

Minutes of Meeting of the Moore St Advisory Group (Online)

12th March 2021 @ 2.30 p.m.,

Members in attendance were:

Tom Collins (Chairman),
Thomas Holbrook,
Catherine Kennedy,
John Daly,
Brian O'Neill,
(Catherine) Carmel Smyth,
James Connolly Heron,
Aengus O'Snodaigh TD,
Neasa Hourigan TD,
Senator Mary Fitzpatrick,
Councillor Donna Cooney,
Councillor Nial Ring,
Nessa Foley,
Coilín O Reilly

Garry McDonagh – Secretariat

1. Draft Minutes of 5th March 2021

The minutes were approved, proposed by James Connolly Heron, seconded by Coilín O Reilly

2. Matters Arising

James Connolly Heron suggested that Nos. 12 and 13 would be a useful addition to the National Monument to allow for visitor numbers. He also suggested that the MSAG request photos of the breakthrough and other recent discoveries from Hammerson. The Chair agreed with making this request from Hammerson.

Brian O'Neill, in relation to the Sinn Féin concept, queried if the presentation will be made available. He also queried as to the composition and status of the Moore St Trust. Deputy O'Snodaigh advised that it should have been circulated and he will check why it hasn't been. He advised that he will send on details of the Trust and the presentation.

Deputy O'Snodaigh stated that it was important to get the transport authority in to talk to the Group in relation to the proposed metro.

James Connolly Heron stated that, at a meeting he attended with Hammerson, they had stated that the planning permission application was not due to be made until April.

3. Green Party presentation on Vision for Moore St area

Councillor Cooney and Deputy Hourigan made a presentation on behalf of the Green Party on a vision for Moore Street but also the wider area including Parnell Square.

Suggestions included:

- All buildings in the area over 100 years old should be designated protected structures,
- Zoning as an Architectural Conservation Area
- There should be no large enclosed shopping centre in the area,
- The area should include independent retailers, housing, including public housing,
- Parnell Square, which is important both historically and culturally, should be made a public park and would provide a green lung for the area,
- Any new buildings should be built as near zero energy buildings,
- In order to revitalise the Moore Street Market, Dublin City Council needs to allocate further staff and resources,
- O'Connell Street needs to be enhanced in terms of quality offerings.

On foot of the presentation Thomas Holbrook wanted to know if Moore St is seen as a casual trading area or a market area. Coilín O'Reilly confirmed it is a casual trading area but that the market as a whole needed to be looked at in any plans if it was to be successful.

The Chair asked for an analysis of the decay in Moore Street and what was needed to turn it around from its current state. He also noted that the images used in the presentation were from Temple Bar. Deputy Hourigan stated that she didn't see Moore Street as a no go area. Senator Mary Fitzpatrick described Moore St as a living street which the pandemic has impacted. She said that it was unrealistic to expect private investment when the State hasn't been investing but now that it had secured funding there was a great opportunity and the Group should keep to the Easter timeline for its report to the Minister. She also stated that she would like DCC to be the lead on Moore St and that the Group should recommend that DCC operates the commemorative centre.

Carmel Smyth pointed out that there will be a return to shopping but the lanes were indeed a no go area and the only way to secure the area was to open it up to more footfall. The Chair stated that the Gardai acknowledged that the area was a focal point for anti-social behaviour. Councillor Cooney said this was because there was no cohesive plan and that we now had an opportunity to make it a real centre of heritage. Deputy O'Snodaigh described how the traffic on the lane causes mayhem and that the length of time it took to complete the LUAS works contributed to the dereliction of the area. He also felt that a big problem was that the Metro may never happen and that tax incentives should be used to make the area attractive for small businesses as had been the case in the early days of Temple Bar. He also stated that this area

shouldn't be set up to rival Grafton Street but that it should offer something unique as an attraction.

Coilín O'Reilly stated that we needed to focus on moving forward and to look at an analysis of the city post pandemic, the north side being more sustainable than the south, as had been evidenced during the opening up of businesses last Summer after the first phase of Covid restrictions. He also felt that there was a need to provide a mix of quality offerings in the area to attract footfall.

James Connolly Heron welcomed the Green Party vision and supported the notion of plot lines, and markets and also the street manager idea. Thomas Holbrook referred to p.28 on Securing History report which covered all the security problems:

- Gardai don't have the resources to police the area.
- DCC are responsible for licences and have let the numbers dwindle. More traders would help keep it secure.

Deputy Hourigan pointed out that crime is not solved by buildings and that the issues are much more complex than that. James Connolly Heron asked if the Green Party had asked Minister Noonan for a response on its presentation. Deputy Hourigan said that they hadn't as yet but that they would.

Councillor Cooney agreed that we need more traders on the street and that the more positive activity that was taking place there, the more the negative activity would be pushed out.

Give notice to transport authority to attend the next meeting

4. Discussion on presentations to date from Hammerson, Sinn Fein and the Green Party

Meeting adjourned before item 4 was reached. Many members of the group were having issues with internet connections which disrupted the flow and completion of the agenda items.