



EVERY SUNDAY

Capitol Hill, Washington DC
in the Hine School Yard, 7th & G St. SE

TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL BERMAN, PRESIDENT
DIVERSE MARKETS MANAGEMENT, LLC

FOR BILL B19-0513
Eastern Market Preservation and
Development Amendment Act of 2011
BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

JULY 2, 2012

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I. Executive Summary

The Flea Market at Eastern Market, which operates at the Hine School playground and parking lot each Sunday, is clearly a "use of special value to the neighborhood and to the District of Columbia as a whole". The Flea Market is an important element to the local community, to its small business participants and to the city, socially, culturally and economically. The Flea Market, with its first class management and its popular diverse assortment of exhibitors, is an independent, complimentary business and an important driver of foot traffic to Eastern Market, the area businesses, and to the future development project. Hundreds of unique small businesses and area artists depend on this venue for their livelihood. They introduce and promote both new and reclaimed products to the public, and to grow their businesses into larger enterprises. The Flea Market helps these entrepreneurs by providing jobs, marketing their business and product and bringing millions of dollars per year into the small business economy. The Flea Market also pours millions more into the Capitol Hill area each year with customer shopping near the Flea Market. The community depends on this venue to interact with each other socially, find the eclectic products they were searching or delighted to stumble upon, and to engage stimulating cultural experiences each and every week of the year. This international, yet intimately local experience is like no other in the City and it is a touchstone that speaks to the worldliness and charm of the District of Columbia.

The potential closure of the weekend Flea Market due to loss of space or lack of a sublease will be devastating to the small businesses who are vendors at the Flea Market, their families and their employees, and will also result in loss of tax revenue related to sales occurring both at and a result of the Flea Market as well as a significant loss of brick and mortar businesses incubated by the Market.

The legislation can preserve and protect the flea market and ensure its viability as well as provide adequate pedestrian use by subleasing adequate space under the Special Use District. Additional considerations, such as additional locations, efficiency in space logistics and consultation with the Hine School developer, would further ensure adequate space for vending and for the ten thousand average customers that flock to the market area each weekend day..

II. Introduction

Diverse Markets Management, LLC (DMM) is a DC-based firm specializing in the development, programming and management of an outdoor public exhibitor market and special events. Principals in the firm are experienced leaders in specialty vending and in managing relations with this unique group of small business entrepreneurs. Members of the DMM team have a lengthy and successful history of working together at Eastern Market. Key attributes of the team include principle participation as the manager of The Flea Market at Eastern Market, decades of business activity as exhibitors and managers there, as well as

long working relationships with other stakeholders at the market. Because the team has actual investments and livelihoods based on outdoor activities, the company is personally committed to an event's success and strongly dedicated to developing and maintaining a financially- sustainable market while enhancing the ongoing integration of a Market into the community.

DMM owns The Flea Market at Eastern Market that operates on Sundays on both the playground and parking lot of the Hine School.

III. Description of the Flea Market at Eastern Market

A. History

The Market has been operating continuously for 30 years under the management of DMM partner Tom Rall, who still vends his vintage photography and cartography business here. Rall founded The Flea Market at Eastern Market in 1983 on the Eastern Market plaza and sidewalk at North Carolina Ave and along 7th Street. The market expanded to the Hine School in 1993 and has continuously operated there for the past 20 years.

In 2007, after the fire at Eastern Market, the District of Columbia assumed control and management of Eastern Market, severing the contract of the North Hall operator, Market 5 Gallery and thus Rall's sublease for sidewalk vending at Eastern Market on Sundays. Nearly all the furniture and antique and collectible exhibitors, as well as many artists and other large format displays followed the Flea Market to the Hine school yard, which was reconfigured to remove the tennis and basketball courts in order to

accommodate a temporary "East Hall" on former Flea Market space, a move publicly supported by Rall, for the merchants displaced by the fire. The newly configured space allowed the Flea Market to accommodate the exhibitors no longer able or willing to sell on the Eastern Market Square.

DMM was formed in 2005 among Rall's management team in order to build additional events for the long waiting list of exhibitors that cannot get permanent space at the Flea Market due to its popularity. Michael Berman, who worked for Rall for years assisting in the marketing, branding and communications for the Market, and who, as an artist selling at Eastern Market since 1993, was very active in organizing and promoting exhibitors at Eastern Market, assumed the director role for the company. DMM became the official ownership entity of The Flea Market in 2010. As the numerous staff and DMM partners have all been involved with The Flea Market for decades, the transition was seamless.



III. Description of the Flea Market at Eastern Market

B. Evolution

The Flea Market, which boasted on its 3rd year of operations that it had exhibitors from 5 states, now hosts exhibitors from 5 continents. Though not the largest flea market, it is arguably one of the most diverse in the nation. The Flea Market features arts, crafts, antiques, collectibles, and imports from around the world. Exhibitors are extremely knowledgeable of their wares and many actually make their products.

The flea market has been a turning point in the development pattern of Capitol Hill. When it opened, Eastern Market was closed and the streets were deserted on Sundays. Due in large part to the foot traffic created by the flea market, Eastern Market is now a major destination for locals, area residents and tourists. What once was an under utilized public space on Sundays, Rall turned into a contributing element of an economic revitalization that realtors and guides call the “heart of Capitol Hill”. Housing values have skyrocketed, area stores and restaurants are crowded, surrounding businesses are thriving. Indeed, a key reason that there’s such interest and value in developing the Hine parcel is because of the social and economic impact the weekend markets have had on the location. [EXHIBIT A]

There are vendors representing 5 continents, more than 35 countries and a vast array of international goods in all price ranges - antiques, arts, collectibles, crafts and imported goods. Exhibitors come from as near as the neighborhood, from across the city, and from area suburbs. In fact, several antique vendors drive as many as four hours each way and they come each week. The market’s reputation is so well known that exhibitors from other areas of the country arrive seasonally or pass through while on the show circuit. The market has been called one of the “best small markets in the country”. In a Huffington Post poll, it was voted the second best market in the world. It’s been featured in a PBS documentary of flea markets, in numerous travel magazines and cable travel shows, and in local publications including The Washington Post. Selected press materials highlighting the Flea Market at Eastern Market are found in EXHIBIT B.

C. Site Description

The market provides spaces to exhibitors every Sunday, year round, utilizing both the playground and parking lot, at the Hine School. Part of what makes the Flea Market a destination and place-maker at Eastern Market is the fact that the Hine School site is sufficiently large to allow dealers in furniture, antiques and collectibles.

DMM currently leases 65,000 square feet of space on the Hine School playground on Sundays under a lease agreement with the Government of the District of Columbia Office of Public Education Facilities Modernization Realty Office. Approximately 50,000 square feet is used for vending and customers, and 15,000 sq feet is used to park vendor vehicles, ranging from box trucks and trailers, many cargo vans, mini vans, cars and staff vehicles. A self-contained storage unit is on site as well as leased port-a-jons. Unlike Eastern Market vendors, the vast majority of our exhibitors’ vehicles are accommodated on site. Hours of use for the site are from 6am to 7pm. There are two pedestrian gates, one at 7th street and one at 8th street.

Organized into rows of 151 10x10 tents, with center aisles back to back to maximize efficiency of space, the Flea Market keeps aisle ways and breaks between rows 20 feet wide to adequately meet logistics of loading and unloading for 100 exhibitors in a 3 hour window of set up and 2 hour break down. 20 foot aisles allows for vehicles to pass and for larger trucks to unload. 20 foot aisles also provide ample room for the thousands of customers who populate the market during the day, accommodating groups, baby carriages, browsing, exploring, and impromptu exchanges among friends and strangers alike. [Exhibit C]

During the main selling season, DMM also provides an entertainment area, nestled near our small food court. Generators provided by management, allow a low-key professional local combo to play beneath a 10x10 tent. Seating is provided for customers to relax and enjoy the performances. DMM curates, funds, promotes and arranges all logistics for the concert series, called “Music In The Yard”.

III. Description of the Flea Market at Eastern Market

D. Management Description

DMM employs 8 staffers on site each week to handle traffic management, logistics, parking, space assignments, stall rent collections, exhibitor scheduling, safety, information, trash, and clean up, as well as signage and security. Additional independent laborers assist with exhibitor set ups. Staff is on site from 6 am to 8pm during the main selling season. The management maintains monitoring and communication to keep the site safe, trouble-free, orderly, but still casual enough that it remains “a fun place to shop and sell”.

Management of the market, however, is complex and doesn't merely occur on site. During the week employees handle accounting, reporting, planning, exhibitor scheduling, and database maintenance. DMM is the sole keeper of complete records of every exhibitor that has ever participated at the Sunday market, going back thirty years. In 1997 all records of participants were entered digitally. Since that time, over 5600 individual exhibitors have participated in the Flea Market.

DMM also manages the www.easternmarket.net website, with more than 3.5 million hits per year and an active Facebook page. Marketing includes the periodic Easternmarket.net newsletter which currently has more than 7200 subscribers from the region, nation, and around the world. The list also includes City and local agencies, elected officials, business and community organizations, exhibitors, marketers and area media. DMM's graphic designer handles online web content and advertising, signage and promotional materials for the Flea Market.

Although it runs so smoothly one might imagine it it must be very profitable enterprise, the truth is that there are considerable risks involved, as well as considerable investment and behind-the-scene planning that go into managing the market. It should be noted that markets are weather dependant. Bad weather results in fewer customers and vendors,

but it doesn't change the costs in management, which includes more than \$1000 per market day in staff, nearly every week of the year. During some winter months, there are barely enough vendors to cover the expense. The total monthly expense is nearly \$10,000 for staff, accounting, reporting and marketing the Flea Market. There are leasing costs, entertainment costs, advertising, communications, insurance, rent, and loans. There have been hundreds of thousands of dollars in investments made to the market over its long run. Further, The Flea Market at Eastern Market and DMM consistently make many donations to Capitol Hill organizations, religious entities, charities and public and charter school fundraisers, including The Capitol Hill Community Foundation, Capitol Hill Ministry, Capitol Hill Restoration Society, Two Rivers Charter School, and especially to the Hine Jr. Hine School when it was operating. Thousands of dollars are given away in the form of gift certificates and coupons to area organizations and to customers each and every Sunday.

DMM is in compliance with all district government licensing, rules, taxes, and reporting. DMM and its partners are active members in many organizations that promote public markets, open space, arts and small business including: Project for Public Spaces, NY, American Craft Council, NY, The James Renwick Alliance, DC, The Committee of 100 on the Federal City (former Board of Trustees), DC, DC Preservation League, DC, Capitol Hill Restoration Society, DC, The Capitol Hill Merchants and Professional Association (CHAMPS), DC, DC Chamber of Commerce, DC, Cultural Tourism DC, The Washington Project for the Arts, DC and Pennsylvania Quarter Neighborhood Association, DC.

DMM is the only qualified and capable entity to provide a continuation of the 30-year market activity, the sole database owner who is also knowledgeable of the history of every exhibitor, and the only one that can be consulted on how to continue to provide a market of similar stature and success.

IV. Status as a Use of Special Value to the Neighborhood and the District of Columbia As A Whole

The market has been referred to by residents of Capitol Hill as part of the identity of the neighborhood. The health of Eastern Market is somewhat dependent on the viability of the flea market; not surprisingly since we've counted 11,000 visitors on a typical Sunday. Over 5000 signatures collected in just a few weeks reflect the overwhelming support for the flea market, along with accolades, awards, top poll results, professional and tour guide recognition, and not least, our deep history of having founded the Sunday vending activity at Eastern Market. [Exhibit D]

A. Social and Cultural Significance To the Neighborhood and the District of Columbia

The flea market has become a landmark of Capitol Hill. Its social significance includes not only serving as the venue for people meeting and mixing, but as a hub for an international exchange of ideas, products, political views and education. Because of the diversity of its participants, the Flea Market attracts people from all walks of life, from all wards of the city and from a rich multi cultural tapestry. Many comments from area neighbors and visitors show how important the Flea Market is for them, their family and their life experiences. [Attachment C] Selected views include:

- “The Eastern Market Flea Market was the first part of DC to feel like home to me, and I've purchased countless items. That foot traffic affects all businesses in the surrounding area: Capitol Hill Books, Marvelous Market, Tunnicliffs, etc. These places solidify the character of the Eastern Market community.”..... posted by Peter Kopp
- “Eastern Market, including the flea market, is the heart and soul of our nation's best neighborhood. It is a hub of the community: commerce, tourism, socializing, culture, small businesses ... rich history, beautiful scenery... ..posted by Laelia Gilborn
- “... this is a wonderful flea market and brings people from all over the area and all walks of life. Every city should have such a vibrant market to add to the charm and energy of that city”.....posted by BJaye Conway

- “It's a part of the community make-up. I would hate to see it go. I look forward to attending the market each weekend. I also tell my out of town friends about the market as well”.....posted by Kevin R. Calhoun
- “Every time I travel to DC I ensure that I stay extra time before or after my trip so I can get my Eastern Market Flea Market fix. I have often purchased things and had them shipped back home to Colorado. This is one of the best markets I've ever visited”.....posted by Gina Salazar
- “The flea market contributes just as much to "Eastern Market" as the actual market, and Eastern Market is a mainstay in Hill life contributing to their very vitality of the neighborhood. Don't uproot our community, use an alternative design that can maintain all current components of Eastern Market”.....posted by Kassandra Cerveny
- “This is a space that promotes exchange and stimulates community on Capitol Hill. The flea market serves as an opportunity for residents to purchase local goods that support D.C. businesses and keeps dollars in our community. I love this space and it one of the reasons that I, as a Capitol Hill resident, and others from all around this city, spend time in this area.....posted by Alex Cater
- “i am a resident of capitol hill and the flea market is where i go for all my shopping needs: my home is decorated with the salvaged tin roofs, it is the only place i go to buy wonderful, unique presents for my family and friends- pottery, type-writer cuff links, gigantic straw hats, jewelry, maps, vintage posters, teeshirts... i love the market as it is a means of enjoying the outdoors 52 weeks a year and support local start-ups and artisans. ... The flea market is the apple of my eye as it is very vibrant, diverse, and wonderfully unique. It is the only public space in dc that supports small-artisan vendors at affordable costs and promotes their wares and fuses together community, independent artisans, and public space. The flea market at Eastern Market is the linch-in to my decision to live on Capitol Hill.The flea market

IV. Status as a Use of Special Value to the Neighborhood and the District of Columbia As A Whole

plays a crucial role in the community and to overlook that would measurably harm the community by reducing the number of visitors to the area and the amount of money that goes into our local economy. Above all, it would just be very sad to take away this valuable public space that is used towards very positive means”.....posted by Stephanie Hydal

- “This is a major community and tourist destination filled with quality products, produce and wonderful people. It is immaculate, fun and safe. It represents the spirit of small business and entrepreneurship. It would be a great loss to the community as well as the city if the market were reduced in size or closed altogether”...posted by Elaine Fishbein
- “...one of the most vital collection of vendors and visitors in our city. It has grown to symbolize what is possible in cross-cultural, artistic, healthy, and stimulating ideas exchanged among the myriad people who bring their sensibilities together in harmony. There is nowhere else in the city in which this happens on a consistent basis, week after week, year after year”.....posted by Joan Thornell
- “I moved to Capitol Hill as a child with 2 parents and 7 siblings in 1964. For decades, the "Market" has been a staple of our community and I recall as a very little child shopping at Eastern Market....he Flea Market became a weekend ritual, shopping for gifts, cards, antiques, food, jewelry, and just about any and everything else I - or anyone else- could want, need or use. It is, and will always be a destination spot for tourists and people from all over the DC Metro region. It is a delightful experience of enormous diversity, shopping and exotic vendors with unique and fantastic goods! I am appalled at the thought that all of this may be gone in a few years for some big box chain stores and other inappropriate, out of proportion development!....preserve what the residents of this city needs, loves, and deserve!.....posted by Claire Adams

B. “Save The Flea Market” Petitions

As negotiations with the Hine School developer stalled, promises for more space through ANC negotiations failed, concerns from the community regarding the lack of public space grew, and the draft bill for Eastern Market governance not adequately protecting the Flea Market drove anxiety of vendors and managers of the market to a peak, The Flea Market began to publicize the plight for the future of the market with a “Save The Flea Market” campaign. It was greeted with both a horrific cry of remorse for the possible demise or diminution of the market and an unprecedented outpouring of love and support. The market launched a petition on May 20, 2012 stating concerns for the potential loss of the market space under the plans and resolve for the Applicant to rectify the situation. In just three Sundays and one Saturday, the petition received over 3500 signatures. [Attachment A]

Additionally an online petition at Change.org has received 1235 signatures by June 27. Many signatories of the petition added personal comments, (referenced above) lamenting the negative implications of the potential loss of the market and noting the high esteem patrons have for the market. Both the online petition and the comments continue. [Attachment B and Attachment C]

C. Economic Significance to the Neighborhood and the District of Columbia

The Flea Market is an important driver of foot traffic to Eastern Market, the area businesses, and to the future development project. Dozens of unique small businesses and area artists depend on this venue for their livelihood. They introduce and promote both new and reclaimed products to the public. And they grow their businesses into larger enterprises. The Flea Market helps these entrepreneurs by enabling for jobs, marketing their business and products, and ample customers. This activity brings millions of dollars per year into the small business economy, the vast majority directly benefitting the District of Columbia. The Flea Market also pours millions more into the Capitol Hill area each year by attracting shoppers who spend at other proximate businesses.

IV. Status as a Use of Special Value to the Neighborhood and the District of Columbia As A Whole

1. Customers

The Flea Market attracts some 432,700 visitors on an annual basis. The Flea Market attracts over 184,000 visitors from the DC Metropolitan Area and DC tourist market. These visitors bring \$11.3 million to the city. Customers who come to The Flea Market also tend to shop at the Eastern Market Square, including its exterior vendors, its farmers and food vendors as well as the indoor food merchants. Area residents, city and metro area visitors as well as out-of-town visitors also tend to shop the neighboring cafes, restaurants, retail and services. Conservatively, it is estimated to be more than \$29 Million per year on Sundays and probably an equal amount on Saturdays. Details regarding the spending activity brought to the area are detailed in the attached Owens Economic Report and the WB+A Market Research Report.

2. Participants

The Flea Market has economic and development significance for independent small enterprises and for the city as a whole. The market has given crucial support for many artists in DC and beyond; has helped launch dozens of independent businesses for the city in brick and mortar stores; provided the foundation for many others that have cultivated relationships with larger stores to carry products produced or selected by these businesses; and has provided other important business growth for the city and entrepreneurs. [Exhibit E]

Artists have gotten gallery representation and commissions; have been recognized by museums and most notably, the Smithsonian Institution. Many artists and artisans opened their own galleries in and around DC, including Georgetown and Downtown. Some have their works represented around the world, yet still maintain their presence at

the Flea Market. Several artists maintain an active studio in the City or nearby, and as a result of continued sales and contacts at the market, significantly contribute to the local art community and the “creative economy”. The Flea Market is also a well known venue for photographers. Many travel the world and return to the market to exhibit their internationally inspired images, Many are also award-winning and published, and claim some of the most iconic Washington DC imagery available. Notable DC artists have been a staple at the Flea Market, including one who has had significant recognition as an official portrait painter of President Clinton and Justice Thurgood Marshall. [Exhibit F]

The Flea Market has been the incubator for many businesses, especially for the District of Columbia and significantly to Capitol Hill. Many exhibitors have gone on to create larger businesses with storefronts, multiple kiosks or have been picked up by department stores or larger enterprises. Many of these businesses still thrive, especially those that decided to locate in DC. Potters have opened shops, hand-bag and clothing designers have opened boutiques, a pet product entrepreneur went on to start one of the largest gourmet pet supply and food businesses regionally. Many importers from Spanish crafts to Afghan rugs have thriving stores after having test-marketed their products at the Flea Market. DC has benefited from Flea Market ‘business incubator’ role most, with over 60% of expanded businesses staying in the District. Not only has a significant portion of those incubated stores located on Capitol Hill to the benefit of the local community, but some are even across the street from the Flea Market benefiting from the synergy the weekend activity brings. [Exhibit G, Exhibit H]

V. Legislative and Development Impact on The Flea Market

A. Requirement of Bill 19-0513

Bill 19-0153 must ensure the new Eastern Market governance provides reasonable lease terms and adequate space for the Flea Market to continue. Failure to provide for sufficient space for the Flea Market at Eastern Market **will result in a loss of a “use of special value to the neighborhood and to the District of Columbia as a whole”** and the loss of the associated economic and social benefits of this use.

Elimination of the Flea Market is inconsistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Destruction of the Flea Market will not further the policies identified in the Comprehensive Plan as part of the Pennsylvania Avenue Policy Focus Area of promoting Eastern Market’s “intended function as a produce, meat, farmer’s and retail market as well as a community meeting place and visual arts center.” Policy CH -2.2.4. Comprehensive Plan, Capitol Hill Area Element, at 15-25. Its elimination will also be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan’s policies of promoting cultural tourism. See Comprehensive Plan, Capitol Hill Area Element, at 15-22 (Policy CH-2.1.6. Historic Preservation); Comprehensive Plan, Historic Preservation Element, Policy HP-3.3.4 (“use cultural tourism to link neighborhoods and promote communication between diverse groups.”)

It would also be inconsistent with the following Comprehensive Plan policy of the Economic Development Element ***Policy ED-3.1.1: Neighborhood Commercial Vitality***

*Promote the vitality and diversity of Washington’s neighborhood commercial areas by **retaining existing businesses [emphasis added]**, attracting new businesses, and improving the mix of goods and services available to residents.*

As the bill envisions, the Trust shall gain and exercise operational control over all market activities in or adjacent to the Special Use District. However, it is important to recognize the significant investments made by the Flea Market to build, operate, advertise and sustain a viable business. Therefore, it is imperative that the bill

honors the current lease agreements of the flea market operators on the Hine School until construction begins.

The concept of the Trust is perhaps well-meaning but poses inherent risks to the stability and security of the many hundreds of stakeholders that help make Eastern Market a continued destination and success. The key to helping Eastern Market survive and thrive into the future is driven by professional technical expertise, which should not be restricted to a particular geographic limitation in the city. Professional city-wide expertise with criteria for specific knowledge regarding public markets, public space planning, special event planning, and small business, including an eye toward minority, artisan and vending start-up business would be appropriate. Current EMCAC members, because they represent certain constituencies, have not shown to have such expertise, but rather are set with certain biases against many stakeholders and should not qualify.

B. Inadequate Space

The proposed development that will displace the Flea Market at Hine School, as currently designed, cuts by two-thirds the space for vendors and customers, eliminating 38,000 square feet of market space. Plans and designs for the Plaza and C Street portions of the proposed development have changed little since the HPRB hearing on August 3rd, 2011. As a result of the HPRB report, the Applicant was urged to address the board’s concerns with regards to the landscaping, plaza and lack of adequate space for market related activity. While a meeting was held with market operators and Councilmember Wells, and with some District agencies in attendance, and with concern again being raised at the April 21, 2012 HPRB hearing and from the ANC, the revised designs continue to disregard this issue providing less than 50% of the markets’ current needs, making no logistical considerations, and leaving no allowance for social and cultural activity to occur simultaneously. [Exhibit I]

V. Legislative and Development Impact on The Flea Market

The developer proposes to devote a narrow area along the re-opened “C” street to the weekend Flea Market, consisting of only 12,000 square feet for vending (as approximated in the Nov 2011 submission) and no on-site space for vendor loading or parking. This would be enough to accommodate only about 50 vendors, and would be wholly insufficient and inefficient to accommodate the space and loading requirements for the dealers of furniture, antiques and other large collectible items, thus significantly reducing the diversity that has made the Flea Market a destination in its own right.

Unlike the current market configuration of 20 foot aisles for approximately 50,000 square feet of useable space, the Applicant offers merely 12,000 square feet, one 15 foot aisle in the road bed, (likely a fire lane requirement) and then narrower aisles and a 10 foot break between tents. This will not accommodate the typical Flea Market vendor who specializes in large format set ups to sell furniture, antiques and collectibles, home furnishings, large artworks and vintage posters and print material among the other clothing, crafts and jewelry displays.

Therefore it is essential that the Flea Market be given space with in the Special Use District beyond C Street and the developers proposed plaza to also include 7th Street from Pennsylvania Ave up to and including C Street and that parts of the 200 block of C Street also be considered.

C. Mitigation for Loss of Vendor Parking and Loss of Market Storage Space

Development on the Hine site negatively impacts open space, market activity, market management, market storage, market vendors, public parking, and vendor parking. Each one of these adverse impacts should be addressed and mitigated.

Currently, 75 Flea Market vendor vehicles, including cargo vans, box trucks, trailers and other vehicles, are provided adequate on-site parking without cost. Only 50 spaces for vendors of both Eastern Market Square and the Flea Market have been promised as part of the development, and there is a limit on how many vehicles could be oversized. Further the developer intends to charge significant parking rates.

Eastern Market Square vendors, numbering 75 to 100, park on area streets. However Flea Market vendors are nearly all accommodated on the Hine site. Therefore, a net increase of parking on neighborhood streets by vendors will result if the development does not provide more parking spaces.

Market management requires storage space for all of its programmatic elements, including a limited number of tents, signage materials, and other fixtures and furniture

D. Mitigate Loss of Space, Revenue and Parking During Construction

Once the development project is approved and construction begins, mitigation to enable the market to continue adjacent to the site is necessary. The closure of 7th Street for traffic to enable market activity is likely the preferred solution for some space. Consideration should also be made to phase the construction, so as the market might utilize the former East Hall space, currently a concrete slab, for as long as possible. The Applicant must assist in finding parking spaces for vendors and must be prepared to assist in loss of revenue to management, budget for promotions, signage and advertising, and provide aggressive clean up programs before each weekend.

VI. Conclusion

The Flea Market at Eastern Market is clearly a "use of special value to the neighborhood and to the District of Columbia as a whole," as an important element to the local community, to its small business participants and city-wide, socially, culturally and economically. The Flea Market's popular diverse assortment of exhibitors is an important driver of foot traffic to the Eastern Market area. This unique dynamic local experience is like no other destination in the City and it is a heralded and beloved jewel that brings out the best of the District of Columbia.

While economic experts predict a diminution of profits from the market with diminution of allocated space, the reality is that we can only meet the expenses of running the market with a critical mass of vendors. The closure of the weekend Flea Market would be devastating to the small businesses at the Flea Market. Without the Flea Market, place-making objectives to attract pedestrians to the destination are much diminished, as is the vitality of Eastern Market. Tour books would be rewritten; neighbors would move away; retail would be curtailed. The cultural and social significance that organically blossomed and has been celebrated as a city asset would be uprooted and destroyed and could not be replaced.

The positive impacts of The Flea Market at Eastern Market can be preserved and enhanced through holistic legislation that subcontracts the management of the Flea Market under the Eastern Market management in a reasonable lease, allocates sufficient space to the Flea Market in the Special Use District and meaningfully coordinates activities including operations, logistics, parking, marketing and advertising. With the right individuals selected to operate the market, strong protections for the market stakeholders and the management that that helped make The Flea Market at Eastern Market the jewel and destination it is today; and with an inclusive and cooperative atmosphere for future preservation of Eastern Market and development of the Eastern Market District: we can support the proposed Bill 19-0513.