

SPEECH TO PORTLAND CITY COUNCIL

May 18, 2016

Good morning Mr. Mayor and members of Council.

I am John Russell, 200 SW Market Street in Portland. I am here speaking for a group of nine property owners in an area bounded by roughly SW Main, the South Park Blocks, Interstate 405 and Riverplace. Portland State is one of our members. The other eight of us own some two dozen city blocks in the area. The other members are Scott Andrews of Melvin Mark Properties. They own a partnership interest in the two blocks that make up Crown Plaza, the two blocks of the old State office building and Columbia Square. Greg Goodman of Downtown Development owns an interest in Crown Plaza and a vacant lot to the east of KOIN Center. Julie Leuvrey and Randy Lovre of Oregon Pacific own apartments, office, retail and land between First and Park Avenue.

Tom Kilbane of Urban Renaissance Group owns the Oregonian Building that has been virtually entirely pre-leased before the end of its reconstruction. Bob Scanlan of SKB owns KOIN Tower and the CH2M Building at 4th & Lincoln. Senka Lenn of Cambia Health owns an interest in our 200 Market Building and a second block on SW First. Kevin Reynolds is the representative from Portland State. Several of our members took the time to be here today.

This is an area that most people believe is thriving. Most of our buildings are relatively full, and the area is seeing important new construction. We are the neighborhood of the new County Courthouse, the renovation of the Oregonian Building, the new Porter Hotel, Walt Bowen's new hotel/office development on Broadway, the construction projects on the PSU campus, and a new apartment building and grocery store at 4th & Harrison. Our area is well served by light rail and streetcar.

However, we came together as a group because we see clouds on the horizon. Our rental rates lag those in the Pearl District by some twenty percent. There are tenants who have chosen not to locate in our district because they believe that it isn't sufficiently attractive to the "millennial workforce" that wants a more vibrant street scene.

We met in December and January with 25 prominent creative types, to help us formulate a plan to improve the neighborhood.

Each of us is spending millions on our own buildings to make them more attractive at the ground levels. You may wonder, then, why any of this should be of particular interest to Council. The answer is that we believe that the condition of some public sector properties are detrimental to our neighborhood. We would like to enlist your support to let us improve them.

They are three.

The first is the Keller Auditorium which, although it is operated by Metro, MERC and Portland Five, is owned by the City. We have several ideas that we believe can transform the building. We have hired Shiels Obletz Johnsen to see if solar panels can be installed on the roof at no cost to the public, like was done at the Convention Center. We hope to commission Don Stastney to conduct an international design competition for a comprehensive signage program for the Keller on the same scale as the signage for the Schnitz. We will need Council approval of that signage.

The second public properties are the two fountains in the Halprin Sequence. Of particular concern is Forecourt Fountain. The grass has turned to moss; the fountain pumps were only turned on in early April; the lights that illuminate the fountain from underneath are not working, nor are the lights that illuminate the fountain from above. We would like your permission to do those repairs at our cost, using union labor. We envision the Halprin Sequence parks

functioning like the Japanese and Chinese gardens, with the Halprin Conservancy.

The third properties are the walkways in Halprin Sequence, along what used to be Second and Third Avenues. We would like to install, at our expense, Tivoli lighting to illuminate what are now dark pathways.

Although we would enthusiastically welcome public sector contributions to the cost of these improvements, we at a minimum would like your blessing to proceed, so that the public sector properties in our neighborhood can add to the neighborhood's attractiveness.

We're all in this together, we as private property owners and the City as the owner of public properties. Together we can make this area regain the vitality that it had when our buildings and your properties were new.

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Moore-Love, Karla

From: John Russell <john@rusfel.com>
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2016 11:00 AM
To: Moore-Love, Karla
Cc: Wiggins, Rachael
Subject: RE: May 18th Communications

Indeed I do, Ms. Moore-Love.

From: Moore-Love, Karla [mailto:Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov]
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2016 9:50 AM
To: Wiggins, Rachael <Rachael.Wiggins@portlandoregon.gov>
Cc: John Russell <john@rusfel.com>
Subject: RE: May 18th Communications

Thank you Rachael.

City Code requires everyone to submit their own Communication request. Mr. Russell will have to confirm with me by replying to this email, that he does want the Communication spot on May 18th.

Regards,
Karla



Karla Moore-Love | Council Clerk
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phone: 503.823.4086
Clerk's Webpage: www.portlandoregon.gov/auditor/councilclerk

From: Wiggins, Rachael
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2016 9:00 AM
To: Moore-Love, Karla <Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov>
Cc: 'John Russell' <john@rusfel.com>
Subject: May 18th Communications

Hi Karla,

John Russell (cc'd here) would like to reserve a communications slot of May 18th. His information is below:

John Russell
200 SW Market Street, Suite 1720
john@rusfel.com
"Neighbor Improvements for the Keller Auditorium and the Halprin Sequence."

Please let me know if there is any other information need.

Best,
Rachael

Rachael Wiggins

Policy Assistant/Council Liaison
Office of Mayor Charlie Hales
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1221 SW Fourth Avenue, Suite 340
Portland, OR 97204
P: 503-823-4120
E: rachael.wiggins@portlandoregon.gov
www.portlandonline.gov/mayor

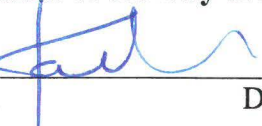
Request of John Russell to address Council regarding neighbor improvements for the Keller Auditorium and the Halprin Sequence (Communication)

MAY 18 2016

PLACED ON FILE

Filed MAY 10 2016

MARY HULL CABALLERO
Auditor of the City of Portland

By  Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Novick		
Hales		