

Special Events Committee Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2019

Seattle City Hall, Bertha Knight Landes

Member Representatives in Attendance:

Agency	Representatives	Noted in Minutes As
Citizen Representatives	Tom Anderson	Citizen Representative
	Oliver Little	Citizen Representative
Department of Construction & Inspections	Tony Jagow	DCI Noise Abatement
	Jessica McHegg	SDCI
Department of Neighborhoods	Angela Rae	DON
Economic Development	Phillip Sit	OED
Finance and Administrative Services	Not Present	FAS
King County Metro Transit	Glenn Bartolome	Metro
Mayor's Office	Dominique Stephens	MO
Parks and Recreation	Carl Bergquist	Parks
Seattle-King County Health Department	Not Present	Health
Seattle Center	Gretchen Lenihan	Seattle Center
Seattle Department of Transportation	Mike Shea	SDOT
Seattle Fire Department	Not Present	FMO
Seattle Police Department	Not Present	Police
Seattle Public Utilities	Not Present	SPU
Mayor's Office	Dominique Stephens	MO
Special Events Office	Chris Swenson	Chair
	Julie Borden	SE
	Jonelle Mogi	SE
WA State Liquor & Cannabis Board	Lt. Rob Rieder	WSLCB

Additional Attendees: Michael Wells – OED, Dan Goodman – SDCI Noise Abatement, Luke Sillonis – DSA, Erin Chevront – DON, Lisa Nielsen – Parks, Laura Jenkins – DON, Fabiola Arvizu – DON, Samantha Stork – DON, Scott Plusquellec – OED, Andy Fife, Don Glickstein, Maratha Manning, Jason Lajeunesse, Kate Harris, Tracy Taylor, Amanda Schulte, Jeremy Orbe, Shelley Brothers, Egan Orion, Glen Gordon, Elayne Wylie, Joey Burgess

Note: As always, these are "raw minutes notes" based on the discussion of the 12/18/19 meeting and do not include every word spoken - not a literal transcript - merely a summary of ideas.

Public Comment:

Don Glickstein

- Capitol Hill Block Party is the major bone of contention
- Sponsor presented last week presented their own survey; Done on their own and failed to mention how many businesses that he owns
- The methodology of the City's survey and focus group didn't adequately represent residents who are impacted by Capitol Hill Block Party
- Widespread dislike of Capitol Hill Block Party
- Inside the fence, people were frightened by the crush and feared a stampede
- Outside the fence, Capitol Hill and First Hill residents complained about amplified noise
- The study found the event has outgrown the location but doesn't provide a recommendation to address
- Recommendations
 - Limit the evening hours to 10pm on Friday and Saturday and 8pm on Sunday
 - Expand daily clean-up to a half mile radius of the event
 - Permanent solution is to move location to Stadium District or Seattle Center

Jason Lajeunesse, Capitol Hill Block Party

- Capitol Hill Block Party's survey presented asked customers how they use and interact Capitol Hill
 - Did not think questions were misleading
 - Comments from the survey represented a small number of the attendees of the event
- Overcrowding was an issue for one artist on one day and is being addressed
- Regarding City's survey:
 - 110 responses, 8% of comments that negatively called out Capitol Hill Block Party
 - 25 responses suggested moving block party
 - Overall demand was to keep Special Events in the community
- Capitol Hill Block Party works with nonprofits, retailers and community each year

Tracy Taylor, Elliott Bay Book Company

- Disappointed on the timing of this meeting; These are the days that are critical for the business (Elliott Bay Book Company)
- 48 stakeholders interviewed and contacted, many of times the stakeholders represented the same business or organization
- Mitigation – How many people or businesses were given mitigation? How did it influence the survey?
- When Elliott Bay moved to Capitol Hill 10 years ago, one business was very vocal that didn't want Capitol Hill Block Party, now the business closes down during Capitol Hill Block Party weekend and Capitol Hill Block Party works with them; Would like to have mitigation that is not just held within Capitol Hill Block Party organizers

Capitol Hill Event Survey

Samantha Stork – DON, Andy Fife – Fife Consulting

- Background
 - Ongoing concerns regarding special events in Capitol Hill
 - Late 2018 project planned, and Fife Consulting hired to conduct survey regarding Capitol Hill Block Party due to the impacts to the neighborhood
 - Survey expanded to all Capitol Hill events realizing impacts were not limited to one event
- The goal to better understand the impacts of special events in the public realm within the Capitol Hill neighborhood, using this data gathered to provide recommendations to the Special Events

Committee, the body responsible for permitting special events throughout the City.

- Methodology & Survey Process
 - 18 pages Capitol Hill Special Events Survey and Assessment Report; A lot of information to be shared by community and the event organizers
 - Taskforce
 - 6 representatives of neighborhood orgs and city departments
 - Goal was to provide feedback and guidance on survey, stakeholders, and overall approach based on broad neighborhood representation
 - Focus Groups and interviews
 - 42 community members engaged
 - Business/Organization/Property Survey
 - 73 responses received
 - Broadway BIA and Capitol Hill Business Alliance provided door to door outreach
 - Community Survey
 - 1,397 responses received
 - Strong interest in the number of respondents; number of responses shows that folks were interested and wanted to engage
- Survey footprint was identified because wanted to look at input; Footprint was if people lived in the neighborhood or a few blocks
- Limitation of respondents due to time of year
- Over half of the respondents live in the area; There were various number of events that respondents attend in Capitol hill
- Community survey scored entertainment & enjoyment, social connection and sense of community, and safety & security on a scale from 0 – 10 based on demographics; Gender non-conforming overall feel less safety and security
- Businesses and engagement
 - 70 percent within the direct footprint
 - Not all questions required answers, so participants could answer which ones would be directly related to them
- Fife Consulting Key findings
 - Events key to neighborhood culture and identity
 - In many other neighborhoods, events seen as a way to push against gentrification
 - Safety, security and cleanliness are top priority
 - Transit, traffic, and parking an ongoing concern
 - Business foot traffic, visibility and accessibility effects mixed
 - Perceived imbalance - negative impacts vs. positive benefits
 - Perception that someone should be doing something fort the negative impacts, but there is not a strong arbiter there to justify the negative impacts to the positive benefits
 - Capitol Hill is currently missing intermediary organizations
 - Communication and engagement is insufficient
 - Don't prioritize contacts
 - Numerous times, the notification reaches the business, but doesn't make it to the hands of the one that makes decision; Missing link in the process
 - City permitting policy and process needs review and improvement
 - A lot of findings that certain aspects of City permitting is problematic ie. time it takes for City permitting (organizers)
 - Event organizers feel like they are in the dark; If they reach out, committee members do not know where to point them to
 - More/new events are desired and welcome
 - Wanting more events in parks was a theme

- Individual Event Findings
 - Pride
 - Vital importance to neighborhood culture / LGBTQ community regionally
 - Mixed impacts on business revenues and foot traffic
 - Negative impacts on traffic and parking
 - Some cleanliness and safety challenges throughout neighborhood
 - Capitol Hill Block Party
 - Ongoing conflict and anxiety within community
 - Importance to music/arts/festival community locally and regionally
 - Perceived mismatch between event and location
 - Strong concerns about accessibility, mobility, safety, cleanliness
 - Free Speech Events
 - Supported overall, with a desire for de-escalation of law enforcement
 - Cal Anderson and Volunteer Park
 - Desire for more events/more programming
 - Other temporary street closures
 - Met with enthusiasm, with focus on stronger safety, security and programming
- Recommendations
 - Safety, Security and Cleanliness: Explore increased police presence, community-based security and event design infrastructure
 - Community Outreach and Engagement: Improve outreach by providing stronger contact data and more guidance and support on outreach plans
 - Intermediary Community Organizations: Establish one or more community associations as event intermediary
 - Right-of-way Permitting: Consider recalibration of permitting policies and practices
 - Cal Anderson Park: Invest in improvements as a venue for events and programming
- 2020 Recommendations
 - Safety, security and cleanliness - Require a larger footprint of cleaning and security investments in the neighborhood
 - Could look at partnering with a community organization or a temporary crew similar to DSA
 - Improve event outreach - City develops a shared list through existing datasets, templates stronger outreach plans
 - Shared that event organizers would share their contacts with city stakeholders – there is a disconnect between city lists
 - Template stronger outreach plans that encourage multi-channel communications and neighborhood engagement
 - Establish lead intermediary community association(s) – Consider funding and other support to capacity, invite participate in permitting process and partnership
 - City can take a stronger approach by requiring partnerships with intermediary organizations
 - Choose one or more Capitol Hill community organizations to lead on event conversations
 - Invite participation in permitting process and events partnership
 - Recalibrate permitting of public right-of-way – Consider requirement for portion of net proceeds towards community-reinvestment and impact mitigation in partnership with a community-based nonprofit, including a transparent and formal process
 - High ticket price and low access, proceeds from that event should be transparent to the community
 - Policy be more transparent
 - Invest in Cal Anderson Park as a venue - Examine infrastructure, capacity and policy

- required, including review of reservoir cap, playfields maintenance, equipment
 - Simple steps for investment to make it more available
- Identify opportunities to mitigate impacts to Capitol Hill businesses and residents in 2020
- DON recommendations to the Special Events Committee
 - Race and Social Justice Implications
 - While the themes show resounding support and advocacy for POC and LGBTQ artists and events, additional RSJ analysis should be conducted to understand potential unintended consequences to communities of color and other historically underserved communities
 - Further Engagement with SDOT
 - Special Events Committee needs to engage with SDOT around use of public right of way and recommendations presented in report
 - Additional engagement around recommendations is needed with other SEC departments
 - Feasibility in 2020 and Beyond
 - Noise - Theme city has heard over time but not prevalent in this study. SEC should consider bringing noise in line with other large events
 - Neighborhood Communications - In addition to previous recommendations about more robust outreach and event promotion, the SEC should explore accountability measure for event organizers for neighborhood notification
 - Special Events Committee should consider Implications beyond Capitol Hill
 - Recommend initiating sub-group that may include other work groups outside of the Special Events Committee members
 - Develop a feasible workplan that aligns with broader Special Events analysis, considering that major events are 6-7 months away
 - Identify recommendations that need guidance through policy that may or may not fall under the purview of SEC, including citywide policy and RSJ

Special Events Office Chair Follow-up

Chris Swenson – Special Events Chair

- General comments
 - Special Events Committee is the body of regulators, a working group for event logistics
 - Logistics recommendations for 2020 fall under Special Events Committee (SEC), much of the policy recommendations will need to be addressed outside of SEC with additional stakeholder input which can identify any gaps in the work done here for a deeper dive into recommendations and issues
 - This survey and findings are a first step with the community; Communication with the community will continue throughout this process
 - Decision for SEC will be split between 2020 requirements and 2021 and beyond policy updates
 - Notification, outreach, and databases
 - Neighborhood notification and communication oversight is an opportunity for OED and DON to collaborate on business, organization, and residential databases
 - New residents and businesses neighborhood may be unaware of historic events; the notification and outreach process must reflect this
 - Right of Way permitting and policy
 - SEC must review Parks' current mandate to keep Park space free and open to public
 - Capitol Hill Block Party is not unique for gated and ticketed events on Right of Way, other than it is three days and has a 10,000 per day attendance; SEC must consider how these recommendations influence policy for all similar events in Seattle that are ticketed and gated

- Andy Fife – Notes that generally the community feels Parks are a better venue for a closed ticketed event, while event producers see that it is harder to bring closed event to parks instead of in on City streets
- Restricting commerce and business
 - What is the City’s role in event impacts and the business impacts?
- Discussion regarding 2020 recommendations
 - Outreach and communication
 - Pride is coming up 7 months, what can be done ahead of time? In the past we have created a map of all Pride events and a one sheet
 - Visuals helpful
 - Positive promotion of events
 - Mismatch that event organizers for notification in person or email; For larger institutions need to get communication to the right person
 - DON can dig deeper and find out who is the direct contact for larger institution
 - On the application, there is a 60-day, 30-day window; Should we think about changing that whole process? There needs to be more control with the outreach and notification component
 - Event organizers are doing the 60 and 30, but done feels like there needs to be more in respect to notification
 - We need to look at closing the gap, tools are there and the timeline is there, but review is missing; Who is reviewing and if it is sufficient enough
 - For 2020, if there is committee representation or staff time to be assigned to review notification then can implement
 - There is a disconnect from notification and what community feels like notification
 - Not just reaching out to a business group, but can plan to address it without having to go back and ask community members again
 - Look to event organizers for feedback
 - Meeting in early 2020, Special Events will work with DON for coordination and Committee Review of recommendations
 - Safety and security
 - Not just around Policing or increase number of security or Police; Some participants do not feel safe with an increase number of Police
 - What does an infrastructure look like, so people feel safe within the footprint?
 - How do we make sure when a footprint is set up that participants feel safe?
 - More Police does not equal more safety; Capitol Hill with LGBTQ culture there is challenging; Models to look and learn from; Look at Transpride safety and security plan
 - Can the City support or even incentivize?
 - More that events tied to community, then the safety they are; Encouraging community partnership
 - Expanding and improving clean up
 - Survey findings and what heard post event, cleanup is not just event footprint or immediate footprint, but needs to be expanded; That is not dissimilar to other events like Hempfest
 - Models that City can propose, recommend or mandate for event clean up
 - Hempfest works with MID, Belltown and Waterfront for cleanup due to historic impacts of garbage
 - Off hours sound (gap what seen in recommendations and what is heard post-event)

Committee Roundtable

OED (Sit) – Recommendations for an intermediary agency is needed, but needs more than one voice; We

work with business district partners to see their capacity and see how can get them together regularly
Parks (Bergquist) – What is spelled out now and what is actively doing; Cal Anderson Park is only half Parks property, the other half is SPU; Cal Anderson is the first capped park so there are a lot of complications that come with that; SPU restricts a lot that can be done in that property; The section that Parks owns, spent time and money to rebuild restrooms and fix the drainage issue; The playfield is a separate park with synthetic turf in that playfield, turf has a life expectancy and need to protect the turf with what events can happen there in that space; If had more funding to dedicated a MID then that would be a great benefit to the neighborhood and park; Parks can't clean up as fast or make repairs as timely as necessary; CHBP activation in the park as a fun and free way to activate

Parks (Nielsen) – Parks activation and programming with buskers, activations, events. etc.; Would like to do public and private partnership, for now with Capitol Hill, there is no strong partnership, but willing to be there and be there more in a regular basis

Citizen Representative (Anderson) – Communication and notification we've talked about a bit; The City has not supported, and the event organizer has to go out to notify on its own; Event organizers need to create the list that the City approves; There could be some support to create a more defined list

Citizen Representative (Little) – Agree with what Tom, more definition of what the notification should do, what do we provide to them; Are we encouraging citizens to say no to an event or respond that they've received notification, what are we trying to fulfill with notification

Metro – No direct impact to Metro, especially in Cal Anderson, but there is a lot that needs to be done in background; Capitol Hill is high density neighborhood and is between 2 connecting areas; Consider Capitol Hill "B", Metro goes "A" to "B" to "C"; While some goes from "A" to "B", some still will need to transfer to "C"; The impact of events delays people that wants to go to their next location, this is what Metro worries about in the background; If my trip started in UW and needs to travel through Capitol Hill to south Seattle, the rider doesn't want to attend event but needs to go through the neighborhood due to transit commute; There is a delay to transit commute due to the event, the byproduct of event is the interruption of my work transit; A lot of people live and work in the area but there are others that use transit and go through the neighborhood; How do I mitigate my event to the person using transit is something organizers should keep in mind

WSLCB – Establishing an intermediary committee will help agency contact event organizers with any issues with special alcohol license or modifications

SDCI – Limited involvement with SE, if building or structures then involved; DON mentioned issue of safety with set up on right away, it is SDCI jurisdiction for safety and security when it is on private property, when event is set up at the scale of CHBP ingress and egress, life safety, fire line, exits should be addressed on public right away; Not a very granular process

SDOT – Will continue to mitigate construction and traffic impacts

Seattle Center – Seattle Center has crews that do cleanup on campus; Crews do a 3 block perimeter from campus, in high residential area sending crews out to support; Whatever solid courses of action has implications within other areas of the city; Seattle Center is a mix and dense of commercial and residential, so if decision lands on a subgroup, should come back to the larger group so can be unified throughout the SEC; Ticket prices need to differentiate what happens in Parks, Seattle Center and City Streets; There are often events with higher ticket prices and lower prices; For safety and security, could look at implementing a conscious crew as brought up in the Music Safety Summit as a valuable support to the community

SDCI Noise Abatement – Based on the changing climate of the Capitol Hill neighborhood, with new residential use buildings either being developed or occupied in last several years, SDCI is re-evaluating the issuance of temporary noise variances to extend amplified sound past 10PM in certain cases. With the size and scale of the Capitol Hill Block Party in its current form, concerns have been raised regarding rest and repose for residents living in or near the footprint of the event as it's related to the noise created by amplified sound. As a result, SDCI is prepared to approve a temporary noise variance for the following:

- An additional hour past code on both Friday and Saturday night resulting in a cut-off time of 11PM
- Sunday night will be restricted to code, which is 10PM

As is always the case, each event that applies for a temporary noise variance to extend amplified sound past

the allowable hours, will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and will be conditioned accordingly.

DON – It seems as if applicants do not want to submit notification plan with the application; What is the organizers plan for notification; It is extremely important and should be addressed

Additional Comments

OED (Wells) – Special Events needs to allow more time for public comment after the presentation; There is an urgency for action – ask Special Events to make it a priority in 2020; There are a lot of rolling things that come on but need to be addressed; The idea of an intermediary group is something the City has tried before and it failed, OED primary topic of conversation is that there should be some intermediary group

Shelley Brothers, Wildrose – Fire dept has been on top of things to inspect the street use, works closely for emergency exits to make sure egress and ingress is being addressed; Most common interactions with SFD
Joey Burgess, Queer/Bar – One of the big issues with the notification is, is the notification allowing our neighbors say no, or is it something that City approved and we are just letting our neighbors know; There is a disconnect if we are asking for approval or giving them a right to say no; There are some neighbors that do not agree with the event, so there should be a direct contact to a city staff to have a place to express their feeling and concerns

Elayne Wylie, Trans Pride Event – Event has scaled up in the last few years, invested in Cal Anderson since there are some serious accessibility issues from Cal Anderson meadow and Bobby Morris playfield; The accessibility issues should be addressed and the projects not be done right up to their event; There should be confirmation of metro and if there are oversight on routes that are impacted

Tracy Taylor, Elliott Bay Book Company – From the Capitol Hill Special Events Survey and Assessment Report, those that participated in focus groups and interviews: 7 work in the City, 3 from one business, 2 from another; How many individual businesses and individuals were reached out?; Received email several times about the survey but could not tell the difference of the business survey and the community survey; Not sure if Elliott Bay Books answered the right survey since there were many sent out

The Chair presented and the Special Events Committee voted to approve for 2020:

- Creating and mandating a broader cleanup for permitted Capitol Hill events
- Notification revamp for Capitol Hill events
- Supporting SDCI's outdoor amplified sound restrictions for permitted Capitol Hill events at 11:00pm Fridays, 11:00pm Saturdays, and 10:00pm Sundays
- Committee voted all in favor, will move forward with the three recommendations

Next steps:

- Special Events Office will convene internal meetings with Committee reps to address broader clean up requirements
- Special Events Office will convene internal meetings with Committee reps to address updating notification process
- Special Events Office will convene meetings between SDCI and individual event organizers to discuss outdoor amplified sound restrictions