that the event offers a great networking opportunity.

7. Update: Winter Wander-land

Jessica informed the committee that the Winter Wander-land page is now live on the Union Square website. She encouraged committee members to submit holiday ideas, promotions, and events for inclusion, which will be organized into categories for the Winter Walk. This will help drive traffic and encourage visitors to explore the website longer. Additionally, a press release highlighting Union Square's holiday offerings will be distributed within the next two weeks.

8. Update: Winter Walk

Mark reminded the committee that Winter Walk will be held from December 13–22, featuring food trucks, performances, and an outdoor holiday market. Tammy raised concerns that food trucks could harm local Union Square businesses, suggesting non-local vendors pay additional fees. Blake clarified that Union Square businesses have first rights and emphasized the Alliance's effort to create a viral moment with a local bakery's exclusive pastry. Dianna proposed compiling a list of local restaurants to encourage food participation. She also noted challenges with the permitting process, which limits Union Square businesses from joining. Blake highlighted the difficulty for businesses to participate during the busy holiday season.

Mark shared that the Alliance received approval for street closures at a recent ISCOTT meeting. He encouraged committee members to promote the event. Jessica outlined the marketing plan, which includes ads, influencer promotions, press outreach, and giveaways with Yelp and Do the Bay. Winter Walk posters will be distributed once finalized.

9. Overview: Union Square in Bloom

Mark introduced Union Square in Bloom event, emphasizing its role in engaging the community to beautify the neighborhood. In 2024, around 40 businesses participated, with Tulip Day being a major highlight. On this day, 35,000 people gathered to pick 80,000 tulips, an effort supported by the Netherlands. This event serves as a significant marketing opportunity for local businesses. The 2025 Tulip Day will kick off Union Square in Bloom on March 22, featuring 80,000 to 90,000 tulips, and attendees will be able to take home six tulips each. The event will run through mid-August and will feature a custom-designed dress for the occasion. Sponsorship opportunities for the event are available through the Alliance.

Jessica reminded the committee to start planning and budgeting for Bloom, with the Alliance providing regular email communications to keep members informed about



preparations. Additionally, the Alliance has partnered with sponsorship consultant Kevin Bartram, who has secured sponsorships from companies such as Waymo, Amazon, and JP Morgan Chase for Winter Walk. They are currently working with the Mayor's Office, OEWD, Amazon, United, and JP Morgan Chase on securing sponsorships for Bloom. Jessica also presented the Bloom sponsorship deck, which highlights the importance of Union Square, its historical context, media coverage, testimonials, and sponsorship levels with associated benefits. Mark encouraged businesses to get involved by offering floral-themed cocktails, decorating their properties, or creating hotel packages for the event.

10. ACTION to approve Union Square in Bloom Sponsorship Deck for recommendation to the Board of Directors

Action: The committee unanimously approved the Union Square in Bloom Sponsorship Deck for recommendation to the Board of Directors, as motioned by Stefan Aronsen and seconded by Blake McCall.

11. Overview: Additional Upcoming Events

Mark informs the group about the upcoming Winter Wander-land events, including the Safeway Holiday Ice Rink, the Neiman Marcus Ornament Trunk Show, and Macy's Great Holiday Tree. He also highlights key Alliance and Foundation events, such as the Safe Shopper Press Conference and the Union Square Foundation Holiday Party.

Adjournment & Next Meeting:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m. The next meeting is on Wednesday, January 8 at 12:00 p.m.