#### **BAY AREA**

CITYSCAPE By John King

# A big neighbor that fits in well

This theatrical yet urbane apartment house shows that multifamily housing can be well-mannered as well. The simple device of a courtyard entry creates visual interest, a landscaped oasis with ornate doorways reached by tiled steps. The facade adds to the ambiance with Moorish bays and a prim pitched roof. Today's zoning in the Sunset and other largely residential districts judges such a building with its 24 apartments to be too dense for its locale. In fact, a dozen more like this one would make the neighborhood better, not worse.



**1640 Kirkham St.** | Builder: August H. Klahn | Style: Mediterranean Revival Size: 3-plus stories | Date built: 1929

Photos by John King / The Chronicle

As Cityscape bids the Sunset adieu, thanks to Gary Goss from jking@sfcbronicle.com for information on this week's stop.

#### BAY AREA

CITYSCAPE By John King

### A getaway now part of the city

Buildings stand as markers of cultural change even when their form remains intact. This shingled box perched high for views was built as a beach cottage for the city's fire chief, Dennis Sullivan, who perished in the 1906 earthquake. The following decades saw sand dunes covered by housing and, more recently, families of Asian descent settling along the city's western edge. The cottage now is a Korean-language church pressed tight by multiunit homes. For the congregation it offers sanctuary; for the rest of us, a hint of long-gone worlds.





#### 1984 Great Highway

Builder: Fred C. Jones | Style: First Bay Region | Size: One story above raised basement | Date built: 1905

Cityscape is spending the month in the often-sunny Sunset. Your tour guide: jking@sfchronicle.com

THE EXAMINER . Sfexaminer.com . Monday, June 11, 2012

#### LOCAL NEW

# Voters might settle fight over condos

By Joshua Sabatini S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

The battle over a luxury 134-condo development at 8 Washington St. appears to be headed to the November ballot.

The Board of Supervisors on Tuesday is expected to approve the Simon Snellgrove of Pacific Waterfront Partners development despite opposition from more left-leaning political factions and members of the Golden Gateway Tennis and Swim Club, which would be displaced. Approval, however, won't stop opponents from fighting.

"We're not done," said longtime land-use attorney Sue Hestor, who is fighting the project on behalf of Friends of Golden Gateway. "Simon Snellgrove is going to have to put some more of his money up."

On June 21, the group is hosting an 8 Washington referendum fundraiser for the November ballot, when it will ask voters to reject height increases along The Embarcadero. The 130-foot-tall development would exceed the existing 84-foot height limit.

Supporters of 8 Washington questioned the aims of the ballot effort.

"So now we are going to go to the ballot to protect a private tennis club? That would seem to be a perversion of our system," said development spokesman PJ Johnston, adding that the proposal "has been dragged out for seven years" and has passed "fair and square" with the approving bodies.

"This is a case of NIMBYs protecting their private tennis club," he said.

An appeal last month of the development's environmental impact report was rejected by supervisors, with David Campos, John Avalos and board President David Chiu the only ones to support it. The development is in Chiu's district.

Last week, Supervisor Jane Kim obtained more concessions from the developer, including low-income youth access to the pool, a decrease in parking spaces from 250 to 200 and a 50-cent surcharge on parking for area transit improvements. The deal also calls for an \$11 million contribution to The City's affordable-housing trust fund, \$2 million more than required.

jsabatini@sfexaminer.com

Development challenge: A 134-unit condominium development on prime waterfront property across the street from the Ferry Building won the backing of the Board of Supervisors Tuesday — ending one battle and expected to start another.

Opponents have threatened to stop the project by referendum and/or lawsuits.

The controversial project at 8 Washington St., covering 3.2 acres, will include luxury condominiums, parking, a health club and a public park.

To win board approval, the developer, Pacific Waterfront Partners led by Simon Snell-grove and Alicia Allbin, agreed to kick in \$11 million to the city's affordable housing fund — \$2 million more than required by law — and to turn

over the health club's pool a couple of hours a week for cityrun swim lessons for low-income kids. In addition, a 50-cent surcharge will be levied on vehicles that use the public parking lot, with the proceeds used for street-scape and transit improvements.

"It's great news; we're very happy," Snellgrove said after the vote.

The board approved the project on an 8-3 vote, with Supervisors **David Chiu**, **David Campos** and **John Avalos** opposed.

Opponents on the board and in the public have listed a number of concerns, among them the height, the bulk, the loss of the existing Golden Gateway swim and tennis club, the obstruction of views for some residents and the amount of

parking. Critics also said they should provide more funding for affordable housing and community benefits.

- Rachel Gordon

Turf wars: Opponents of the plan to replace shabby grass with synthetic turf and new lights to Golden Gate Park's Beach Chalet soccer fields filed an appeal with the Board of Supervisors Tuesday.

SF Ocean Edge and other neighborhood and environmental groups held a City Hall press conference prior to filing the appeal, arguing that an environmental impact report certified by the San Francisco Planning Commission last month failed to consider many environmental impacts and project alternatives.

Attorney Richard Drury,

representing SF Ocean Edge and several other groups, said the city refused to consider a "hybrid alternative," proposed by opponents, which would renovate fields at West Sunset Playground with artificial turf and lights while preserving grass at Beach Chalet.

Recreation and Park officials have said that the addition of turf and lights will triple the amount of playing time on the 7 acres of fields.

"The lights aren't on all night. This is not ripping up Golden Gate Park. It's simply a different playing surface," turf supporter **Po Bronson** said.

6-13-2012 - Neal J. Riley

E-mail: cityinsider@ sfchronicle.com Twitter: @SFCityInsider

## **Board unites behind waterfront**

By Joshua Sabatini S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

San Francisco supervisors expressed unanimous support Tuesday for negotiations between the Warriors and city officials for a waterfront arena already being touted as the "envy of the world."

The Board of Supervisors voted to waive The City's competitive bidding requirements for the development of Piers 30-32 and bless the negotiations between the basketball franchise and The City's Office of Economic and Workforce Development, which will act as the lead negotiator.

"This is merely the opening tip off," said city project manager Ken Rich.

The approval is a signal to the Oakland-based Warriors that city officials are united in making the waterfront development a reality. San Francisco is well-known for its laborious planning and approval process — particularly regarding waterfront development.

The talks will hammer out details around a real estate transaction between the team and The City for Piers 30-32 and Seawall Lot 330. The terms are expected to be reached in September.

Community meetings will begin in the coming weeks to address



Game time: San Francisco will try to work out a deal with Warriors officials regarding the development of Piers 30-32 and Seawall Let 330.

concerns

"It is important to go to the community before there is a design, before we pick an architect, before many of these processes have begun," said Supervisor Jane Kim, whose district includes the team's possible future home. "This project, as amazing as it potentially could be, will have a tremendous impact on this residential community that already exists there."

The franchise has committed to taking part in the public meetings.

Rich said it is "a large project with significant implications" regarding transportation, parking, bay views and access to the waterfront.

The goal is to have a draft environmental impact report before the Planning Commission for approval by the end of the 2013.

Rich said the officials leading the proposal are "confident" that the process "will result in a new waterfront facility that will be the envy of the world."

jsabatini@sfexaminer.com

6-13-2012



We're not done with pension reform in S.F.

> ith the overwhelming voter endorsement of pension reforms in San Jose and San Diego, folks here in San Francisco might be thinking, "Thank

goodness we passed our own reform - Proposition C

- last November." Well, as was pointed out in this column and in public statements by Jeff Adachi and even mayoral candidate Joanna Rees, Prop. C was founded on the fanciful notion that we could continue to

assume a 7.75 percent return on pension fund investments.

When New York City considered lowering its expected investment return rate, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said, "The actuary is supposedly going to lower the assumed reinvestment rate from an absolutely hysterical, laughable 8 percent to a totally indefensible 7 or 7.5 percent." Private companies use an average of 4.8 percent return.

Earlier this year, CalPERS, the nation's largest public-pension fund, reduced its expected return rate from 7.75 percent to 7.5 percent, although the agency's staff had recommended lowering the rate to 7.25 percent.

In December of last year, just a month after Prop. C passed, the San Francisco Employees' Spare change: Expected returns on pension investments

could drop lower, leading San Franciscans back to the polls for future reform.

Retirement System lowered its expected investment return rate from 7.75 percent to 7.5 percent. According to retire-

ment board member Victor Makras, lowering the return rate to 7.5 percent results in a \$25 million increase in pension obligations in fiscal year 2012-13. With Prop. C in place, employee contributions are projected to increase by \$40 million, which is nothing to sneeze at. But the massive savings predicted by Prop. C's proponents — \$40 million to \$50 million in 2012-13 - appears to have been undercut by the recent reality

The percentage of total employee payroll that The City will have to contribute to the pension fund actually went up this year (!!!) from 18.1 percent to 20.7 percent. And we'll still be paying \$405 million in pension costs and \$173 million in retiree health care costs in 2012-13, for a total of about \$40 million more than

Before you know it, San Francisco may have to take pension reform back to the ballot box.

#### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS REVIEW



#### Warriors puns a slam-dunk

At Tuesday's Board of Supervisors meeting, the supes unanimously passed a resolution allowing the Office of Economic and Workforce Development to begin negotiating for a Warriors arena. The hearing was surprisingly uneventful but for the attempts by government nerds to demonstrate knowledge of professional basketball. "This is the opening tipoff." said Ken Rich of the Office of Economic and Workforce Development, describing the fact that this is only the beginning of the process of developing the site. Later, after local public crooner Walter Paulson treated the room to a song about the Warriors, Supervisor David Chiu complimented him with, "Slam dunk singing, 6-14-2012



#### Waterfront views vs. luxury condos

Later the board considered a development of condominiums near The Embarcadero at 8 Washington St. This is the most recent of several hearings on the matter wherein people who want to protect their fabulous waterfront views and tennis courts get to rail about the proposed luxury development. (It ain't exactly David versus Goliath.) That the developer will be giving \$11 million to The City for affordable housing was not enough for supervisors like David Campos and David Chiu, who were hung up on the amount of profit that the project would yield. Apparently when determining the amount to extort from local construction projects, the question isn't, "What do we need?" it is, "What have you got?" 6-14-20/2

# CITY INSIDER

### **Budget panel OKs** waterfront condos

The saga of 8 Washington, the pricey waterfront condo development slated to go in across the street from the Ferry Building, could finally come to an end Tuesday when the Board of Supervisors will be asked to sign off on the financial details of the

project.

A subcommittee of the board's budget and finance panel agreed Wednesday to push the plan up the ladder for what's expected to be the final up or down vote.

Not surprisingly, the controversial

proposal for what are expected to become some of the city's most expensive condominiums didn't sail through the hearing. Board President David Chiu, an outspoken opponent of the 134-unit project, dropped by to suggest that backers of the project hadn't supplied needed paperwork, had broken the law by trying to cut a deal with Port of San Francisco officials before the project went out to bid, had inflated the value of benefits provided to the port and would never come up with the money promised to the port and the

City Insider continues on C5



#### INSIDER

From page C1

city.

He also said that the port's proposed 50-50 split of the additional property tax from the project probably should be 80-20 in favor of the

Many of those same concerns are likely to be raised at Tuesday's board

meeting.

Supervisor John Avalos, the lone dissenter on the three-member subcommittee, also said the city was being shortchanged by the developer, Pacific Waterfront Partners, which should be forced to pay more than the \$11 million now promised to the city's affordable housing fund.

"I don't see the project at the level we need to have for public benefits," he said. "It behooves us to make sure we get as much as we can."

But Supervisors Carmen Chu and Jane Kim agreed to move the project to the full board, although some details remain to be worked out.

The developer has tentatively agreed to trim 20 percent of the planned 255 public spaces in the underground parking garage, add a parking surcharge earmarked for nearby street improvements, boost its payment to the port for its temporary loss of parking and negotiate a minimum payment for the cafe that will be built on the site of a current port-owned parking lot.

While none of these agreements is final, Kim and Chu said they wanted everything worked out before Tuesday.

- John Wildermuth

A welcome home: An injured Iranian cat found on the streets of Tehran with shrapnel in his face and covered in wounds

### **LOCAL NEWS**

# More condo plan perks sought

Board trying to wring public benefits from 8 Washington project

By Joshua Sabatini S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

Despite unresolved issues, the politically charged waterfront development at 8 Washington St. moved closer to reality Wednesday and is poised for approval next week.

The 134-unit luxury condo development has ignited a divisive political debate and angered members of the private Golden Gateway Tennis and Swim Club, which it would replace. The project would eliminate the facility's tennis courts but replace an existing pool. Labor unions have rallied behind the project's expected construction jobs, but progressives say The City needs affordable housing, not multimilliondollar condos.

Like other significant developments in San Francisco, the project's approval process includes a debate about how many so-called public benefits developer Simon Snellgrove of Pacific Waterfront Partners



**Controversy:** A proposed 134-unit waterfront condominium development has been criticized for its lack of affordable housing and displacement of sports facilities.

would have to pay for beyond the mandatory fees for items such as affordable housing.

City officials disagree about the exact value of those benefits, which the developer pledged to make in several documents it has submitted for city approval. San Francisco's port staff valued them at \$144.6 million, while Board of Supervisors Budget Analyst Harvey Rose projected \$84.4 million. More clarity is expected by next week's vote.

Both estimates include about \$11 million in affordable-housing fees, which is \$2 million higher than the fee The City mandates for its public housing fund to help build affordable housing.

During Wednesday's meeting of the Board of Supervisors Budget and Finance Committee, Supervisor Jane Kim sought a number of concessions from the developer, which would help ensure the project's passage next week. Among them were a reduction in the number of proposed underground parking spaces from 255 to 200, a parking surcharge of 50 cents per use to pay for streetscape improvements within a one-mile radius and a partnership with The City to ensure youths have access to the swimming pool. There are currently 1,400 youths on the Recreation and Park Department's swim lesson wait list.

Kim said with an agreement on those issues, she would support the project.

"I would not characterize this deal as generous," Kim said of the overall development, if modified to include her demands.

But not everyone is sold on the deal. Supervisor John Avalos had unsuccessfully sought to postpone the committee's vote. He said the development should include city fees "well above mandatory" given that overall revenue estimates he has seen for the project say it could exceed \$400 million.

The full board is scheduled to vote Tuesday on the development, which includes a height increase, a special tax district and a land swap.

jsabatini@sfexaminer.com

### STOSHEW CULITUI tower will display an artistic air



**HNTB** Architecture

The new air traffic control tower at SFO, to be completed by the end of 2014, will be 221 feet tall. It is required to withstand a magnitude 8 earthquake but needs to fit into a compact site.

#### Architects meet myriad requirements but avoid 'lollipop on stick' style

#### By John King

As the new control tower at San Francisco International Airport takes shape during the next two years, keep this simple phrase in mind: Flair follows function.

The end result will be a 221-foot aluminum-clad tower that's narrow at the base but slides out to the east as it rises, as though craning its neck for a view. At the summit an all-glass crown will pull back and pop up, the see-through finale to the show.

It has the makings of a stylized torch amid SFO's low horseshoe of domestic terminals, at least if reality matches the architectural renderings. But the designers and airport officials call the design a pragmatic response to the challenge at hand - squeezing into a narrow site between two terminals while crafting a perch where air traffic controllers can survey every nook and cranny below.

"We worked hard to keep the tower on a diet," said Alejandro Ogata, an architect with HNTB, the tower's design firm. "All the activities need to be at the top of the building, but nobody wanted a lollipop on a stick."

The \$102 million project kicks off Thursday with a ceremony that will include Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood. The clearing of the site between Terminals 1 and 2 will be followed by the construction of a

Tower continues on A10



John Blanchard / The Chronicle

control tower, seen

The current



from the parking area, sits atop a 1950s block of offices at the north end of Terminal 2.

#### FROM THE COVER

# Control tower designed with an artistic air

Tower from page A1

facility that should be completed in the fall of 2014. The Federal Aviation Administration will spend another year installing the navigation control equipment.

As might be expected, a tower of this nature is shaped by a multitude of demands. For starters, the FAA requires that SFO's be strong enough to withstand a magnitude 8 earthquake — larger than the 1906 temblor — and promptly resume operations. But it's not allowed to sway in high winds, lest a traffic controller be hit by airsickness.

The height and the upper floor's precise location are determined by the need to have a clear line of sight to all of the airport's critical runways and gates. Lightning protection cables will radiate down from rooftop antennas.

When the decision was made, for seismic reasons, to replace the current tower, which sits atop a 1950s block of offices at the north end of Terminal 2, SFO had to find a place within its existing buildings to insert a new one. That's not the case at most airports, which have enough land to set the control tower away from the terminals.

The one semi-convenient space proved to be a tight

"These projects are civic in nature. You want to strike a balance between (employee) safety and openness."

Alejandro Ogata, architect

square now used mostly for docking and parking. At the same time, the compact dimensions required that the lower neck of the tower be as narrow as possible, since room was needed for a pair of corridors between Terminals 1 and 2, one for general visitors and one for passengers who already had passed through security.

Working within these constraints — and given a site that will be far more prominent from the Bayshore Freeway than the current control tower — the architects sought to enliven the tower without exceeding the budget set beforehand by the FAA, which will pay \$69 million of the cost, with the balance covered by the airport.

The tower is shaped as though the aluminum-clad form unfurls from a central trunk of translucent glass; the trunk faces the traffic ramps



HNTB Architecture

SFO's new control tower will feature a torch-like appearance and a clear glass base and crown. After its completion in fall 2014, the FAA will spend a year installing the equipment.



Brant Ward / The Chronicle

The old control tower, seen looming over Terminal 2, is being replaced because of seismic safety concerns.

inside the horseshoe and will glow at night. The base will be clear glass, an atrium-like space with the aluminum panels of the tower beginning their climb at the rear, another way of accenting the height. The faux-atrium is where along with plants and seating and public art along the way. "These projects are civic in nature" Ocata explained "You

the nonsecure corridor will be.

nature," Ogata explained. "You want to strike a balance between (employee) safety and openness."

On the south edge of the base will be the most public gesture of all, a concession area to serve people waiting for incoming flights at Terminal 1. It's the first step in a planned upgrade to a structure that was built in the early 1960s and last remodeled in 1988 — more evidence that renovation work at SFO will never, ever truly come to an end.

John King is the San Francisco Chronicle's Urban Design Critic. E-mail: jking@sfchronicle.com. Twitter: @johnkingsfchron THE EXAMINER'S WEEKLY GUIDE TO SAN FRANCISCO HOMES

ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT | SUNDAY, JUNE 3, 2012







For more information on our featured property, see Ted Bartlett & Tina Bartlett Hinckley's ad on page 3.

LUURL HETT

# Port moves to settle America's Cup lawsuit

By Dan Schreiber S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

Organizers of the America's Cup regatta are near the finish line of San Francisco's complicated political obstacle course, but there's still a pending lawsuit — which if not settled could delay plans to build race facilities on the waterfront.

The City's Port Commission voted Tuesday to settle the suit, which was brought against The City and the Port of San Francisco by a group called Waterfront Watch, for what it saw as inadequacy in the America's Cup project's environmental analysis. Just days after the lawsuit was filed, race organizers — led by Oracle CEO Larry Ellison — scrapped a sweeping plan to fix The City's ailing waterfront piers in exchange for lucrative long-term development rights.

The draft settlement, which now moves to the Board of Supervisors for approval, requires The City to provide \$150,000 for the U.S. Geological Survey to do a multi-year bird study and \$75,000 for Waterfront Watch attorneys' fees. In exchange, a consortium of groups -including the Sierra Club, the Golden Gate Audubon Society and the Telegraph Hill Dwellers — will not be allowed to further challenge race preparations, including the America's Cup Village at the northeast waterfront's Pier 27, which is slated to eventually become The City's primary cruise ship terminal.

Plaintiff and former Supervisor



#### **Coming together**

Oracle Racing received more pieces to its 72-foot catamaran Tuesday for next summer's America's Cup. The main element of the wingsail and the catamaran were unloaded and trucked to Team Oracle headquarters at Pier 80. — Staff report

Aaron Peskin said the tumultuous unraveling of a deal for race organizers to invest more than \$100 million in piers in exchange for 66-year rights to develop nearby parcels ended up creating a better deal for race organizers and for The City. The settlement also involves the official elimination of a large water-borne "Jumbotron" that was in the original plans for the regatta's finals, which are coming to San Francisco in late summer 2013.

"The parties have worked well in the settlement to improve the event and make it better," Peskin said.

6-13 - 26 13

na ba:



We're not done with pension reform in S.F.

ith the overwhelming voter endorsement of pension reforms in San Jose and San Diego, folks here in San Francisco might be thinking, "Thank goodness we passed

our own reform

— Proposition C

— last November."

Well, as was pointed out in this column and in public statements by Jeff Adachi and even mayoral candidate Joanna Rees, Prop. C was founded on the fanciful notion that we could continue to

assume a 7.75 percent return on pension fund investments.

When New York City considered lowering its expected investment return rate, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said, "The actuary is supposedly going to lower the assumed reinvestment rate from an absolutely hysterical, laughable 8 percent to a totally indefensible 7 or 7.5 percent." Private companies use an average of 4.8 percent return.

Earlier this year, CalPERS, the nation's largest public-pension fund, reduced its expected return rate from 7.75 percent to 7.5 percent, although the agency's staff had recommended lowering the rate to 7.25 percent.

In December of last year, just a month after Prop. C passed, the San Francisco Employees' **Spare change:** Expected returns on pension investments

could drop lower, leading San Franciscans back to the polls for future reform.

Retirement System lowered its expected investment return rate from 7.75 percent to 7.5 percent.

According to retire-

ment board member Victor Makras, lowering the return rate to 7.5 percent results in a \$25 million increase in pension obligations in fiscal year 2012-13. With Prop. C in place, employee contributions are projected to increase by \$40 million, which is nothing to sneeze at. But the massive savings predicted by Prop. C's proponents — \$40 million to \$50 million in 2012-13 — appears to have been undercut by the recent reality check.

The percentage of total employee payroll that The City will have to contribute to the pension fund actually went up this year (!!!) from 18.1 percent to 20.7 percent. And we'll still be paying \$405 million in pension costs and \$173 million in retiree health care costs in 2012-13, for a total of about \$40 million more than last year.

Before you know it, San Francisco may have to take pension reform back to the ballot box.

#### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS REVIEW



#### Warriors puns a slam-dunk

At Tuesday's Board of Supervisors meeting, the supes unanimously passed a resolution allowing the Office of Economic and Workforce Development to begin negotiating for a Warriors arena. The hearing was surprisingly uneventful but for the attempts by government nerds to demonstrate knowledge of professional basketball. "This is the opening tipoff." said Ken Rich of the Office of Economic and Workforce Development, describing the fact that this is only the beginning of the process of developing the site. Later, after local public crooner Walter Paulson treated the room to a song about the Warriors, Supervisor David Chiu complimented him with, "Slam dunk singing, Walter."

6 - 14 - 2012



#### Waterfront views vs. luxury condos

Later the board considered a development of condominiums near The Embarcadero at 8 Washington St. This is the most recent of several hearings on the matter wherein people who want to protect their fabulous waterfront views and tennis courts get to rail about the proposed luxury development. (It ain't exactly David versus Goliath.) That the developer will be giving \$11 million to The City for affordable housing was not enough for supervisors like David Campos and David Chiu, who were hung up on the amount of profit that the project would yield. Apparently when determining the amount to extort from local construction projects, the question isn't, "What do we need?" it is, "What have you got?" \$\mathcal{C} - |4 - 20|2|\$

#### LUUAL RENO



Game on: Opponents of a plan to install artificial turf and lighting at the soccer fields at the Beach Chalet want the turf installed at West Sunset Playground instead.

# Turf foes plan appeal

By Carolyn Copeland Special to The S.F. Examiner

Groups opposed to an artificial turf project at the Beach Chalet soccer fields announced Monday that they will appeal the project to the Board of Supervisors.

The Recreation and Park Commission and the Planning Commission on May 24 approved replacing the grass fields in Golden Gate Park with synthetic turf and adding lights to the playing area.

On Monday, community groups that oppose the project proposed to renovate the Beach Chalet soccer fields with living grass, improved drainage and gopher nets, though they do not recommend any lighting — a plan called the "hybrid alternative." Additionally, they propose that the lights and synthetic turf be placed at West Sunset Playground, which is located about eight blocks south of Golden Gate Park.

"It's all about location and protecting the habitat and beauty of Golden Gate Park," said Katherine Howard, leader of SF Ocean Edge. "Everyone deserves to be able to see the nature at the park without it being lit up like 'Star Wars,"

The playing fields at West Sunset Playground are scheduled to be renovated as part of the 2012 Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond. Moving the artificial turf project will cost approximately the same amount and will increase the number of playing fields at West Sunset from four to six, according to Richard Drury, the attorney for the community groups that oppose the Beach Chalet project.

"The City is going to be spending about the same amount of money either way, so I don't understand why they would draw a line in the sand and say that the artificial turf has to be at Beach Chalet," Drury said.

Rec and Park has said the project at the Beach Chalet fields will increase the amount of time the fields are available.

"Right now, Beach Chalet is closed on Mondays and several times throughout the year," said Rec and Park spokeswoman Sarah Ballard. "The Beach Chalet project goes a long way to increase play time since you can play on the artificial turf in the rain and the field will be lit up at night."

ccopeland@sfexaminer.com

Development challenge: A 134-unit condominium development on prime waterfront property across the street from the Ferry Building won the backing of the Board of Supervisors Tuesday - ending one battle and expected to start another.

Opponents have threatened to stop the project by referendum and/or lawsuits.

The controversial project at 8 Washington St., covering 3.2 acres, will include luxury condominiums, parking, a health club and a public park.

To win board approval, the developer, Pacific Waterfront Partners led by Simon Snellgrove and Alicia Allbin, agreed to kick in \$11 million to the city's affordable housing fund - \$2 million more than required by law - and to turn over the health club's pool a couple of hours a week for cityrun swim lessons for low-income kids. In addition, a 50-cent surcharge will be levied on vehicles that use the public parking lot, with the proceeds used for street-scape and transit improvements.

"It's great news; we're very happy," Snellgrove said after the vote.

The board approved the project on an 8-3 vote, with Supervisors David Chiu, David Campos and John Avalos opposed.

Opponents on the board and in the public have listed a number of concerns, among them the height, the bulk, the loss of the existing Golden Gateway swim and tennis club, the obstruction of views for some residents and the amount of

parking. Critics also said they should provide more funding for affordable housing and community benefits.

- Rachel Gordon

Turf wars: Opponents of the plan to replace shabby grass with synthetic turf and new lights to Golden Gate Park's Beach Chalet soccer fields filed an appeal with the Board of Supervisors Tuesday.

SF Ocean Edge and other neighborhood and environmental groups held a City Hall press conference prior to filing the appeal, arguing that an environmental impact report certified by the San Francisco **Planning Commission last** month failed to consider many environmental impacts and project alternatives.

Attorney Richard Drury,

representing SF Ocean Edge and several other groups, said the city refused to consider a "hybrid alternative," proposed by opponents, which would renovate fields at West Sunset Playground with artificial turf and lights while preserving grass at Beach Chalet.

Recreation and Park officials have said that the addition of turf and lights will triple the amount of playing time on the 7

acres of fields.

"The lights aren't on all night. This is not ripping up Golden Gate Park. It's simply a different playing surface," turf supporter Po Bronson said.

6-13-2012 - Neal J. Riley

E-mail: cityinsider@ sfchronicle.com Twitter: @SFCityInsider

### City kids deserve a natural GG Park

To the letter writer from San Bruno: The 7 "measly acres" you refer to actually belong to the taxpayers of San Francisco and not to a San Bruno resident ("Small Golden Gate Park patch a big deal for families,"

Letters, Wednesday).

The City has more to offer children than just soccer. Great libraries, nine public swimming pools, a playground in every neighborhood, at least 60 soccer fields, numerous basketball gyms, after-school programs and lots of affordable summer camps — but we also want children to experience nature, wildlife and a great dark sky to view the stars.

All the groups who are against plastic turf and 60-foot stadium lights want children to play soccer, but we want to keep the Golden Gate Park

soccer fields natural.

I have researched San Bruno parks, and it looks like the letter-writer can find 7 "measly acres" in which to put in plastic grass and

Ellen Leaf San Francisco

#### **Fields need renovations**

lights in his backyard, not mine.

After reading the letter regarding the Beach Chalet soccer field project, I couldn't agree more with the letter writer. Renovations are long overdue. As a teen in the 1970s, I played junior high, varsity high school and travel-team soccer for the Olympic Club. It seemed like I spent nine months a year out there.

#### TO ADD YOUR VOICE

We give preference to letters containing fewer than 150 words. Please include name, phone number and city of residence.

By email letters@sfexaminer.com

By mail Editorial Page Editor The San Francisco Examiner 71 Stevenson St., Second Floor San Francisco, CA 94105

By fax

(415) 359-2766

#### CONTACT US

News

(415) 359-2754 newstips@sfexaminer.com

Sports

(415) 359-2637 sports@sfexaminer.com

Features

(415) 359-2727 features@sfexaminer.com

6-11-2012

I hated playing goalie, as the dirt pits in front of the goals were always filled with rocks and broken glass. We also had countless plays altered by the uneven grass and sprinkler heads, which caused twisted ankles and scraped knees.

The City did an amazing job of reconditioning the Crocker Amazon fields, and now it's time for the same treatment at the Beach Chalet.

Paul J. Weber San Francisco

#### Keep fake turf out of park

Your San Bruno reader has his facts wrong. Seven expansive areas behind the Beach Chalet are already fenced in and used only for soccer. The issue is whether they shall be covered with toxic plastic, effectively asphalting this enormous expanse, and lit up at night (so that adult teams from Marin may use city resources).

This is a loss leader.

Taxpayers will be on the hook for the replacement turf. Why is it that grass cannot be maintained and the absurd plan to put in stands and towering lights scrapped?

But that would make too much sense. Had the Presidio been city property, we would have an art museum under construction there now. We are truly the city that cannot say no to idiocies — whether it be to park privatization or the surrealistically absurd Central Subway.

Harry S. Pariser San Francisco

#### South Bay needs BART

Wednesday's pedestrian death near the grade-separated San Antonio Road Caltrain tracks was the ninth death this year, 25th death since January 2011 and 185th death since January 1995.

What will it take to get politicians and residents impressed enough to start the 10 years of work to replace the outdated, deadly Caltrain from our midst with quieter, safer, more frequent, low-profile BART for the last 28 miles to connect Millbrae with the future Santa Clara BART station, and the rest of the Bay Area, with this real one-seat rail solution?

How many more must die?

Omar Chatty

# Bed, breakfast & bureaucracy

an Francisco's Airbnb, an online service for short-term housing in private residences, is a success story: Since its launch in 2008, the company has booked more than 5 million overnight stays. But in San Francisco, at least, it's experiencing some growing pains.

Everyone from the San Francisco Tenants' Union to the San Francisco Apartment Association has a

bone to pick with the



liability,
legal, and
safety
elements
that
come
with
the fact
of San
Franciscans sub-

letting their spaces for profit. So it's predictable that San Francisco's Board of Supervisors President David Chiu is considering legislation to address the trend. His main concern seems to be whether Airbnb is giving landlords a way to take rental housing off the long-term market in favor of short-term tourism, but his staff says they're still working on the details.

Airbnb says it's gotten very few

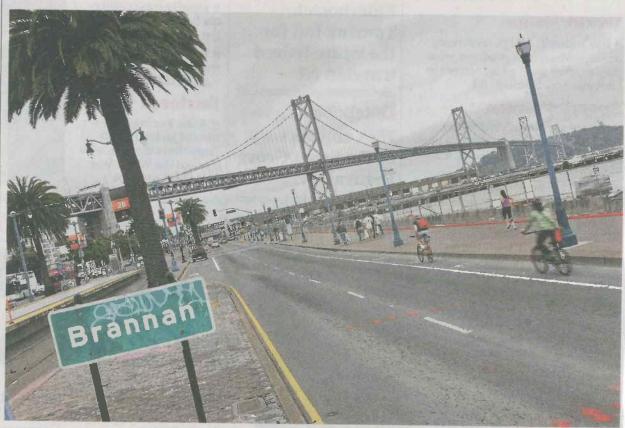
complaints since its founding, but that will change. As its service grows, Airbnb will have to learn how to engage with local communities and address these kinds of complaints.

But San Francisco officials need to take advantage of this opportunity to look at how their own practices are affecting the short-term housing market, too.

There is absolutely no good reason, for instance, why San Francisco's process for residents to get a bed-and-breakfast license should be as expensive and complicated as it is.

An application process that costs thousands of dollars and frequently takes years to complete is a process that invites residents to flout the law. If city officials are serious about asking for more cooperation from would-be sublettors, then they need to be serious about making it possible for them to comply.

# Asians' immigration began where Brannan Street ends



/ue Wu / The Chronicle

The point where Brannan Street meets the bay was San Francisco's first entryway for U.S.-bound Asians.

The crowds strolling up the Embarcadero heading for the Giants-Dodgers game Monday at AT&T park will be passing right by one of the most historic places in San Francisco without knowing it.

On the waterfront, where Brannan Street ends, is the place where Asian immigration to the United States began. Asians started coming to America in significant numbers in the California Gold Rush, or just after, and now, according to a Pell Research Center report released last week, Asian Americans are the fastest-growing immigrant group in the country. They also have the highest incomes, and are the best educated of any immigrants to the United States. It was page one news: a major shift in the American immigrant story

Nearly all those first immigrants were from China, and they landed first in San Francisco at the Pacific Mail Steamship Co.'s terminal at the Brannan Street wharf. It is ground zero for the Asian experience in the United States.

#### An easy spot to miss

It is easy to walk by this place and not notice. There is no sign, no marker, nothing. There used to be a tall pillar on the Embarcadero sidewalk describing the significance of the spot, but a vehicle hit it; it was taken away and not replaced.

All that is about to change because the Port of San Francisco is ready to start work on a brand-new waterfront park extending from the sidewalk out into the bay — a wedge-shaped open space with a huge lawn, benches to sit on and interpretative panels to explain the history of the place.

Let's hope the panels explain the

history truly. It is not a pretty story.

In 1852 alone, 25,000 Chinese came to California, drawn by the Gold Rush and the chance for a new life. By the early 1850s, it was clear that the white gold seekers did not want competition. John Bigler, governor of California, declared the Chinese "a menace." He advocated an immigration tax on Chinese — \$50 a person, a fortune in those days. The Legislature passed the foreign miners tax, enforced apparently only against Asian or Latino miners. That was only the beginning.

By 1875, according to historians T.H. Watkins and Roger Olmsted, there were close to 100,000 Chinese in California. Most of them were young men, ready and willing to work at any job available.

In San Francisco, Watkins and Omsted wrote, 20 percent of Sar Francisco's workforce was Chinese. There was also an economic depression, with thousands of other men out of work. Wages were dropping. It was a volatile mix.

On June 23, 1877 — Saturday was the anniversary — a huge mob attacked Chinese businesses and headed for the symbol of Chinese immigration, the Pacific Mail wharf at the foot of Brannan Street. They tried to burn the pier. They failed, but four people were killed in the riot that followed.

The better people in the city were outraged, especially since the anti-Chinese faction also wanted to hang the rich. But Asian immigrants had few friends. By 1882, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion act, designed to keep Asian workers out of this country. Four years later, in New York, the Statue of Liberty was dedicated. In 1903 the famous in-

scription "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free" was added to the statue. It was clear these words did not apply to Asian immigrants.

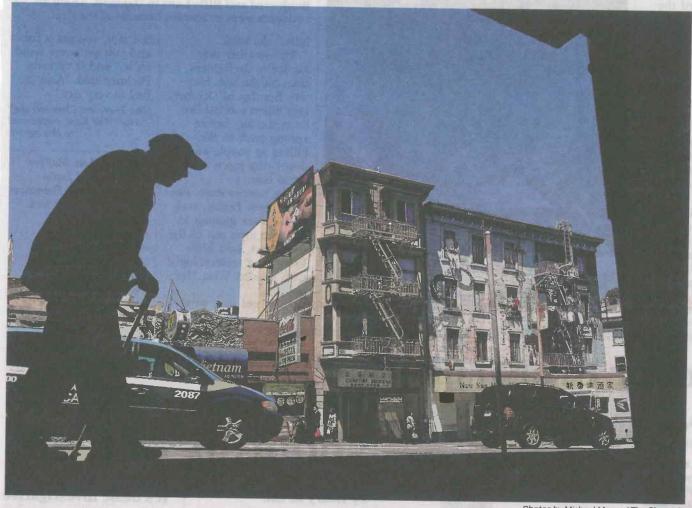
#### Final docks destroyed

The immigration station at the foot of Brannan Street was moved to Angel Island in 1910; new piers were built, and life on the waterfront moved on. Pier 36, the last of the docks at Brannan Street, was torn down — demolition was wrapped up only a week ago.

San Francisco has changed. The mayor, the president of the City Planning Commission, the president of the Port Commission, four members of the Board of Supervisors and a third of the city's population are Asian American. An amazing story. And it all began where Brannan Street meets the bay.

Carl Nolte is a San Francisco Chronicle columnist. His column appears every Sunday. E-mail: cnolte@sfchronicle.com





Photos by Michael Macor / The Chronicle

Broadway at Columbus would be at one end of the proposed area that would get trees and wider medians.

# Broadway's new leaf

Some on busy street hope for a strip of trees and medians

By John Wildermuth

Trees? On Broadway?

San Francisco's tawdriest boulevard is in line for a kid- and senior-friendly upgrade as Chinatown residents look to set their piece of Broadway apart from the strip clubs, bars and barkers of North Beach.

It's a pedestrian safety issue as much as anything else, with too many drivers treating Broadway as a freeway, said Alison Collins, whose twins are second-graders at Jean Parker Elementary School at 840 Broadway.

Broadway continues on C3



Pedestrians cross Broadway at Stockton. The wider medians could serve as a resting place for those who need more time to cross the street.

### BAY AREA

# A strip of trees on Broadway?

Broadway from page C1

"There are children walking to and from school every day, with lots of grandparents dropping kids off and picking them up in the afternoon," she said. "I'm happy the city wants to make Broadway look more like a neighborhood street."

The target area for the improvements is the section of Broadway between Columbus Avenue and the Broadway Tunnel, which can turn into a speedway during parts of the day.

"This project has to be a high priority," said Cindy Wu, a member of the city Planning Commission and planning manager for the Chinatown Community Development Center, which is working with the city Planning Department, the Department of Public Works and the Municipal Transportation Agency in the improvement effort. "We need to slow cars and make the area safer for pedestrians."

#### Densely populated

While Chinatown is a major tourist destination, it's also the most densely populated urban area west of Manhattan, with 15,000 people living in a 20-square-block area. Few of them own cars, 39 percent are older than 60 and studies have found that 41 percent walk to work, which leads to plenty of congestion on



#### "I'm happy the city wants to make Broadway look more like a neighborhood street."

Alison Collins, whose twins are second-graders at Jean Parker Elementary School there

the narrow sidewalks. A safety study done by the development center found that more than 9,000 pedestrians used the intersection of Broadway and Stockton Street between 10 a.m. and noon on a typical week-

The three targeted blocks of Broadway include not only Parker School and a nearby infants' day care facility, but also senior housing developments. Combining children and the elderly with fast-moving traffic on a busy, wide

street is a recipe for disaster, said Board of Supervisors President David Chiu, who represents Chinatown and North Beach.

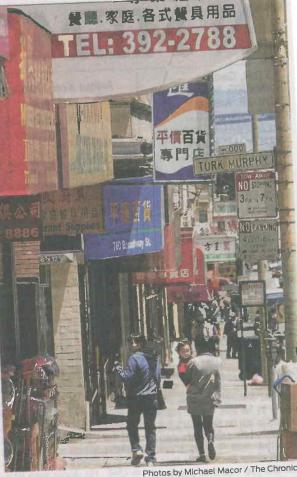
"We need to calm the traffic and make Broadway a more livable street," Chiu said Wednesday at a public meeting on the plan at Chinatown's International Hotel. "We want to create a real community without all those cars speeding out of the tunnel."

The project now calls for converting the narrow concrete median that

runs from the tunnel and Powell Street into a wider, tree-lined island that can provide a refuge for children and seniors who need more time to cross the street, said Lily Langlois, the city's lead planner for the improvement effort

Trees will be planted on newly extended barriers in front of the Parker School and the day care center across the street, while crosswalks will be widened and made more visible at Powell and Stockton streets, as well as at Grant Avenue. Visibility will be improved by eliminating some parking spaces by the intersections and widening the sidewalks there.

Lighting improvements, benches, landscaping and public art



The area around Broadway and Stockton, above and left, is often bustling with pedestrians.

also are part of the plan, Langlois added.

"We're trying to create a gateway to the neighborhood, to provide a unique feel that lets drivers know they're entering a real community," she added.

#### Funding sought

The problem, as always, is money. While the city found the funding for upgrades of three other sections of Broadway since 2005, the \$5 million to \$7 million it would take for this final round of improvements isn't there.

City officials, along with community groups, are looking for outside funding and are hopeful the cash is out there.

But even without the money, the newly completed plan is a major step toward providing Chinatown with safety improvements that have been studied and studied some more since 1994, said John Rahaim, the city's planning director.

"No one wants to give money until they can see a plan," he said. "Now we have the plan."

John Wildermuth is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: jwildermuth@ sfchronicle.com

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

6-15-2012 SF CHRONICLE

### No cars on Market? Uh-oh

Reading your story "Fewer vehicles, more street life considered for Market Street" (June 20) reminded me of a similar effort in my hometown of Fresno nearly 50 years ago, when the central business district's main thoroughfare, Fulton Street, was remade into a pedestrian mall.

It came with disastrous consequences.

I watched the thriving downtown of my youth wither and die as a well-meaning, but misguided, vision of inner-city revitalization was implemented, causing most businesses to fail or flee downtown, blocked from customers who could no longer reach them by car.

We now know that a dead city center affects the entire region, including encouraging sprawl, a sluggish economy, poverty and crime, but in spite of officials finally pushing to have the mall removed and the street restored, the damage had been done. Shrinking budgets don't help.

I urge everyone interested in this Market Street idea to examine the history of pedestrian malls in the United States and take note that most have not fared well. I hope, too, that my new home in the city isn't jeopardized by those who would throw the baby out with the bathwater in their zeal for urban renewal.

Mykel Cardoza, San Francisco

Unhappy in North
Beach: Digging is finally
under way for the 1.6-mile
Central Subway from
South of Market to Chinatown, but the fun won't
stop at the end of the line.

Millions of dollars will be spent to dig from the subway's end point at Stockton and Washington streets all the way to North Beach — including tearing up a half-block of pavement alongside Washington Square Park.

Muni officials said the extra six blocks of digging are needed to accommodate the "retrieval shaft" for the giant tunnel-boring machine.

The city has yet to receive the money for most of the big Central Subway dig, but it does have enough to start relocating utility lines, which means tearing up a section of Columbus Avenue.

"But no more than one lane of traffic will be closed at a time, and all lanes will be open at the end of each work day," said Muni spokesman **Paul Rose**.

Neighbors, however, are fuming, saying Muni ignored less-expensive and less-intrusive options.

"We were never told about this," said Marc Bruno, a North Beach resident who has been spearheading the protest. "And had we been told, we would have had a chance to ask some reasonable questions." 6 -17-2017

### Central Subway work, traffic snarls set to begin

Insider from page C1

walls that will stretch across Fourth Street at the site of the Yerba Buena/Moscone Station. began last week.

In the coming months, construction of headwalls will take place on Fourth Street between

Folsom and Howard streets and on Stockton Street between Market and Geary streets. Workers will also drill holes to monitor ground stability and inject a mud-like grout into the soil where needed. Utility relocation work in the Union Square area will continue through the summer.

Of course, several Muni lines and streets will be affected by the construction. The 30-Stockton and 45-Union/ Stockton lines will continue the new routes they moved to in Januarv: the 8X/8AX/8BX-**Bayshore Express and** 

91-Owl will be re-routed in July, and the temporary 8 shuttle route will be eliminated. Passengers on the 38/38L-Geary routes should be prepared for delays in the Union Square area.

During construction of the launch box, at least two lanes on Fourth

Street will stay open at all times, which, of course, means that two will often be closed. All ramps to Interstate 80 will remain open during the day but could be closed at night. Needless to say, delays are expect-

ed and drivers are advised to steer clear of the area. Parking restrictions will also be in effect, and the sidewalk will be closed on one side of the street at a time. Similarly, work on the

Fourth Street headwalls will close two lanes between Folsom and Howard streets at times as well as sidewalks on the west side of the street. Access to Clementina Street between Fourth and Fifth streets will be restricted at times. Parking will be restricted in the area.

Around Union Square, detours will stay in place but taxis, Muni buses and tour buses probably will be banned from Stockton Street between Market and Post, where private vehicles are already prohibited.

Meanwhile, MTA officials are still awaiting word from the Federal Transit Administration on an anticipated federal funding guarantee worth \$942 million, the bulk of the \$1.6 billion cost. But Paul Rose, MTA spokesman, said the agency expects the federal agency to approve the agreement this month, sending it on to the secretary of transportation's office and then to Congress. It's expected to be approved in early fall.

Critics, including former Supervisors Quentin Kopp and Aaron Peskin, have argued that the project costs too much and would be underused. They're campaigning to kill the federal funding, and have urged the MTA to stop preliminary construction while the money is still

uncertain.

6-12-2013

E-mail citvinsider@ sfchronicle.com Twitter: @SFCityInsider.

### **Central Subway** work, traffic snarls starting this week

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency is still waiting for the guaranteed federal funding that will allow it to start digging the 1.6-mile Central Subway tunnel to Chinatown, but that's not

slowing major construction to prepare for the excavation.

And that will mean a summer (and beyond) full of transit and traffic detours, delays and headaches.

On Tuesday, crews from jointventure contractor Barnard Impregilo Healy will start digging up nearly a square block on Fourth Street between Bryant and Harri-

son streets and building a "launch box," the point at which two tunnel boring machines will start chewing the twin-bore tunnels next year.

**INSIDER** 

Preliminary work on headwalls, 100-foot-deep Insider continues on C2

# Chinese cash may fuel housing

Foreign bank could supply \$1.7B for new developments in S.F.

By Dan Schreiber S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

Stagnant interest from American investors in funding the construction of 20,000 new San Francisco homes has driven developer Lennar to a Chinese investment bank in search of \$1.7 billion in startup capital.

The Miami-based housing giant is in negotiations with the China Development Bank to start construction on two city-approved redevelopment projects on former Navy bases — Hunters Point and Treasure Island — a company spokesman confirmed Monday.

While China has funded housing, roads, commercial buildings and other infrastructure projects across the globe, large undertakings have been focused on the developing world and are mostly unprecedented in the United States. Chinese foreign investment also is often carried out by roving Chinese laborers, a practice that would face scrutiny in San Francisco, where city contracts require a percentage of workers to be local.

Both of the plans rely on California infrastructure financing programs that allow San Francisco agencies to use state bonds to fund part of the construction based on repayment from future property tax revenue. But that money will cover only a fraction of the two projects' combined price tag, estimated at more than \$10 billion.

Tim Paulson, executive director of the San Francisco Labor Council, said while any investment to jumpALL COURTESY RENDERANCS

Overseas money: Skittish
American investors have forced
developer Lennar to seek
\$1.7 billion in capital from a
Chinese bank for proposed
housing developments on
Treasure Island, above, and
Hunters Point, right.

start building projects is welcome news for the ailing construction industry, he'd prefer to see more confidence coming from American companies.

"I'm extremely disappointed that they had to go outside the United States," Paulson said. "I just think it's incredibly ironic that the Chinese financial institutions are more interested in jobs and housing than American corporations."

Paulson added that strictly bottom-line thinking among American

investors appears to be forcing some to seek out foreign sources of capital.

"They don't really care about American workers and American families," he said.

Having elected The City's first Chinese-American mayor in November, San Francisco also has a history of efforts to build economic relations with the rising superpower. The China SF program, launched in 2008, aims to help Chinese companies connect with business investment and relocation opportunities in San Francisco.

Some of the same goals are held by the San Francisco Center for Economic Development, which counts former Mayor Willie Brown among its leaders and has been keenly interested in seeing the Hunters Point project come to fruition. The program boasts that the Bay Area attracts 36 percent of the nation's total venture capital investments — both foreign and domestic.

6-27-dschreiber@sfexaminer.com

### Chinese bank looks to finance 2 major S.F. developments

ChinaSF, the publicprivate partnership that has been luring Chinese businesses and investment to San Francisco for the past three years, has helped haul in the city's biggest fish yet.

That would be the China Development Bank, which is looking to invest up to \$1.7 billion in the Treasure Island and Hunters Point Shipyard projects.

The money, in the form of a loan, would go primarily to Lennar Urban, the projects' lead developer. Lennar and the governmentsupported Chinese bank were brought together with the help of China-SF; the two have been in discussions for sever-

THE BOTTOM LINE By Andrew S. Ross

-27-201

al months.

While the deal isn't complete and no one would comment publicly on the negotiations, the two sides have signed a memorandum of understand-

The planned redevelopment of the 143-yearold Hunters Point Shipyard and the adjoining

Ross continues on D3

### Chinese bank looks to fund 2 big projects

Ross from page D1

Candlestick Point will include approximately 10,500 new homes, a third of them priced at below-market rates as required by the city; 1.1 million square feet of retail and art-related space; and a U.N.-sponsored Global Compact

Sustainability Center. Plans for Treasure Island include 8,000 new residential units, a third of them at belowmarket rates; 240,000 square feet of office, commercial and retail space; three hotels; and 300 acres of parks and

open space. San Francisco real estate developer Wilson Meany, which is partnering with Lennar on the Treasure Island project, also has been involved in the China negotiations.

Both projects have been eyed by Chinese investors for some time. Nathan Williams, who heads ChinaSF's Beijing office, told me during my March trip to China that state-owned companies had expressed considerable interest in the city developments. "There's a ton of

interest in project fi-

nancing," he said, "They're definitely interested in infrastructure investments in San Francisco.

As part of the deal, another state-owned company, China Railway Construction Corp., would be hired as a general contractor, responsible for building roads, bridges and other infrastructure at both projects, sources in San Francisco confirmed.

The Wall Street Journal, which posted a story on the negotiations on its website Monday evening, noted that Chinese invest-

ments in foreign projects are often conditional on using Chinese developers and contractors — and Chinese labor. The latter is a definite nonstarter in San Francisco - something ChinaSF presumably counseled the Chinese investors about and in fact local labor unions are reportedly on board.

"Organized labor has had a seat at the table from the start, the whole nine yards," said an industry source, referring to the Hunters Point and Treasure Island projects.

I asked Mayor Ed Lee's office, which has been pushing the Lennar projects forward, if he was aware of the reported Chinese investment.

"The mayor's office doesn't have information about the specifics, but Hunters Point and Treasure Island are extremely important projects for the city and will get built," said the

mayor's director of communication, Christine Falvey.

Falvey confirmed that Lee is scheduled to make his first trip as mayor to China in November. Might a signing ceremony pertaining to two of the city's biggest urban redevelopments be on the agenda?

#### M&R from page C1

cost of a round-trip airfare at anywhere from \$1,500 to \$2,000.

City attorney's spokesman Matt Dorsey said it was premature to talk about buying a ticket because "Ms. Lopez has yet to file a declaration in the case or even indicated a willingness to testify."

Mirkarimi is facing possible ouster from his job after having pled guilty to a misdemeanor domestic violence charge involving a New Year's Eve fight with Lopez.

Such a deal: The Chinese government has singled out San Francisco's former Navy facilities at Treasure Island and Hunters Point to be

the beachhead for a big-time break into the U.S. construction market.

But rather than being upset by the move, local labor is embracing it.

Under terms of a deal being negotiated, sources say, the government-controlled China Development Bank Corp. would lend \$1.7 billion to home builder Lennar Corp. and its partners to kick-start millions of square feet of shopping and 10,500 homes at Hunters Point and 8,000 housing units and retail space on Treasure Island.

In return, the Chinese want China Railway Construction Corp., which recently opened a U.S. headquarters in San Francisco, to manage a big portion of the project's construction — starting with the roads, bridges and other infrastructure.

One of the key negotiating points is San Francisco's local hire labor policy, which requires both projects to use union labor and to hire locally.

"The question is, are these guys willing to live with these terms?" said one source familiar with the negotiations.

Mayor **Ed Lee** has made it clear that he wants the city to be a leader in attracting foreign investment in the United States, and we're told he's been meeting with China Railway officials and encouraging their participation.

Some local labor lead-

ers were very vocal about their displeasure that the Bay Bridge eastern span is largely a Chinese production. But when it comes to the San Francisco projects, they say that if Wall Street isn't willing to open its purse strings to Lennar, then maybe China is the way to go.

"It's just incredible that Lennar has to go to China to invest in American jobs and housing," said **Tim Paulson**, head of the San Francisco Labor Council. "It just goes to show that the American financial institutions, for whatever reason, are unwilling to invest in America."

6-27-2012 Angel deal: As they jointly push to do away

#### **More Cliff House changes**

Carolyn Copeland's article about the wind turbine planned for the Cliff House ("Wind turbine planned for historic restaurant," Sunday) neglects to mention the most recent, comprehensive renovation of this structure just a few years ago, which replaced its popular, more affordable and user-friendly restaurant with the current upscale ones, and relocated its adjacent vintage and much-loved Musee Mecanique from the Outer Sunset neighborhood of its origin to Fisherman's Wharf.

An ocean-facing wind turbine sounds like a very good "new" tourist magnet; boarding up half of the building's east-facing windows along the Great Highway to accommodate the pricey new burger joint (replacing a former charming gift shop) have already created an eyesore.

Go for green — with the caveat: Let the blades blend well!

Biana Scott San Francisco

#### Let voters decide turf war

I think my point was missed ("Turf war all about location," Letters, Friday) by a recent letter-writer.

As to "toxic fields" being implemented at parks, I knew nothing about the plastic fields at Crocker Amazon Park until they were already in, A friend who can see the stadium lights from his front room knew nothing about the plastic fields there until they were installed. The only community that was informed about the Beach Chalet plans were the soccer players. I never knew about it until I was given information at a Sunday Streets event.

If you think everyone wants this stadium complex in Golden Gate Park, let's bring it to the tax-paying voters. This issue is too important for all of The City, not just a few people who play soccer. Remember, there are many alternatives.

Ellen Leaf San Francisco

#### AC bus saved BART rider

I know many BART riders such as myself got some disturbing news at our respective BART stations Thursday morning due to the fire that necessitated the closure of West Oakland station.

I was among the lucky ones who were able to get to MacArthur station, where AC Transit buses were waiting to take us across the Bay Bridge. Everyone sighed a sense of relief and I would say that it was a good effort to get us to work on time.

Way to start the day on an otherwise bleak morning.

John Tanwani Antioch



**Pilot project:** The Cliff House at Ocean Beach will have a wind turbine mounted atop its observation deck as soon as July for a three-year trial under a proposal.

# Wind turbine planned for historic restaurant

By Carolyn Copeland Special to The S.F. Examiner

A proposal to install a wind turbine at the historic Cliff House at the northwestern edge of San Francisco is being praised by some for its environmental benefits, but questioned by others for the aesthetics.

The National Park Service, which owns the Cliff House, has proposed installing an approximately 31-foot-tall wind turbine on the observation deck of the building. The turbine would allow the site to generate its own electricity by using the wind off of the Pacific Ocean. It is expected to produce enough energy to power the Cliff House Gift Shop.

If the park service approves the turbine, it would operate for a three-year test period. The turbine would be almost 9 feet taller than the restaurant, according to NPS.

Installation would start as early as July 1 and would be completed within one week. A wind turbine was proposed instead of a windmill because it is noiseless, turns slower and generates more power, the NPS said.

"I think a wind turbine is a great idea," said Corey Yun, 18, one of he people visiting the area who was asked about the project. "I would encourage any building around the area to push to get one installed."

But the idea of a wind turbine at the historic site may not sit well with everyone.

"My only concern is that the turbine would be distracting," said Jinny Bender, 31. "I've seen those things before and they kind of stick out."

The historic aspect of the building also was raised.

"The building already has an old, beautiful look to it," said Ariana Tottenhoff, 15. "I'm sure the amount of energy a wind turbine would save wouldn't be worth je pord in that."



GODOFREDO VASQUEZ/ THE S.F. EXAMINE

Others say the plan is good if the turbine is placed out of sight.

"As long as it's out of the way and inconspicuous and doesn't block the view, I don't see how it would cause any harm," said Michael Carr, 62.

A wind turbine engineer con-

I specialize in wind turbines and I think this will be very affective for San Francisco and a great piece to look at," said 29-year-old Victor Hernandez. "The problem would be that since it's going to be roughly about 31 feet tall, it can distract the sightseers from touring around the Cliff House. I believe it will be constructive."

The wind turbine is the latest effort to make the Cliff House more environmentally friendly. In 2010, the Cliff House won the Carbon Cutter Award for installing green vent exhaust management and replacing its refrigerator gasket and evaporator fan motor.

The site has a long history in San Francisco, stretching back to 1863 when it was first constructed. The original structure was destroyed by a fire in 1894. The replacement building survived the 1906 earthquake, but burned down a year later. The third Cliff House opened in 1909. It draws more than 1 million visitors each year.

ccopeland@sfexaminer.com

Bryan Vo. special to The S.F. Examiner, vootributed to this report.

SAN FEARCISCO PROPOSITION B

# Coit to corral more revenue

Measure will direct revenue from site into upkeep of historic art

By Dan Schreiber S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

Voters have effectively told The City to pay more attention to deteriorating conditions at Coit Tower, as parks officials will now have to implement Proposition B — a policy to "prioritize" funds earned at the landmark for its upkeep and the maintenance of the historic murals housed there.

Recreation and Park Department officials and Mayor Ed Lee opposed the measure because they said it would impose undue restrictions on San Francisco's overall parks budget. Neighborhood groups, including the influential Telegraph Hill Dwellers, gathered signatures to qualify the measure for the ballot after anger grew over chips and gashes in the tower's Depression-era murals, along with troubling structural problems.

The neighborhood groups banded together to form the Protect Coit Tower Committee and crafted the somewhat openended policy that also includes a requirement to "strictly" limit private events at the 210-foot concrete structure. Proponents of Prop. B expressed concern that

fancy fundraising affairs — which are sporadically held at the tower — could hamper public access to the popular tourist site and contribute to damage problems.

In the midst of mail-in and early voting, the mayor announced that \$1.45 million in bond funds would be dedicated to fixing the building, in addition to \$250,000 the park department had already given to the Arts Commission for mural repairs. Rec and Park General Manager Phil Ginsburg said the department had plans all along to address the issues, although the Prop. B campaign may have sped the process along.

The proposition prevailed despite a television spot — released by the nonprofit San Francisco Parks Alliance — which presented The City's contention that the policy would be overly restrictive during the budgeting process. The fight to get Prop. B passed was led by Telegraph Hill Dwellers head Jon Golinger, who also garnered support from the descendents of Lillie Hitchcock Coit, the woman whose estate funded the tower's 1933 construction.

Ginsburg argued that the parks system leans heavily on revenuegenerating facilities such as Coit Tower and Candlestick Park, and the new requirements could force the closure of some of The City's other open spaces, particularly those in poorer neighborhoods.

dschreiber@sfexaminer.com



### **Construction boom** beyond Mid-Market

We can't say if Market Street will ever become "San Francisco's Champs-Élysées," as former Mayor Gavin Newsom once envisioned, but there are major changes afoot. And we're not just talking about Mid-Market, which has garnered much of the attention lately.

Further west, on the other side of Civic Center, a veritable construction



A residential complex with a Whole Foods is in the works at the former S&C Ford site. boom is taking place.

Last week, shoring and excavation work was being conducted at Market and Dolores streets, where S&C Ford once stood. In its place, by September of next year, will be an 82-unit residential complex anchored by a 30,000-square-foot Whole Foods.

Two months later, assuming construction remains on schedule, 113 new apartments, along with 5,500 square feet of retail space and an underground garage, will have been built at Market and Octavia streets, where a small retail center used to be.

One block away, at a former Union 76 gas station at Market and Buchanan, ground will be broken this month on another mixed-use

Ross continues on D9

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE AND SFGATE.COM | Sunday, June 17, 2012 | D9

BUSINESS The Chronicle with Bloomberg

# Construction boom beyond Mid-Market

Ross from page D1

development, this one featuring 115 apartments.

All told there are five projects, accounting for approximately 450 new rental units, under construction or in the groundbreaking stage on Market Street between Castro and Octavia.

"It's not near the size and scale of Mid-Market, but we're going to see a lot more people on the street, during the day and at night, which is really good for the area," said Dan Safier, president of San Francisco's Prado Group, which is developing the Market and Dolores project.

In particular, the relatively empty area between Dolores and Octavia "will become a much more significant hub of the neighborhood," said San Francisco Supervisor Scott Wiener, who represents the district. With the accompanying new streetscaping, "it will be much more walkable and vibrant."

With several more mixed-use projects in the planning and permit pipeline, Upper Market will have up to 1,500 new rental units in the next five years, says Peter Cohen, board member of the Duboce Triangle Neighborhood Association, which keeps close tabs on commercial development in the area. "And there'll be a lot of new retail coming online," he said.

CVS/pharmacy, which has one outlet on nearby Castro Street, is taking over a larger space at Market and Noe in early 2014. Add that to



An 82-unit residential complex anchored by a 30,000-square-foot Whole Foods is set to open by September 2013 at Market and Dolores streets.

its existing Market Street store, at Third Street, and a third, scheduled to open in August, at Market and Second.

Starbucks is seeking a permit to open up in a vacant storefront at Market and Sanchez streets. Another beverage chain, Los Angeles-based The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, has signed a letter of intent to open a store over the road from the future CVS/pharmacy, above Gold's Gym.

Bank of the West, meanwhile, is looking to open a 3,300-square-foot branch to fill what locals refer to as "the Hole-inthe Ground" — a 31-year-



Bank of the West wants to build a branch at Market and 16th streets, with 18 rental units above.

old vacant lot — at Market and 16th streets, the site of another mixedused development in progress. On the eastern

end of the strip, the San Francisco regional bank - owned by France's BNP Paribas - is scheduled to open a



Jason Henry / Special to The Chronicle

Last week, shoring and excavation was being done at the Market and Dolores site, shown in March.



At Octavia Street, 1844 Market will have 113 apartments, retail space and an underground garage.

"wealth management client center" at 555 Market St. in the Financial District next month.

However, the bank is getting pushback from residents concerned about the amount of "formula retail" entering the neighborhood. A permit hearing scheduled for last Thursday before the city's Planning Commission was put off until July 12.

As welcome as the developments on Upper Market are, said Cohen, there's also concern that rents, already formidably high, will increase even more and change the residential makeup of the neighborhood.

"One of the consequences may be further gentrification," he said. "I'm just offering a cautionary note."

Andrew S. Ross is a San Francisco Unronicie columnist. Blogging: www.sfgate.com/columns/ bottomline E-mail: bottomline@sfchronicle. com Twitter: @andrewsross Facebook page: sfg.ly/doACKM

# Supervisors must heed voter support for safer hospitals and CPMC project

By Steve Falk

an Francisco is close to moving The City's health care system into the 2ist century.

The City has completed the rebuild of Laguna Honda Hospital and has begun construction of a new General Hospital. Construction of the new Chinese Hospital has been approved. The UC San Francisco medical center is also under construction. And last month, with the support of Mayor Ed Lee, the California Pacific Medical Center received the approval of the Planning Commission to build two new seismically safe, state-of-the art hospitals at St. Luke's in the Mission and at Cathedral Hill on Van Ness Avenue. Now, all that stands between city residents and these two new world-class health care facilities is the Board of Super-

As the project awaits its final hearing at the board, a recent poll of more than 1,000 registered city voters should give our supervisors confidence in their support for the development. According to the poll, which was commissioned by the Alliance for Jobs and Sustainable Growth, nearly seven in 10 San Franciscans—or 69 percent of voters—support CPMC's hospital building plans and want to see the project move ahead.

Such strong support should come as no surprise for a development



Care: The California Pacific Medical Center wants to bring a modern hospital to Cathedral Hill on Van Ness Avenue.

that will double The City's number of seismically safe hospital beds and help ensure adequate capacity in case of a major emergency or natural disaster. The project will also inject \$2.5 billion into the local economy and create 1,500 new construction-related jobs.

Voters are pleased with more than just the safety and economic benefits of the project. According to the poll, voters strongly support the development agreement negotiated with The City that will provide \$1.1 billion in additional investment for transit, affordable housing, streetscape improvements and various social services. Eighty-five percent of voters polled support the hospital's commitment to hire local workers and fund community clinics. Eighty-two percent say they support CPMC's investment in public transportation and pedestrian-safety improvements. And 76 percent support the funding of affordable housing.

Voter support for the project is particularly high in odd-numbered districts up for election this November. For example, 74 percent of voters in District 11, 70 percent in District 3, 65 percent in District 1 and 62 percent in District 5 support the CPMC plan. Voter support is highest in District 6 (83 percent), District 7 (79 percent) and District 3 (70 percent).

The message is clear: Voters support CPMC and want to rebuild these hospitals for the 21st century. After a decade of discussion, debate and compromise, The City's departments, commissions, labor, business and community groups all agree on CPMC. The fate of our city's health care infrastructure now lies solely with the Board of Supervisors. When it comes time to vote, let's insist they make the right choice.

Co - T - 2012 Steve Falk is president and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce.

#### **LUCAL NEWS**



Hillside: The development, which would include 34 housing units, isn't a good fit for the neighborhood, some say. Others think it would be the perfect place for families.

# Residents clash over Forest Knolls proposal

By Ari Burack S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

A proposed new residential development in Forest Knolls has riled some neighbors who say it's unsuitable for the secluded neighborhood west of Mount Sutro.

The proposed San Francisco Overlook Development — a threebuilding, 34-unit project of duplexes and a townhouse, plus 68 parking spaces — would be perched on a steep hillside at the end of Crestmont Drive, offering sprawling views of The City but also standing out in a neighborhood of mainly single-family homes.

Sam Sobol of the Crestmont-Mt. Sutro Neighborhood Preservation Coalition, who has lived in his home up the hillside from the proposed development for about 25 years, said it just doesn't fit.

"It's really totally inappropriate for the neighborhood," Sobol said. "There's nothing else like it in Forest Knolls." Sobol cited overcrowding, parking, fire safety and noise concerns, as well as worries about rockslides from the construction.

The development would provide two- and three-bedroom homes for families, as well as a pedestrian walking area, public space and improved vehicle access, according to Jessica Berg, a spokeswoman for the developer. She said that the project area had been zoned for up to 83 units.

"We really believe this is the right-sized development for this site," Berg said.

The project is headed to the Planning Commission today for a hearing on a draft environmental impact report, but Sobol said neighbors will probably save their boisterous public opposition for a final hearing on the EIR, possibly this fall.

The development will also have to navigate a city review of hillside impacts and a possible appeal of the environmental report before the Board of Supervisors, Berg said.

aburack@sfexaminer.com

6-3-2012



Matthew Peek of Studio Peek Ancona transformed an asphalt rooftop into this 500-square-foot viewing platform for the upcoming America's Cup races.

# All hands on the deck

DESIGN America's Cup fan can keep an eye on racing thanks to architect's love of roof terraces



#### By Leilani Marie Labong

One August night, on a roof terrace in Rome, a young architect in a state of repose observes a speckled sky. It's the Night of San Lorenzo, the best night of the year to spot shooting stars.

"The air was cool, drifting from the sea, but the deck was still warm from the heat of the day," recalls architect Matthew Peek, who studied architecture in Italy on a Fulbright Fellowship in the late '90s. "I absorbed the warmth of the deck through my back, gazing up into the stars. It was kind of magical. I knew I had fallen in love with roofscapes in Italy."

Peek, now principal of San Francisco's Studio Peek Ancona, Deck continues on M7





Architect Matthew Peek drew inspiration from the rooftop terraces he enjoyed in Italy. "In S.F., the rooftops are mostly asphalt and quite underutilized," he says.

# So long asphalt wasteland, hello vie

Deck from page M1

summons more memories of life above the fray in Italy: the "sea of domes" as seen from his Roman rooftop, and, from a modest terrace in Florence, adorned with lemon and olive trees, a postcard view of the famous Duomo. More than a decade later, Peek's enchantment with rooftops has long surpassed its statute of limitations as mere nostalgia for a hopeful and adventurous time in his life — the impact of these Italian terraces lingers, imbuing his architectural career.

#### A key to Italian life

"Having an outdoor space is essential to urban living. In Italy, there's a whole other level of existence up top — people are eating meals, stargazing, basic anatomy of these

reading books," says the architect. "In S.F., the rooftops are mostly asphalt and quite underuti-

Our city's saving grace: the mild climate - chilly occurrences of windwhipped fog notwithstanding, of course. Even during a more recent Fleet Week scene from a Peekdesigned rooftop in San Francisco — where 102 people festively gathered upon tech executive Fred Courtot's new 500square-foot deck in the Marina for an unobstructed view of the Blue Angels' acrobatic feats - cool air drifted in from the sea during the day, and at night, the clear sky revealed constellations and galaxies.

#### The basic function

Fundamentally, the

"Creating a new vision for something that didn't have a vision to start with was the biggest challenge."

Matthew Peek

intercontinental portrayals is identical. Apart from the tricked-out materiality of the San Francisco space, and the fact that unlike its Italian inspirations, it exists, first and foremost, as a luxuryviewing platform for the upcoming America's Cup sailing races (Courtot grew up in such maritime cities as Boca Raton, Fla., and Annapolis, Md.), they're all just outdoor spaces. Crowning build-

#### Design

Studio Peek Ancona, (415) 282-0431. www.peek ancona.com

ings. Waiting to serve a greater purpose.

"Creating a new vision for something that didn't have a vision to start with was the biggest challenge," says Peek, whose accomplishments as a competition architect (his design for the High Line, a former elevated freight rail-turned-public park on New York City's West Side, was a finalist out of 700 entries) testify to his unique ability to dream up something out of noth-

That said, what was once an asphalt wasteland atop a two-unit, 1930s Marina-style domicile with partial views of the Palace of Fine Arts and the Golden Gate Bridge, is now a bi-level roof terrace made of sustainable western cedar cladding and ipe decking (the latter is a fire-resistant safeguard against potential disasters in the new stainless-steel outdoor kitchen). The small-

#### Penaloza Landscaping

- Free Estimates
- Tree Trimming
- Clean-ups & Maintenance

510-383-9235 5-637-0169

er, 150-square-foot upper deck, built to capitalize on the vistas above the roofline of neighboring buildings (translation: S.F. landmarks can now be seen in all their glory), has a prefabricated steel railing - a modern, industrial counterpoint to the

timber terrain. Supporting the new addition - which includes a penthouse/guesthouse and that quintessential apparatus of eligible bachelorhood, a cozy, two-person, outdoor hot tub - is an updated configuration of I-joists, an engineered material that looks like wood, is made of wood, but doesn't act like wood (it's considerably stronger).

#### Nor Cal modernism

According to Peek, "the use of contemporary structural elements in combination with warm woods" is, by his definition, "Northern California modernism" at its finest.

The western cedar cladding, treated with a rich red stain, could be interpreted as a nod to Italy's terra-cotta roofs or as a reference to the local architectural landscape this kind of close contextuality is part of the reason Peek believes that, in behavior unbecoming the city's planning and building departments, the deck's permits were quickly approved.

"The space is definitely more modern than some of the surroundings, but it fits in," says the architect, who hosted a community wine-and-cheese to es-

pouse the virtues of roof decks - think easy-access outdoor living, maximized city lots, increased property values, neighborhood beautification, plus vitamin D and fresh O<sup>2</sup> infusions the way Mother Nature intended - and assuage the worries of Courtot's neighbors. "People are just uncomfortable seeing other people on top of

roofs," adds the architect. While safety concerns are naturally triggered anytime heights enter the equation, the likelihood of an altitude-related accident here is remote: Peek designed windscreens, also in western cedar, to impede any dangerous gusts. Comfortable outdoor seating discourages any acts of braggadocio that might end in a grim plummet. A built-in gas fire pit inspires hearthside chats.

And, thanks to the old digital-projector-hiddenin-a-utility-closet trick, TV shows, movies and sports matchups are splashed onto the sidewall of a neighboring building, transfixing visitors. It's a spell that Peek was delighted to cast, as it stirs another midsummer night's memory, this time set in Bologna, when the city hall once served as a movie screen upon which Charlie Chaplin performed a silent slapstick under the stars.

Leilani Marie Labong is a San Francisco freelance writer. E-mail: home@ sfchronicle.com



Se port Biju evar**o, Redwood Ci**ty - Mon - Sal Tijn - Su



Paul Chinn / The Chronicle

Red's Java House will survive, but will never be the same after the Warriors build an arena near it.

# Puzzling out how dives fit in

The Warriors are moving back to San Francisco, and they want to build a spiffy, beautiful arena at Piers 30-32. It will be a majorleague basketball showplace, right behind Red's Java House, that funky-looking, old cheeseburger joint on the waterfront.

Well, there goes the neighborhood.

Red's will survive, you can bet on it. But it will be all cleaned up and cute. First class. The raffish old place with snaggletoothed, collapsing old piers viewed through windows streaked with seagull poop will be no more. Already, it's bad enough. Red's is Zagat Rated. It's in the tourist guides. The house special - a double cheeseburger and a Budweiser - now costs \$9.75, which used to be a day's pay for an ordinary seaman.

Red's Java House is already quaint, but worse things are in store. When the new neighbors move in, Red's will become fashionable.

May has been a bad month for the old town. They had last call at the Gold Dust Lounge on Powell Street. They served the last meal at the Fior d'Italia in North Beach, a couple of days after the Fior's 126th birthday. It didn't even get a nice obituary.

I know what you're thinking: The Gold Dust was a dive, loud and a bit cheesy, and the Fior had been really trashed in recent reviews on Yelp. But they were both unique. The Fior d'Italia was the oldest Italian restaurant in America, and if the Gold Dust was a dive, it was our dive. A good place for a nite-cap, as they used to say.

But think of this: Red's Java House as it is now, the Gold Dust as it was a month ago, and the Fior in its heyday were real San Francisco institutions, places that made the city unique.

And what's going to replace them? Chain stores, a Starbucks, or a cleaned-up version of a waterfront coffee place, as pristine as one of those cute Ferry Building shops? Is that the future?

San Franciscans - and by that I mean anybody who lives here and cares for the town — are going to have to ask themselves what kind of city we want this to be. If we want a city full of exactly alike shops and eating places, chains, why not go to some mall, or to Sacramento? The weather is warmer there and you can park. And you will never be surprised; everything will be exactly as advertised.

San Franciscans are going to have to protect the unexpected places that make the city different. But the citizens have to pick their fights. You can't save everything, and places like Doyle Drive deserved to be smashed flat. And maybe even the North Beach library, which is a good example of a bad architectural style. Or the bar atop the Hyatt Regency, which is so dated now it looks like a guy wearing 1975 sideburns or a woman wearing a beehive hairdo.

There is a San Francisco style, and it's not necessarily old. You'll find it with the young people on Valencia Street, where there is enough energy to power the state of Iowa. You can find it in one of those cluttered, amazing Chinatown alleys. You can find it at Ninth and Judah in the Inner Sunset, an intersection of a hundred restaurants.

You'll find the San Francisco

style at Original Joe's, reborn and better than ever on Washington Square, in the heart of North Beach. You'll find it in a hundred other places.

If you want a neighborhood dive bar, go to the 3300 Club at 29th and Mission, where they have poetry slams every so often. Set your watches by the sirens at noon every Tuesday. Walk across the Golden Gate Bridge early in the morning before the crowds come, and look back at the city. If the summer fog is in, the city will appear and disappear, like an illusion.

San Francisco is no single thing. It is like puzzle pieces, each different. When you put them together, you have something that can't be matched.

But there is a catch. In order to keep the city alive, you have to live with it. Bill Saroyan said it best: In the time of your life, live. And this is the time of your life.

-7012

Carl Nolte is a San Francisco Chronicle columnist. His column appears every Sunday. E-mail: cnolte@sfchronicle.com



# **LOCAL NEWS**



New leash on life: BAYCAT founder and CEO Villy Wang, center, and a newly hired employee pause at a bustling corner in the Dogpatch. BAYCAT is an education nonprofit.

# Dogpatch learns new tricks

Old industrial enclave hums with fresh energy and commercial influx

By Andrea Koskey S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

When Margherita Stewart Sagan and Sheryl Rogat decided to open a restaurant six years ago in the Dogpatch, none of their friends knew where the neighborhood was.

Now, Piccino Cafe is a neighborhood staple and has grown from just 25 seats to more than 100 in a brand-new building. Sagan said the Dogpatch was the right fit for the business they wanted to establish.

"The people in this neighborhood are real," Sagan said. "They're knowledgeable. They know good food and they know good wine. It's

Piccino is just one example of the growth happening in the historically industrial are of The City that is east of Potrero Hill and is roughly boarded by Mariposa Street to the north, Cesar Chavez at the south and between Indiana and Illinois

On a recent Thursday, the sidewalks along two blocks of Third Street from 20th to 23rd streets had a steady stream of people going to and from work or visiting one of the many new restaurants.



Bubbling up: Piccino Cafe has expanded from 25 to 100 seats in the Dogpatch.

more than doubled in the past eight years since he joined the association. In 2004, it had some 60 merchants. Today, that number is 150, and Vaccaro said most of that growth occurred in the past three or four years. The figure also includes nearby Potrero Hill.

The increased use of ground-level retail space in the former American Can Co. complex that spans two city blocks has been a boon for the neighborhood. Serpentine, Gilberth's, Mr. and Mrs. Miscellaneous and Poco Dolce are just a few of the restaurants and gourmet retailers that occupy ground-floor spaces in the industrial buildings.

Bradley J. Vaccaro, vice president of the Potrero Dogpatch Merchants
Association, said membership has

"It's a very business-oriented tion, said things have changed since she moved to the neighborhood 30 years ago, but recently growth and

maker Poco Dolce's. "When I first came down to work here, I had no idea there was anything here other than manufacturing.'

Poco Dolce has been in the complex since 2004, but it was only a year ago that the specialized door for retail - complete with a glass front and company logo - was created to foster a more inviting space. Previously, the company used a loading-dock door for customers.

People had to know we were here to come in," he said. "Now there's always people walking up and down,

Janet Carpinelli, president of the Dogpatch Neighborhood Associamembership have been steady.

"We are where all the growth is happening," she said. "It's exciting."

Though the slowdown in the economy quieted the Dogpatch's growth in 2008, things have picked up. Condo developments that were stopped are starting again, and businesses are moving into once-empty locations.

The growth also has brought in more open spaces.

The aptly named Progress Park was completed last month after two years of work. The small strip of green space located underneath Interstate Highway 280 near Indiana and 25th streets has helped to bring together the growing community, said Bill Slatkin, a community organizer.

"It does feel like a neighborhood, a community," said Slatkin, a Dog-patch resident for nearly nine years. "Originally it felt like an area where there were a lot of strangers or nearstrangers living in close proximity. I think the park had a lot to do with turning it into a community."

More projects to convert small strips of unused land into green space are being planned, Slatkin

Rogat and Sagan are looking to thank the community when they host a block party at their new location now that the renovations to the bright-yellow building are

"The neighborhood loves us," Rogat said. "We want to show them we feel the same"

akoskev@sfexaminer.com

### **Business** is blooming at ex-factory

Inside two industrial buildings on Third Street, from 20th to 23rd streets, some 300 companies have set up shop to give more than 3,000 people a place

Restaurants, textile makers, biotech and high-tech firms now call the old American Can Co. buildings home in the Dogpatch neighborhood.

Site manager Gregory Markoulis said as times have changed, so too has demand for the space. He and his family were more than willing to accommodate the need. They offer spaces ranging from 200 to 17,000 square feet.

"We never forced changes," Markoulis said. "We think the market will tell us what it

In this case, the market went from manufacturing to locally owned shops and businesses that make products on-site.

The whole of Dogpatch seems to be the place to be in

The City," Markoulis said. In 1975, his family acquired the 400,000-

square-foot industrial space is now the American Industrial Center when thev were looking for a new space to



run their manufacturing company, which didn't need the entire space.

"We only needed 5,000 square feet," he said. The family decided to rent out the rest.

And rent they have. The complex is very business- and neighborhood-friendly, according to tenant Villy Wang.
In 2003, Wang founded

BAYCAT, a nonprofit organization that teaches arts and technology to kids in the Bayview-Hunters Point area. She said the owners opened their arms to the idea of a nonprofit in a light-industrial zone.

Markoulis has noticed a change in the tenants as well as the neighborhood.

In the old days, he noted, tenants such as sewing companies kept a narrow focus on their individual workspaces. Now, "these people, these new companies, they want to go out and walk around.

- Andrea Koskey

# Dolby Labs' head office moving to **Mid-Market**

**By Casey Newton** 

**Dolby Laboratories** says it will move its headquarters to the Mid-Market neighborhood, continuing the transformation of a neighborhood that is becoming a new technology hub.

The audio technology provider said Tuesday that it plans to purchase the building at 1275 Market St. from DivcoWest. The purchase price is \$110 million.

The building, which sits a few hundred feet from the new Twitter headquarters near Ninth and Market streets, was formerly occupied by the State Compensation Insurance Fund.

DivcoWest and TMG Partners acquired the 354,000-square-foot building from the fund in October for \$44 million, according to the San Francisco Business Times.

Representatives said the new sale price reflects a retrofitting of the building that is under

Dolby, which has about 700 Bay Area employees working in three

Dolby continues on D5



Noah Berger / Bloomberg 2004

Dolby Laboratories will relocate its headquarters despite not receiving financial incentives from S.F.



## **Dolby Labs plans** new head office in Mid-Market

Dolby from page D1

San Francisco offices, will consolidate most of its operations into the new headquarters, CEO Kevin Yeaman said. Its current headquarters at 100 Potrero Ave. will continue be used as an adjunct to the new headquarters, he said.

The company is making the move despite not receiving

financial incentives from the city. Its new headquarters lies a bit outside of the Mid-Market area where companies are eligible for a temporary exemption from the city's payroll

"We're actually excited to be a part of the Mid-Market area," Yeaman said. "There are a lot of exciting things going on

Dolby continues on D6

# Dolby plans new head office in Mid-Market

Dolby from page D5

there. It's an opportunity to get in on the ground floor of a very exciting neighborhood."

In addition to Twitter, technology companies that have moved into the area recently include Zendesk, Zoosk, One

Kings Lane and Call-Socket.

"They're going to be adding to our whole strategy around Market Street," Mayor Ed Lee said. "They're a good San Francisco company. They mean to grow here and be here for the long term."

The building will be renovated before employees start moving in, probably in the next year to 18 months, city officials said. Renovation plans are in the early design phase, Yeaman

Founded by Ray Dolby in Britain in 1965, the

company moved to San Francisco in 1976. Its products include surround-sound systems and technology that encodes and compresses

"We are excited about Dolby Laboratories' continuing and growing presence in the city and

its contribution to revitalizing the Mid-Market area," Dolby said in a statement.

Casey Newton is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: cnewton@ sfchronicle.com Twitter: @CaseyNewton

THE EXAMINER



Brant Ward / The Chronicle

**CEO Kevin Yeaman says Dolby Laboratories will** merge most operations in the space.

San Francisco Chronicle | SFGate.com

#### DOLBY LABORATORIES

The San Francisco-based audio technology company is moving its operations to the mid-Market Street area, making it the eighth tech firm to relocate to the area recently, the Mayor's Office announced Tuesday. Mid-Market has been a focus of The City's revitalization efforts. Dolby will occupy all 16 floors of a 354,000-square-foot building at 1275 Market St., though the parcel does not qualify for the same payroll tax exemption that has attracted other companies to the area. 6-27-20|2

By Amy Crawford S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

Fire Department officials Wednesday questioned the PG&E response time for a broken gas line that fueled a four-alarm fire Tuesday in the Portola district.

Fire Chief Joanna Hayes-White has requested a meeting with PG&E to determine whether there was a miscommunication in the response.

The fire, which began when a contractor working at a vacant home on San Bruno Avenue inadvertently ignited a gas service line, badly injured the worker and caused \$1.4 million in damage to the empty house and a building next door. Three firefighters were treated for minor injuries. The contractor was in stable condition Wednesday at St. Francis Hospital.

The fire ignited about 3:45 p.m., according to Fire Department Lt. Mindy Talmadge. According to Fire Department and gas company notes,



Reaction: The Fire Department called PG&E's response time to a broken gas line that fueled a fire in the Portola district Tuesday bothersome.

an emergency dig crew arrived about 4:40 p.m., 50 minutes after the initial call to PG&E. A PG&E supervisor arrived on the scene at 4:15 p.m.

"It took a long time for the dig crew to arrive, and that was bothersome." Talmadge said. "We called PG&E and said, 'We need an ETA! We need an

ETA!' and we didn't get one."
The gas continued to burn for 2½ hours because the flames prevented responders from reaching a shut-off valve. PG&E was able to shut off the gas at 5:40 p.m., Talmadge said.

PG&E spokesman Joe Molica said the dig crew, one of two such PG&E teams in the area, had been in Twin Peaks.

"We got there as quickly and safely as we could," he said about the response time.

He said PG&E always follows up these types of incidents with a full investigation and will gladly sit down with the Fire Department.

acrawford@sfexaminer.com

Bay City News contributed to this report.

"They didn't have all the information they should have had to shut off the gas line. It did take, I thought, longer than necessary ... to cap the leak."

Joanne Hayes-White, San Francisco fire chief

Fire chief blames PG&E for delay at 4-alarm blaze



Anthony Tim removes records from San Bruno Avenue Dental Group offices that were gutted by the fire.

## PUC opens investigation; utility defends its response

By Jaxon Van Derbeken and Will Kane

A delay of more than two hours by Pacific Gas and Electric Co. in shutting down the natural-gas line fueling a four-alarm fire in San Francisco triggered criticism from the city's fire chief Wednesday and the opening of a state regulatory investigation.

PG&E crews "were very challenged in trying to locate the shutoff" valve to the 1-inch plastic pipe, said Fire Chief Joanne Hayes-White, who watched firefighters



Dental impressions that were saved from the blaze sit in a bin in front of the charred building.

battle the blaze in the Portola neighborhood Tuesday afternoon. "They didn't have all the information they should have had to shut off the gas line.

She added, "It did take, I thought, longer than necessary for them to cap the leak.'

A man working on a construction project where the fire started at a vacant residential and office building at 2809 San Bruno Ave. was severely burned, and three firefighters suffered minor injuries before the gas was cut off.

Fire continues on A11

## FROM THE COVER

# Fire chief blames PG&E for delay

Fire from page A1

The building and a neighboring dental office incurred \$1.4 million damage in the blaze, which started at 3:45 p.m. and wasn't contained until 6:31, the Fire Department

#### Touched off by welder

The fire began when a worker was welding a water pipe and apparently punctured the nearby plastic gas line, said Joe Molica, a spokesman for PG&E. It took company crews about 20 minutes to arrive, he said.

PG&E officials said the contractor on the construction job had not properly marked the gas line.

Firefighters quickly responded to the fire, but had to pour water onto the burning gas main as PG&E crews searched for a shutoff valve, fire officials said.

"We couldn't really get the fire completely out until the gas was shut down," Hayes-White said.

PG&E officials said flames had prevented workers from reaching the closest shutoff valve - which was near where the fire started - so workers had to dig into the street and pinch the pipe closed. The first dig location was abandoned in favor of one about 50 feet up the street, PG&E said.

Part of the delay was caused by workers having to check maps to make sure they didn't cut off the gas flow to a large number of customers, Molica said.

"We understand that it can seem counterintuitive to see us digging holes in the pavement, but we want to assure folks that we used the fastest and safest method to shut the gas off," Molica said.

#### **PUC** investigation

An investigator with the state Public Utilities Commission was at the scene of the fire afterward, and the agency is doing a full investigation, said Chris Chow, spokesman for the agency.

PG&E has had previous problems shutting down gas that fueled fires, including the 2010 San Bruno disaster in



Photos by Paul Chinn / The Chronicle

A man carries debris from the San Bruno Avenue buildings that were heavily damaged in the four-alarm blaze.



A PG&E internal audit

conducted in 2007 concluded

properly servicing or keeping

track of shutoff valves in its

system, some of which were

buried or had not been main-

tained for years.

that the company was not

which a 30-inch transmission

line fed flames for 90 minutes

before workers manually shut

shutting down a gas line after

gutted a Cupertino condomin-

down the line. The utility

suffered a similar delay in

an August explosion that

owner of the San Bruno Avenue **Dental** Group building, surveys the damage to a second-floor apartment. The fire gutted the structure and an adjacent building.

Justin Tin,

seek a meeting with company officials to address Tuesday's

"After the disaster in San Bruno, then-Mayor (Gavin) Newsom asked that we start a working group with PG&E," Hayes-White said. "We will be Hayes-White said she would addressing this there."

PG&E officials have started a review of the incident and are planning to meet with San Francisco officials, Molica

#### Patients flee

Dr. Justin Tin, who owns the gutted dental building where 10 doctors practice, said a dozen patients fled for their lives when the fire broke out.

'It's just very ridiculous," he said of the time it took to shut off the gas.

The office — which serves 20,000 patients — was a charred mess Wednesday, with dental files that were saved from destruction piled on the sidewalk out front.

"I really don't understand why it took so long," Tin said.

Jaxon Van Derbeken and Will Kane are San Francisco Chronicle staff writers. E-mail jvanderbeken@sfchronicle.com and wkane@sfchronicle.com. Twitter: @Jvanderbeken and



Irons worker Nick Grey helps guide the final steel beam of San Francisco General Hospital's new roof, putting the building closer to its 2015 completion date.

## HOSPITAL ROUNDS

# Kaiser, Chinese Hospital among places fined

By Victoria Colliver

State public health officials fined two San Francisco hospitals — Kaiser Foundation Hospital and Chinese Hospital — along with Kaiser Oakland, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center in San Jose and nine other hospitals statewide for violations serious enough to cause patient injury or death.

The California Department of Public Health announced this month that the penalties amounted to a combined \$825,000 for the 13 hospitals.

Kaiser in San Francisco was fined \$75,000 for leaving a surgical sponge inside a patient following a Cesarean section, and Kaiser's Oakland hospital was fined \$75,000 for failing to follow procedures related to its cardiac paging system.

The state fined Chinese Hospital \$50,000 for a patient's death in 2010 after a feeding tube was improperly placed, in violation of the hospital's own policies and procedures. Santa Clara Valley Medical Center was fined \$75,000 for failing to provide ongoing assessment of a patient.

Since 2007, when the fines were enacted as law, the state has assessed 224 penalties to 129 California hospitals totaling \$7.7 million. The hospitals have the right to appeal the violations.

## S.F. General celebrates construction milestone

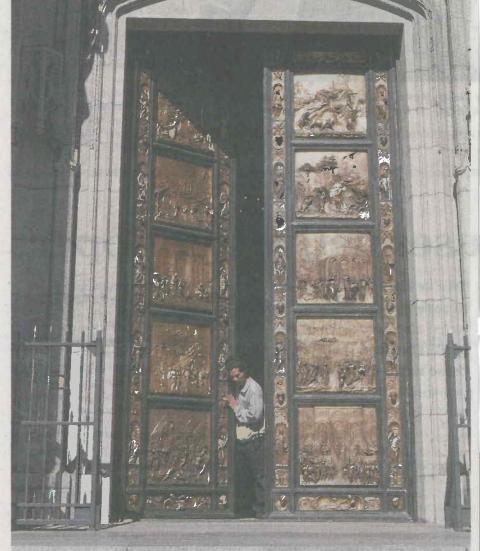
San Francisco General Hospital celebrated a construction milestone June 5 when the final steel beam was hoisted on top of its new hospital, putting it just that much closer to its 2015 completion date. The new building will house more than 284 beds, 14 operating rooms as well as an emergency room nearly three times larger than the current one.

Alta Bates Summit Medical Center is transitioning patients in preparation for the closure this month of its pulmonary subacute unit at its Her-

rick facility in Berkeley.

Hospital officials said the majority of the patients had already been transferred to outside facilities and that the process was scrutinized and approved by state public health regulators.

The official hospital statement cited studies that show long-term care patients of this type are better served in a long-term care facility, but an internal memo said that reductions in government payers as well as commercial insurance has put pressure on the hospital's financial situation.



Photos by Liz Hafalia / The Chronicle

Grace Cathedral in S.F. is home to the most accurate replicas of the Florence Baptistery's 15th century "Doors of Paradise," which are being refurbished.

GRACE CATHEDRAL

# Doorway to Florence steps away at church

By Will Kane

When Michelangelo first saw the

gilded bronze doors on the Florence Baptistery, he exclaimed that they were so exquisite that they must be the "Doors of Paradise." It's been more than 27

years since visitors to the
Italian landmark last saw the
8-ton doors crafted in the 15th
century. Workers have been
meticulously cleaning them of
centuries' worth of soot,
grime and microscopic craters with a high-tech laser and an
array of dentist-like tools. The refurbished doors will be unveiled Sept. 8

at their new home in a Florence muse-

But those who want to see what

inspired Michelangelo need travel no farther than San Francisco's Grace Cathedral, which has the world's most detailed replicas.

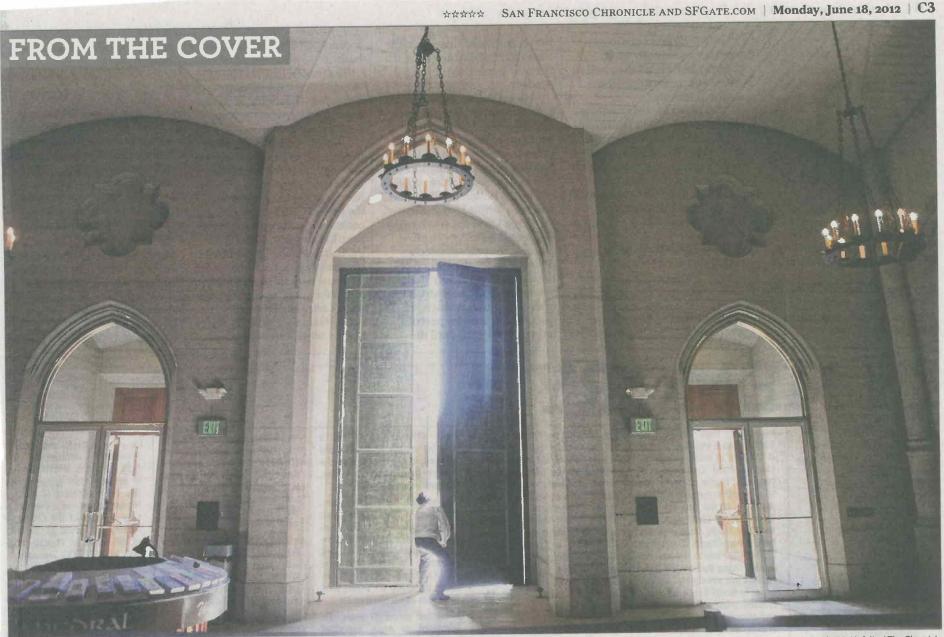
"The Grace Cathedral replicas are the most accurate of any in existence, as they were carefully chased by a master bronze worker after casting," said Michael Lampen, a Grace Cathedral archivist.
"Many people don't get a

chance to go to Florence to see the original doors, and this is their chance

nal doors, and this is their chance **Doors continues on C3** 

John Gruenig (left) and Moises Gonzalez open the S.F. cathedral's replica doors, which were cast from a mold of the 8-ton Italian originals.





Photos by Liz Hafalia / The Chronicle

A yearly cleaning with special soap and water and a wax finish help keep Grace Cathedral's doors in shape. They've been on display since the 1964 opening.

## oorway to Florence steps away at church

Doers from page C1

to see culture that they won't see in other places."

The original doors, crafted by Lorenzo Ghiberti, are considered to be the first and greatest masterpiece of the Italian Renaissance. In 10 panels, Ghiberti recreates sceres from the Old Testament. Sculpting and casting the doors took 27 years, Lampen said, and they were installed in 1452.

Unlike many of the dozens of plaster and bronze replicas found around the world, Grace Cathedral's replica doors were cast in 1956 from

molds made using the original doors, said Katherine Thompson, the cathedral's director of development. Most other replicas were made from lessdetailed molds.

San Francisco's doors were originally cast for a war memorial at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific on the Hawaiian island of Oahu. Philanthropist Charles D. Field purchased the doors for San Francisco when the memorial's financing fell through, and they were installed before the cathedral's 1964 opening.

They've been on display on the east side of Grace Cathedral since then.

"We do clean them once a year with special soap and water and a wax finish," Lampen said. The cleaning makes the bronze color shine from the other side of Nob Hill, he

"My eye always goes to the goldness of them. They are so prominent at the top of the steps," Lampen said. "The incredible detail is the second thing that strikes me, that you can spend hours and hours looking at them."

Will Kane is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: wkane@sfchronicle.com Twitter: @WillKane



The "Doors of Paradise" replicas also feature the 10 panels that re-create scenes from the Old Testament.

## Remedies proposed to decongest Hayes Valley

By Will Reisman S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

A boulevard and open spaces that replaced the elevated Central Freeway have been credited with revitalizing Hayes Valley, but a key intersection there is still plagued by pedestrian safety issues and heavy traffic congestion.

To help improve those conditions, congestion pricing for motorists, new bike lanes on Polk Street, more crosswalks and the implementation of two-way transit routes on local roads are some

of the plans being recommended.

The Central Freeway was torn down in 1992 after being damaged in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, and it was replaced by a boulevard in 2005. For the past several years, the San Francisco County Transportation Authority, a local planning agency, has been studying ways to improve the Market and Octavia streets intersection and nearby streets. A new report

recommends adding crosswalks on thoroughfares such as Franklin and Gough streets to improve pedestrian safety. It also said a two-way bike lane on the south end of Polk Street would better connect The City's cycling network. And there are recommendations for traffic-calming measures and transit improvement plans on Page and Haight streets.

A major component of the plan calls for some sort of traffic management program, such as congestion pricing, which would charge motorists a fee for driving in certain parts of The City.

Most of the proposals in the plan could be implemented for \$100,000 to \$5 million. The City has several new local and regional funding sources - including the recently passed \$248 million streets bond — that could pay for the improvements, said Jesse Koehler, a planner with the Transit Authority.

Koehler said the study is important because it coincides with two separate projects that are already under way: the Van Ness Avenue bus rapid transit network and the Better Market Street plan. The Van Ness project would carry heavy-duty vehicles down dedicated transit lanes, and the Market Street plan calls for a complete overhaul of The City's main artery. Koehler said recommendations from the study could impact how both those projects move forward.

Elizabeth Stampe, executive director of pedestrian advocates Walk San Francisco, said the plan could go a long way toward improving safety in

the neighborhood.

"In a way, we're still removing the freeway from Hayes Valley," Stampe said. "There are still too many spots where it still doesn't feel safe or pleasant to walk."

Kit Hodges, deputy director of the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, said the Market-Octavia intersection could use safety and connectivity improvements for cyclists.

wreisman@sfexaminer.com

2-27-2012

## **LOCAL NEWS**

# Ocean Beach gusts reveal headstones, city history

Long-forgotten headstones buried on Ocean Beach nearly a century ago were uncovered recently by strong winds, a National Park Service spokeswoman said.

The story of how the headstones first ended up on the beach dates back to the early 20th century.

When The City was in the process of moving graves to Colma — known as the "City of Souls" for its large deceased population — many of the headstones were used as fill or crushed up and used for roads, Park Service spokeswoman Alexandra Picavet said.

At Ocean Beach, unclaimed headstones were used to armor the beach against erosion — and with the recent wind that has blown sand off the beach and onto Great Highway, a few of the headstones have become exposed, Picavet said.

The Park Service archeologist is aware of the uncovered pieces of San Francisco history, Picavet said, but staff members have decided to leave them in place.

Colma Historical Society volunteer Bunny Gillespie said that



**Grave reminder:** Delia Presby Oliver's headstone was one of many unearthed at Ocean Beach. the graves were moved to Colma nearly a century ago.

in March 1900, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted to close all but two city cemeteries and relocate many graves to Colma. The transfer process began by 1914, and some stones ended up at Ocean Beach, Gillespie said.

- Bay City News

## Ocean Beach reveals grim mementos

By Carl Nolte

Strong winds and shifting sands have uncovered an eerie reminder of San Francisco's past: discarded gravestones and broken tomb markers used decades ago to shore up

the Ocean Beach seawall.

The tombstones became visible this week, including bits and pieces of marble and granite that once marked the final resting places of citizens long dead.

One of them is the nearly

intact marble tombstone of Delia Presby Oliver, who died at the age of 26 on Apr. 9, 1890.

Her remains were removed and reburied when San Francisco authorities closed nearly all the city cemeteries and

Tombstones continues on A13



SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE AND SFGATE.COM | Friday, June 8, 2012 | A13

Megan Farmer / The Chronicle

that once marked graves in San Francisco cemeteries and were later used on a seawall surface at the end of Rivera Street near Ocean Beach.

**Tombstones** 

## FROM THE COVER

## Old tombstones revealed as sand gets blown away

Tombstones from page A1

moved the bodies to Colma in the early 20th century - part of a move to make space for the growing city. Oliver's original tombstone and thousands like it were used as landfill or in other ways throughout San Francisco.

Some were used as breakwaters. Pieces of others were used to line the gutters of Haight-Ashbury's Buena Vista Park. Some gravestones were used to build the seawall along the Great Highway. Large tombs and crypts were dumped into San Francisco

#### 'No mystery'

"There's a romance to it, but no mystery," said John Martini, a San Francisco historian and former National Park Service ranger who has studied what lies under the Ocean Beach sands. "They are part of San Francisco history."

Martini said strong winds often uncover all kinds of things, even the remains of shipwrecks. The timbers of the sailing ship King Philip, wrecked at Ocean Beach in the 19th century, reappeared a couple of years ago and then vanished again under the sand after a few weeks.

The gravestones are like that, Martini said.

"They turned up some years

There was a big fuss, and then they were covered up again.

marker is a heavy, solid piece of stone meant to last an eternity. The tombstone, nearly as intact as the day it was carved more than 122 years ago, was uncovered in a drift of black sand near the end of Rivera Street.

She was a member of a prominent family. Her father, David Shattuck, was born in New England and served on the San Francisco Board of

Delia Presby was born in San Francisco in 1863 and married Frank B. Oliver on Oct. 27, 1885. She died less than five years later.

Newspapers did not report the cause of her death, but a notice in the San Francisco Call on April 10, 1890, said, "Friends and acquaintances are respectfully invited to attend the funeral services ... ents No. 814 Powell Street. Interment private."

ago in about the same place. How soon we forget.'

Delia Presby Oliver's grave

Supervisors. Her parents lived on Nob Hill.

from the residence of her par-

It is not clear where Delia Oliver was buried, but it is likely that a person of her standing might be interred in the old Laurel Hill Cemetery, which extended south and west of California Street near what is now Presidio Avenue.



Dylan Phillipy finds an old mausoleum structure on Ocean Beach near the Great Highway, where the relics have been uncovered because the strong winds have whipped away the sand.

In the 1920s and '30s, the city decided to move the cemeteries out of the city. The Chinese, the Jewish, the Masonic and the Catholic cemeteries were destroyed.

## Displaced by development

Laurel Hill was one of the last to go. In 1937, The Chronicle described it as "a silent city of the dead." There were 35,000 men, women and children buried there, all removed to make way for the Laurel Heights development.

Martini said much of the western part of the city was built atop old cemeteries, including shopping centers, housing developments and the campus of the University of San Francisco.

"They found hundreds of bodies when they did seismic work at the Palace of the Legion of Honor," he said. "It was pauper's cemetery. And there are literally hundreds of bodies under the Lincoln Park Golf Course. No one kept track of them all.'

In established cemeteries, like Laurel Hill and Calvary on Geary Boulevard, "The remains of the loved one were removed at no cost," Martini said. "But if you wanted to remove a headstone, or a funerary building, the family had to pay the cost."

So tombstones left behind were recycled and used in various city projects. The Chronicle wrote about gravestones surfacing on Ocean Beach in spring 1977. Beachcombers were stunned.

Finding them was "the strangest stuff I've ever come across in a city that's weird enough," Gail Bills, who grew

up in the Sunset District, told The Chronicle in a 1977 article about the tombstones.

The drifting sands soon covered them up again.

#### Fierce spring winds

This spring, the winds were particularly fierce, said Alexandra Picavet, spokeswoman for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, which manages Ocean Beach. "This happens every once in a while," she said. "It's been a crazy year for sand."

Picavet said the Park Service has no plans to remove the gravestones. Eventually, they'll be covered again by the drifting sand, only to be rediscovered in a few more years.

Carl Nolte is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: cnolte@sfchronicle.com



Series Sponsor: T O M E

## IULY 12 OLD BUILDINGS, NEW DESIGNS: THE SECRETARY'S STANDARDS REVISITED

Venue: One Kearny at Market Street

Charles Bloszies, AIA, Alexa Arena, Tim Brandt, AIA, and Charles Chase, AIA, will discuss the role of preservation in increasingly dense urban environments and the challenges facing designers in balancing stakeholder needs with preservation standards.

### AUGUST 16 THESE WALLS CAN SPEAK: TELLING THE STORIES OF QUEER PLACES

Venue: GLBT History Museum, 4127 18th Street

Gerard Koskovich, Alan Martinez, Gerry Takano, and Shayne Watson will lead a discussion on the spaces and places that illuminate the rich history of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender life in California. Co-presented by the GLBT Historical Society & HeritageYP.

## SEPTEMBER 13 PRESERVING SAN FRANCISCO'S MURALS: LESSONS FROM SOCAL

Venue: The Women's Building, 3543 18th Street

luana Alicia, Judy Baca, and Josie Talamantez will discuss California's mural movement and describe case studies and programs in Los Angeles and San Diego that serve as national models for mural preservation. Co-presented by The Women's Building.

#### OCTOBER 18 THE MODERN WORK OF GARDNER DAILEY

Venue: Bayside Conference Room, Pier 1

Paul Adamson, FAIA, will explore the work of Gardner A. Dailey, one of the Bay Area's leading architects (late 1920s into the 1960s) and an instrumental figure in the Second Bay Tradition style. Co-presented by DOCOMOMO-NOCA.

Lecture Sponsor: CDDY ANDERSON WASNEY

## NOVEMBER 15 THEN AND NOW: PRESERVATION IN THE TENDERLOIN

Venue: Kelly Cullen Community (YMCA), 220 Golden Gate Avenue

Mara Blitzer, Brad Paul, and Randy Shaw will investigate how Tenderloin residents and community leaders use preservation to prevent displacement and cultivate neighborhood pride. Guests will have access to the Kelly Cullen Community in its final stages of rehabilitation.

Lecture Sponsor: Knapparchitects

#### **TICKET INFORMATION**

Lecture series tickets are \$8 for members and \$12 for the general public. Series tickets (all five lectures) are \$35 for members and \$50 for the general public. Buy tickets online at sfheritage.org or complete the form and return it to

Heritage at 2007 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA 94109.

QUANTITY MEMBER LECTURE				
	Y/N	Series Tickets		
Y/N		July: Old Buildings, New Design		
	Y/N	August: These Walls Can Speak		
	Y/N	September: Preserving SF Murals		
	Y/N	October: The Work of Gardner Daile		
	Y/N	November: Then and Now		
Total tickets PAYMENT IN	A COL			
Name	JE III			
Email				
Card No.				
Exp. Date		Sec. Code (3 dig.)		
Type: Visa	/ M/C /	Amex Billing Zip		
Please make chec	ks payable to	San Francisco Heritage.		

#### **SERIES DETAILS**

Lectures are held on Thursday evenings at 6 p.m. with doors opening at 5:30 p.m. Please be sure to keep this postcard for location information as each lecture will be held in a different venue. Visit sfheritage.org for more information and to learn about other upcoming events.

Cover photos (L-R): One Kearny (Cesar Rubio), Balmy Alley (Desiree Smith), Tool Box (GLBT Historical Society), Shih Yu-Lang Central YMCA (Thomas Hawk), Tolman Hall (dramingyakker), The Women's Building (Desiree Smith), and Skin Yu-Lang Central YMCA (Mike Buhler).





SAN FRANCISCO
ARCHITECTURAL
HERITAGE
2007 Frankum Staeet
San Francisco, CA 94109





follow us on

Finduson Facebook

Facebook.com/SFHeritage

Twitter.com/SFHeritage

## CHRONICLE CLASSIC



## Dodging the issues

By Herb Caen

The time has come, as the late Supervisor James B. McSheehy once said, "to grab the bull by the tail and look the facts in the face" about such issues as the race for Mayor, height limits and rent control, but frankly, I'd rather be swinging in a hammock, which isn't easy unless you hold onto the sides. It was McSheehy who also said that a certain structure had "all the earmarks of an eyesore," a phrase that might apply to the Transamerica Pyramid, but only in the opinion of some, I hasten to add. "Admit it," people keep chiding me. "Admit you were wrong about the Pyramid." Okay. I was wrong. Anything to keep the peace. "Besides," they go on, "it is the symbol of the new San Francisco, famous around the world." Yeah. That's another problem.

10 to 10

The issues, the issues. Stick to the point, dammit. Well, what's wrong with Dianne? She's intelligent, she's attractive, she's industrious, she may even

have a sense of humor, if that makes any difference, although I have never heard her turn a phrase. She is honest and sincere, don't forget that. Maybe sincerity and humor don't go together. Look over the candidates and you have to say she's the best we've got, and definitely better than the 49ers. Quentin Karpp is also honest, sincere, humorless and hard working, and figures to finish one-two. Fearless forecast.

\* \* \*

The city is in a mess, but it isn't anybody's fault, as inflation isn't anybody's fault. It's built-in, part of the system. "Get rid of the bureaucracy," say the conservatives, "and inflation will disappear," but the bureaucracy is here to stay, too, because like it or not, we have to have it. Rent control may fall into the same category. There are more renters than landlords so I suppose it will win. Nobody knows whether it will work. That will be up to the bureaucracy. I wasn't here during World War II, being gainlessly employed elsewhere, but they tell me controls worked pretty well. The war helped but it's not worth starting one to make rent controls work. If the rent thing passes, it'll be a mess, like everything else. Messes are here to stay, as witness the streets, which are winning the war against all those CETA workers hired by the bureaucracy. Ogawd.

2 2 2

One of my favorite messes is on the "new" multi-million dollar Market St. I mean those three electric clocks that keep breaking down, even though they cost \$17,000 each. They've broken down again and no, they don't look like they should cost \$17,000 for the three. The man in charge of these turkeys explains. "They aren't being maintained." Neither is anything else. Roger Boas, the Chief Administrative Officer, says that if we maintained everything properly - the cable cars, the city buildings, schools, parks, streets - we would need an additional \$78 million a year. With City Hall already running \$100 million in the cerise, forget it. Things will get worse before they get even worse.

\*\* \*\* \*\*

We now come shakily to Prop. O. which would restrict the height of buildings to 20 stories. The old Hunter-Dulin building, now 111 Sutter, is about 20 stories, and quite beautiful. The argument presented most often against Prop. o - that it would create "a monotonous skyline" - doesn't pack much clout. San Francisco is no Venice, Paris or even Florence, but the even skylines there are hardly monotonous. The most beautiful stretch of Park Ave. in New York is the one with the grand old apartment houses - identical in height. Skyscrapers look funny in London.

St 22 22

Old San Francisco - the one so many

nostalgics yearn for - had buildings that related well to each other. You can see the evidence today among the apartment houses on Geary, Post and Sutter. Along Grant Avenue: Shreve and Brooks Bros., Saks, that magnificent pillared phone building, the Baldwin Hotel. Around Post and along Powell, the Chancellor, Elks, the old Press Club, 490 Post. Nearby, I. Magnin, Macy's, the old City of Paris, 133 Geary, J. Magnin. At the foot of Market, the magnificent PG&E, old Southern Pacific, old Matson - all these buildings have a delicate relationship, "a decent regard" for each other. All are low-rise. Not one is what Allan Jacobs, our one-time Planning Director and implacable foe of Transamerica, calls a "look-at-me" building."

St. 50 50

Well, maybe Planning Directors and Commissions are part of the problem (sorry, didn't even HAVE a planning department till 1948). All these lovely olds buildings, with their self-imposed height limits, reflected a gentle, genteel attitude that may no longer be stirring across the hills where the heart was lifted by the rise and fall of magnificent vistas. Look with love upon the fading old buildings, friend. They are greater than you think, and you won't find much to love in whatever takes their place. Even at 20 rent-controlled stories.

This column originally appeared in The Chronicle on Oct. 21, 1979.

# S.F. Homes for Heroes campaign to help house 50 veterans in 100 days

By Ed Lee

can't think of a more patriotic thing to do than to find a homeless veteran a home. I'll be the first to say that despite all our successes — our economy is growing, unemployment is down — housing is expensive. In order to house our homeless veterans, we need the partnership and support of our landlords and property owners.

Thanks to a tremendous investment by the federal government, homeless veterans in San Francisco can qualify for HUD-VASH (Housing and Urban Development Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing) vouchers. These vouchers provide veterans with rental assistance and case management.

In March, HUD awarded San Francisco \$2.7 million, including 200 vouchers for veterans. Vouchers provide veterans with rental assistance throughout The City through the San Francisco Housing Authority and help support the Veterans Commons housing project at 150 Otis St., a new permanent supportive housing site for chronically

Before the new allocation of vouchers are used, there are 50

homeless senior veterans.

veterans with VASH vouchers from prior years' allocations who have been unable to secure housing. Along with our public and private partners, we launched the San Francisco Homes for Heroes 100 Days Campaign in May to house 50 veterans in 100 days.

HUD-VASH vouchers are valuable, and it's up to us to make sure this federal investment is put to good and immediate use. Unfortunately, in this tight rental market, many veterans are having a hard time finding an apartment. My administration has teamed up with the Housing Authority, HUD, the VA and Swords to Plowshares to launch the campaign to house 50 homeless veterans by Aug. 17.

Since we began our campaign, we've fast-tracked the process: Landlords are getting inspected within 48 hours, payments are more flexible than ever, and we've made the paperwork as easy and painless as possible.

The San Francisco Apartment Association, the Small Property Owners of San Francisco and the Chinese Real Estate Association have been actively encouraging their members to participate in the campaign. They understand this is about supporting individuals

who have sacrificed to protect our country.

I call upon the landlords and property managers to join us in our effort. If you have an apartment you can rent to a veteran through this program, we need your help.

San Francisco is known for its big heart. Let's show our veterans, who have made the ultimate sacrifices in fighting for our country, how big that heart is.

Please, join us in our effort to house our veterans! For more information, go to: SFHomesForHeroes. org. 6-4-20(2-4)

Ed Lee is the mayor of San Francisco. The mayor's column will run on the second and fourth Thursday of each month.

## LUUAL NEWS

# **CPMC could abandon St. Luke's in Mission**

By Ari Burack S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

A major deal for two new seismically safe hospitals is being renegotiated after revelations that the California Pacific Medical Center might be closer to abandoning its facility serving lower-income Mission district residents.

The \$2.5 billion project by the Sutter Health affiliate includes a massive new 555-bed hospital at Cathedral Hill and a rebuild of St. Luke's in the Mission.

A deal with Mayor Ed Lee's office requiring that CPMC make significant contributions toward health care for the poor, community clinics, affordable housing and street improvements was announced in March. It must be approved by the Board of Supervisors.

But at a committee hearing Monday, supervisors were broadsided by financial projections that might allow CPMC to escape its pledge to manage the rebuilt St. Luke's for at least 20 years. A clause in the agreement says that CPMC could close St. Luke's if its operating margin falls below 1 percent for two consecutive years.

The Mayor's Office told the committee Monday that CPMC was closer to triggering that clause, and admitted that it knew of the new projections 12 days earlier and hadn't told supervisors, who will vote on the deal next month.

Board President David Chiu called the news "shocking." Supervisor Malia Cohen said CPMC had a history of being "disingenuous" in its negotiations.

"This is a pretty big change ... and very suddenly," said a clearly perturbed Supervisor David Campos, whose district includes St. Luke's. He said the hospital deal's timeline was now in question.

State law requires hospitals be seismically safe by 2015.

"It absolutely has to be fixed, but it appears to be eminently fixable," Supervisor Scott Wiener said Tuesday.

Both the Mayor's Office and CPMC officials downplayed the developments, saying they were committed to keeping St. Luke's open.

"This one piece is about the ability of CPMC to respond to a potential financial catastrophe—in the worst-case scenario—very, very unlikely to come to pass," said CPMC Vice President Judy Li.

But she acknowledged the new projections could trigger the escape clause in as soon as seven years, right after the rebuilt St. Luke's should open.

Li said the trigger would start a two-year "collaborative process where we're working together as partners to try to find a solution."

Both sides hope to come to agreement before the next committee hearing July 9.

aburack@sfexaminer.com



Heavenly housing? A church might be razed to make way for condos.

## Condo plan irks neighbors along Nob Hill

By Ari Burack S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

Some Nob Hill residents aren't ringing bells over a proposal to replace a vacant church with a six-story condominium they complain doesn't fit into their neighborhood.

Wrangling over the future of the property at Larkin and Clay streets has been going on for years, as the 101-year-old First Saint John's Methodist Church sits unoccupied and boarded up. Developers want to replace it with a six-story, 27-unit residential complex.

A court exempted it from landmark status, but the Planning Commission rejected an environmental impact report for the development.

The City calls the church historic, but developers say its condition is so degraded that rebuilding isn't possible, the Planning Department said.

Neighbors accuse the developer of being unwilling to work with them. They say the development would stand out in a neighborhood of three- and four-story residences.

"We'd like to see a building that is more appropriate for the neighborhood," said Dawn Trennert, chair of the Middle Polk Neighborhood Association. Despite a meeting Wednesday night with the architect for the proposed development, Trennert said the developer isn't budging from its plan.

"They've offered minor concessions," Trennert said. "We're very willing to be reasonable about it. We're willing to negotiate and meet halfway, but the developer needs to work with us as well."

The Planning Department believes the housing project is both necessary and compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. It has recommended certifying the project's final EIR. The Planning Commission will consider the proposal at a hearing this evening.

aburacka fexaminer com

# North Beach peep show has eyes to become lusty landmark

C.W. NEVIUS



What do you do when nudity is not enough? That's the question confronting the Lusty Lady, the long-running adult peep show in North Beach.

The neighborhood, once known for Carol Doda dancing topless on a piano suspended from the ceiling, City Lights Bookstore, and the birthplace of the Beat Generation, has become inundated with cookie-cutter strip clubs. The Lusty Lady, which bills itself as "the

world's only unionized worker-owned peep show co-op," is looking a little frayed around the tassels.

Last month I wrote about how it was in such financial distress that it might close. That hasn't happened and the owner/dancers are mulling the idea of turning themselves into a Lusty tourist landmark. Sort of a nude Coit Tower.

"Kind of like the bookstore Nevius continues on C6



Sonia Och / The Chronici

Barbarella waits for a customer in the VIP booth of the Lusty Lady, a North Beach peep show since 1976.

C6 | Thursday, June 21, 2012 | SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE AND SFGATE.COM WB 公立公立公

## FROM THE COVER

# Peep show has eyes to be a landmark

Nevius from page C1

around the corner," said spokeswoman Prince\$\$, who prefers to use her stage name. "It became the Beat Museum. They have Jack Kerouac memorabilia, and people come check it out. We'd like to maintain it as a kink-friendly San Francisco place, but maybe capitalize on the historical landmark part."

It's not a bad idea, says Jerry Cimino, manager of the Beat Museum, which has thrived for nearly 10 years on Broad-

way.

"The Lusty Lady might be onto something," he said.

"That place has such a storied past. They might make it more of a fun thing. It's like us, we're a niche. Like Jerry Garcia said: 'You don't want to be the best at what you do, you want to be the only one.'"

### Not just Barbie Dolls

The Lusty has always been proud that its dancers aren't the blonde Barbie Doll types found in the corporate clubs.

"We have those, too,"
Prince\$\$ says. "And we don't
hate on them. But it's like seeing the same movie every
time"

Laurie Armstrong, spokeswoman for San Francisco Travel, says a city that saw tourists spend more than \$8 billion in 2011 could be an ideal market for a peep show landmark pitch.

"We're a very nostalgic city," she said. "Look at Haight-Ashbury, the Beats, even the Gold Rush. And don't forget, this is the city that put Carol



Photos by Sonja Och / The Chronicle

Prince\$\$, spokeswoman for the theater, makes her way to the stage at the Lusty Lady in North Beach, which bills itself as "the world's only unionized worker-owned peep show co-op."



In the booth, a window opens to the stage where Prince\$\$ and her co-workers are dancing. They want to make it a landmark.

Doda's chest in lights."

There's plenty of history behind the Lusty door. Established at the same Kearny Street location in 1976 to show porn films, it went to live entertainment in 1983. In 1996, unhappy with working conditions, the dancers staged a famous uprising, complete with a picket line, which eventually led to the Exotic Dancers Union.

#### Co-op peep show

The women made headlines again in 2003 when they put together a cooperative, and purchased the place. The unionized, co-op peep show

was an irresistible, only-in-San Francisco story for the national media.

Even now, Prince\$\$ says, tourists seek out the place.

"People come to take a picture of our sign," she says.

The problem is they don't come in. And, to be blunt, in its current condition, you can see why.

"Retro is one thing," Prince\$\$ says. "But this qualifies more as run-down."

### Looking for an investor

What they'd really like is to find an investor. Clearly, the current model may not survive. It didn't help, frankly, when customers were greeted by curmudgeonly desk staff.

"It was getting to be like the movie, 'Clerks,' — where they said this would be great if it weren't for the customers," Prince\$\$ says. "We're trying to change the culture a little, with some really enthusiastic customer service."

Making the peep show a tourist stop is a quirky idea, but the Lusty Lady has always been all about the quirk.

"We may be launching the best new project in San Francisco, or we may be filing for bankruptcy," Prince\$\$ says. Hey, it could work. My ad-

Hey, it could work. My advice: find a piano, hang it from the ceiling, and dance on it.
That never gets old.

C.W. Nevius is San Francisco
Chronicle columnist. His columns
appear Tuesday, Thursday and
Saturday. E-mail:
cwnevius@sfchronicle.com
Twitter: @cwnevius

## Take your last peep at the Lusty Lady

Everything has its day in the sun before sinking beneath the waves of time, unless it happens to be in San Francisco, then it becomes a landmark.

C.W. Nevius' column
("North Beach peep show has
eyes to become lusty landmark," June 21) on the Lusty
Lady's bid for landmark status
highlighted this local phenomenon. No disrespect to the
ladies or what they accomplished in the area of labor and
ownership, but just as the
Internet made adult bookstores obsolete, the culture and
conditions that made the Lusty
Lady viable have evolved and
changed.



Lea Suzuki / The Chronicle

Put up a tribute page on
Facebook, where the girls and
their customers can tell their
stories, but unless they can
financially reinvent the business, let it go.

1 entropy with the page on
2 entropy with the page on
2 entropy with the page on
3 entropy with the page on
3 entropy with the page on
3 entropy with the page on
4 entropy with the pa

The Lusty Lady was an entertaining page in San Francisco history, not a chapter. What next, a memorial sculpture to the naked guys?

Steve Abney, San Francisco

S.F. TRAFFIC

## Fewer vehicles, more street life considered for **Market Street**

By Michael Cabanatuan

Cars have already been pushed off stretches of Market Street downtown, but they could be banned altogether under a revitalization plan being designed by a collection of city agencies.

The Better Market Street plan aims to improve the city's central boulevard from the Embarcadero to Octavia Boulevard and "re-establish the street as the premier cultural, civic, transportation and economic center of San Francisco and the Bay Area," said Kris Opbroek, project manager for the Department of Public Works during a presentation to the Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors Tuesday.

A key part of that plan is limiting - or eliminating - private automobiles on the street. Under the most aggressive strategy, cars would be banned from Market Street in both directions between Franklin and Steuart streets.

The goal is to have an overarching solution" that improves mobility; makes Market Street more of a public gathering place and spurs eco-Market Street continues on A13

# A call to ban private cars on Market St. downtown

Market Street from page A1

nomic development, Opbroek

Improving mobility means finding a way to speed transit and limiting private motor vehicles and accommodating the growing numbers of bicyclists and pedestrians using Market Street, she said.

One of the goals is eliminating conflict and confrontation,"

But a plan to keep cars off Market Street could face fierce opposition. The notion of eliminating cars from the downtown thoroughfare has been broached several times over the years and has always been dismissed when it became gridlocked in controversy.

This time, it's tough to tell how merchants and nearby residents will react, but it's important that they be listened to, said Daniel Hurtado, executive director of the Central Market Community Benefit District.

### 'A lot of positive'

"There is a lot of positive that could result in limiting access of private vehicles, especially in the Mid-Market area," he said "Particularly encouraging people to walk, eliminating congestion and increasing the efficiency of public transit."

But private vehicles should be allowed at night, he said, to improve safety in the area, which can be dangerous or at least feel uncomfortable after

"It adds a set of eyes and ears," he said.

The plan contemplates three approaches for private autos,



The main traffic pedestrians contend with on Market Street at New Montgomery is Muni buses.

all of which reduce access and continue the 2009 experiment launched by then-Mayor Gavin Newsom to reduce the number of cars on downtown Market Street by forcing eastbound drivers to make right turns at 10th and Sixth streets. That temporary plan has since become permanent after studies found an uptick in the number of bicyclists along that stretch, that transit speeds increased slightly and that traffic on adjacent Mission Street was slightly more congested.

The least drastic of the proposals would extend the forced-right-turns approach to other yet-to-be-determined intersections along Market Street while a middle-of-theroad plan would extend forced right-turns and close Market Street only between Fourth and

Fifth streets. Under the plan to ban autos, transit vehicles buses and streetcars — as well as taxis, tour buses, paratransit vehicles and some delivery vehicles would be granted access to Market Street. Shuttles to hotels and some other businesses also could be allowed, Opbroek said.

### **Public input**

Representatives of the city's Department of Public Works, Planning Department, Municipal Transportation Agency, Transportation Authority and Public Utilities Commission have been researching how best to rejuvenate the main drag since 2011, analyzing existing conditions, looking at what other cities have tried and developing possible concepts for Market Street. In July,

they'll hold a series of workshops to see what the public thinks and will then work with interested parties to create a plan by the end of the year.

The plan would be designed and undergo environmental reviews for the next two to three years with construction taking place in 2015 to 2016. The project is tied to a planned repaving of Market Street. Funding for that work is already lined up, but more extensive improvements would require additional funding.

Ed Reiskin, the city's transportation director, said the MTA would apply for federal funding for the improvements. The cost will depend on the approaches the city chooses.

MTA directors lauded the plan Tuesday, with some members saying it matched the

board's vision for Market Street.

"This board has been very supportive of making Market Street more of a transit, pedestrian and bike corridor, and placing less emphasis on autos," said director Cheryl Brinkman. "This is a good start."

Director Malcolm Heinicke agreed, noting that fears of chaos and gridlock with the forced-right-turn plan were unfounded.

'There really isn't a need for private (car) traffic on Market Street like there is on Van Ness or Geary," he said.

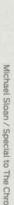
### 'A streetlife zone'

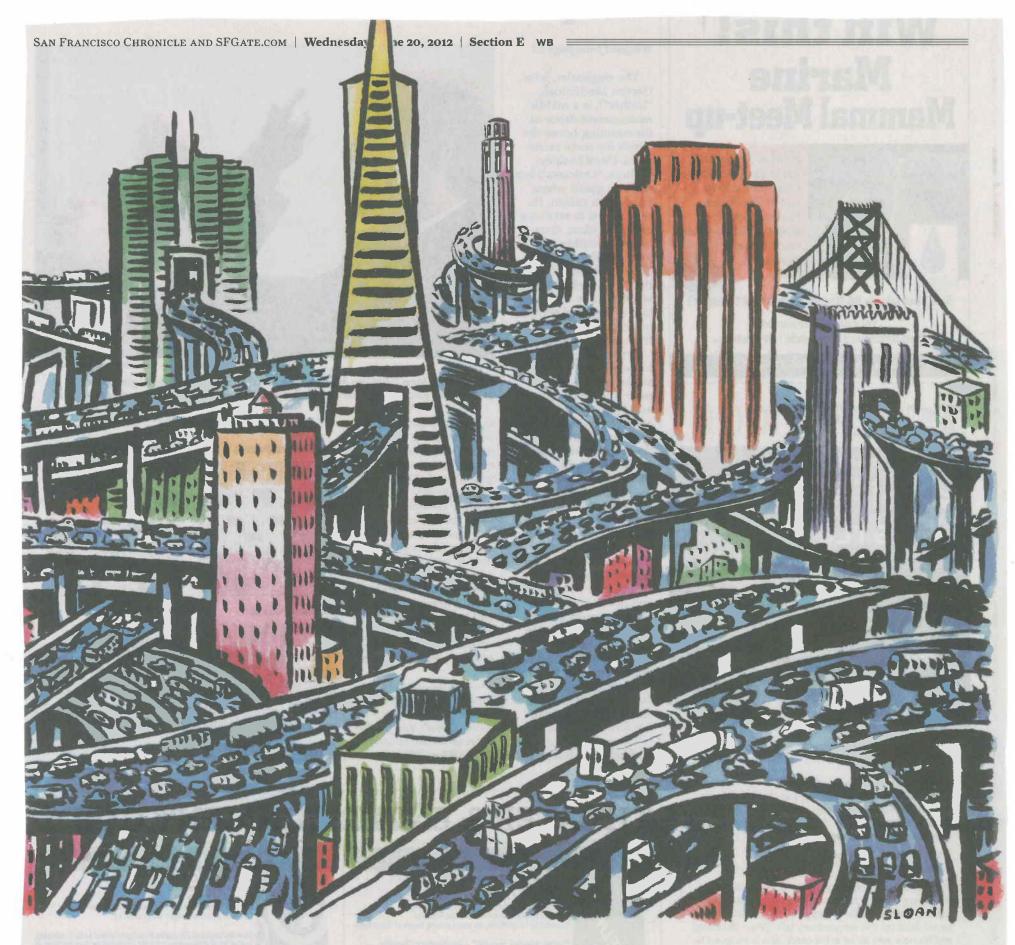
In addition to restricting traffic, the Better Market Street plan would reconfigure lanes and boarding areas to speed transit, accommodate bike riders by either creating a physically separated "cycletrack" or a shared lane with transit and vehicles, revitalize major public spaces along the street and introduce a "streetlife zone," an area between the street and sidewalk with benches, tables, trees and other amenities.

Opbroek knows the plan will face criticism, or at least a lot of questions, but said the city is ready to work with those who will be affected.

"All change is challenging," she said. "Each of these strategies, while beneficial, does have drawbacks."

Michael Cabanatuan is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: mcabanatuan@ sfchronicle.com Twitter: @ctuan





PLACE By John King

# Mess on Market beats alternative

So I was strolling Market Street late one afternoon last week and, as always, traffic was a mess. Cars clogged intersections and crosswalks. Buses honked, pedestrians fumed. Gridlocked commuters sat helpless at the wheel.

Then, in a flash, inspiration hit.

Bring back the Embarcadero Freeway! What could be more convenient for bridge-bound drivers than to ascend at Broadway or Clay Street and glide along the waterfront above city streets? No more confusion for commuters where two grids collide, and everyone else will have an Idea to elevate car lanes in S.F., seen as logical in 20th century, was antithetical to city's health

easier time with all those automobiles moved offstage.

Sanity returned and I reminded myself that the *removal* of the Embarcadero Freeway, the 1990 demolition of the two concrete decks after 31 inglorious years, was one of the smartest things the city ever did.

But that moment of connect-the-dots madness drove home two blunt points. First, there are no easy solutions to large urban problems. Second, a logical analysis of those problems can be taken to ruinous extremes — as was the case in San Francis-

King continues on E5

## Traffic fix on Market won't come from above

King from page E1

co and other American cities in the years just after World War II.

The challenge then and now is that the city's northeast corner has two street patterns that meet at Market but make no sense from an automobile standpoint. Some north-south routes connect cleanly. Some connect with a jog. Some don't connect at all.

On Market Street itself there are cars. And buses. And historic streetcars. Pedestrian throngs, and a bicycle contingent that seems to grow by the week.

#### One big snarl

All this translates to a snarled scene that isn't much different than when Miller McClintock pondered the "Market Street Crossing Problem" in, wait for it, 1937.

McClintock was a traffic consultant of nationwide renown; San Francisco was a city with new bridges to the north and east and a whole lot of traffic in between. The expert told the locals to make drivers happy, or else: "Unless the average person finds freedom to go where he wishes, when he wishes, with minimum delays and by routes which are direct to his destination, the attractiveness of the central district is reduced."

Like any traveling salesman, McClintock had his remedy close at hand - "the removal of hazardous and congestive movements of through traffic," which in turn would make San Francisco "the first American city to achieve a reasonably complete and permanent solution of the pressing problems of traffic accidents and traffic congestion."

Can't argue with that, right? Except that McClintock's "compreThe two street patterns that meet at Market make no sense from an automobile standpoint.

hensive Limited Way Plan" in retrospect was let me find the diplo-

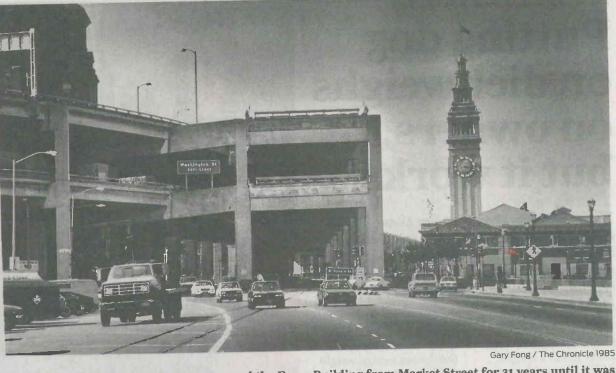
matic term — insane. Here's one example: An elevated path from the Bay Bridge ran above Kearny Street and continued above Columbus Avenue. Van Ness Avenue got the same treatment, though McClintock suggested that near City Hall "the elevated Limited Way should be given architectural treatment consistent with the monumental character of the existing structures in order that it may blend."

No mere hallucinogenic fantasy, McClintock's 460-page vision was commissioned by the city's Department of Public Works. Its approach to transportation segregation influenced the city's official Trafficways Plan of 1950 including, yes, ramps that whisked Financial District workers around Market Street to the Bay Bridge by way of the Embarcadero, which then was a working port.

### **Unthinking destruction**

Again, the move made sense when viewed as an exercise in traffic engineering. It's only when you appreciate that cities are fluid, fine-grained landscapes that the unthinking destruction cultural as well as physical — snaps into focus.

When ordinary citizens saw how the Embarcadero Freeway severed the Ferry Building from Market Street, the crude concrete swath was halted at Broadway. The 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake created an



The elevated Embarcadero Freeway severed the Ferry Building from Market Street for 31 years until it was demolished in 1990. An influential report drafted in 1937 called for elevating Van Ness Avenue as well.



Cars, pedestrians and streetcars jockey for position during the afternoon rush hour on Market Street in 1949, the year before the city's Trafficways Plan.



Today, city leaders are striving to create a Market Street that "is more beautiful and green," but there is no simple way to alleviate the congestion.

excuse for the doubledeck structure's removal, and now the Embarcadero is a treasured promenade along the bay. Many Bay Area residents probably don't know it ever was burdened with a

freeway at all.

Can Market Street blossom as well? Perhaps. The city's Better Market Street effort aims between now and 2015 to conjure up a boulevard that "is more beautiful

and green," where "all users have a pleasant, reliable, efficient and comfortable experience."

The only catch is all those cars. Even if private automobiles are banned from Market east of Van

Ness - something planners clearly would love to do — they'll still be funneled south onto First, Fourth, Eighth and 10th streets. North on Fremont, Third, Seventh

and Ninth streets. "Market Street is the constrained capacity point in the city," says Jeffrey Tumlin, author of 'Sustainable Transportation Planning: Tools for Creating Vibrant, Healthy and Resilient Communities."

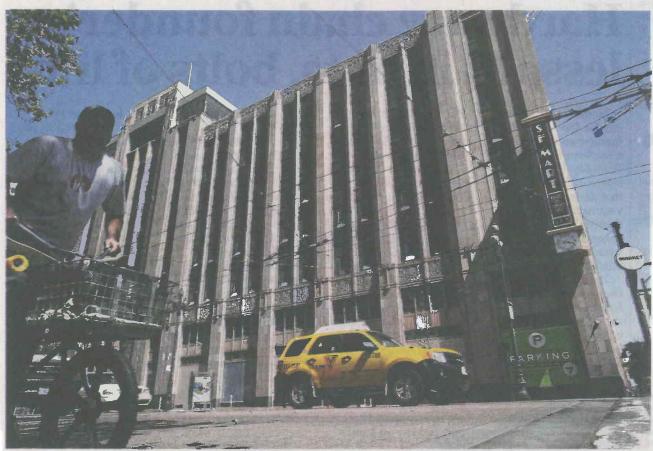
Tumlin's experience as a transportation consultant is that if 10 percent of drivers opt for other means of travel, most of the gridlock goes away. He explains how Muni would be a more attractive option if bus-only lanes actually were busonly, for instance.

Realistically, though, our ever-expanding and increasingly busy downtown will never be bucolic. "There's likely nothing we can do to eke more capacity out of the street network," Tumlin says. "The question is how can we best manage what we have.'

In other words, today's Market Street is the world we have chosen for ourselves. Not a pretty picture. Still, I'll take it over an elevated world that almost was.

Place appears on Wednesdays. John King is The San Francisco Chronicle's urban design critic. E-mail: jking@ sfchronicle.com

## Reality of Mid-Market renewal



Sarah Rice / Special to The Chronicle

Twitter is expected to open in the renovated S.F. Furniture Mart building in the Mid-Market area this week.

## Controversial tax break helping to spur rebound

By John Coté

The fresh lettering on the side of San Francisco's Reneir Hotel reads: "A Temporary Offering." Alex Samek and Brian De Lowe hope their

venture is anything but.

The two principals in the real estate and hotel development firm Kor Group bought the historic hotel on a gritty block of the city's Mid-Market neighborhood earlier this year and are partnering with local artists, food-truck figures and cocktail crafters to transform the Renoir's ground floor into a restaurant with revolving chefs, a hip destination bar, and a combined coffee shop and satellite retail outlet for the Luggage Store Gallery, an artist hub with its main space a block away.

Mid-Market continues on A16

## Mid-Market by the numbers

## \$2.7 million

Estimated difference in long-term payroll tax growth annually for the city from forming a Mid-Market tech cluster through a tax break versus if Twitter did not move there.

7,000 People projected to work in the two-building Market Square development after renovations are done in 2013.

1967 Year Market Street was dug up for BART and Muni tunnels, turning it into a construction site for years.

1979 Year Mayor Dianne Feinstein dedicated a "revitalized" Market Street after the subway project was done.

Drunk and disorderly contacts by Central Market Community Benefit District community guides in March 2011, the month before the Central Market tax break was approved.

125 Drunk and disorderly contacts by Central Market Community Benefit District community guides in March 2012, a year after the tax break had been in place.

Sources: San Francisco Controller, Central Market Community Benefit District, Shorenstein, Mayor's Office, Chronicle research

## FROM THE COVER

# Pockets of change in Mid-Market

Mid-Market from page A1

It's a microcosm of city officials' latest attempt to revitalize a roughly six-block stretch of Market Street using loans, grants and what's known as the "Twitter tax break" to attract arts groups, entrepreneurs, institutional investors and ultimately major technology companies like the growing microblogging service.

This week, Twitter is expected to open its new headquarters for 800 employees on Market between Ninth and 10th streets — roughly one year after city leaders enacted the controversial six-year tax holiday on new hires for companies in Mid-Market and the adjacent Tenderloin.

It's a tipping point, proponents say, that will set the long-blighted area on the path to becoming a thriving neigh-

"It's already happening," Mayor Ed Lee said recently in his office, where a construction crane working on a Mid-Market housing development was visible from his window.

But the reality of transforming Mid-Market - which still sports a patchwork of boarded-up buildings, strip joints and erratic characters on the street — has proved much more nuanced than either critics or supporters of the tax

break have asserted. The proposal was derided as a corporate giveaway that would drive out artists and low-income residents. Proponents like Lee, who as interim mayor in early 2011 adopted the tax-break plan he inherited from Mayor Gavin Newsom as the city tried to convince Twitter to stay in San Francisco, said last month: "I think you're seeing a total resurgence."

### A home for Twitter

The reality has been pockets of major construction, a flourishing art scene, and an influx of nonprofits and small businesses. More projects are expected, and commercial rents have soared. Still, only four companies — each with less than 100 employees — have so far applied for the tax break. with one still awaiting approv-

The transformation is most palpable in the immediate environs of Twitter's new home in the 1937 Art Deco building that formerly housed the Western Furniture Exchange and Merchandise Mart.

The Shorenstein real estate group, which bought the former furniture market and an accompanying building for \$120 million in March 2011, shortly before the Board of Supervisors voted to approve the tax break, said it will spend \$300 million on the project, including major renovations to both buildings.

Now named Market Square, the two buildings combined will offer almost 1.1 million square feet of commercial



Sarah Rice / Special to The Chronicle

S.F. Mayor Ed Lee (second from right) and Twitter CFO Ali Rowghani (right) tour the old S.F. Furniture Mart rooftop garden.

space, with between 65,000 and 90,000 square feet of that planned for retail, including a midsize grocery store in a neighborhood long considered to be a food desert.

"We're transforming the ground floor as a destination place," said Tom McDonnell, vice president for leasing at Shorenstein.

About 90 percent of the office space in the first building has already been leased, including 215,000 square feet to Twitter, with call center company CallSocket, home decor website One Kings Lane and social-network service Yammer all leasing space this

"You've got an entire city block that has essentially sat vacant for a decade," McDonnell said. "The payroll tax holiday has just been a fantastic thing to offer for the area and a pretty clear driver for people who are looking."

#### A ripple effect

The emergence of Twitter as an anchor tenant has jumpstarted work on stalled residential towers on either side of the old furniture mart that combined will hold more than 1,000 housing units.

"Shorenstein and Twitter were obviously the catalyst, with others queuing up to follow," said Stephen Wilson, executive vice president for development and construction at AvalonBay Communities, Inc., which purchased a vacant lot at 55 Ninth St. in June for an undisclosed price.

Construction is planned to start next month on a 17-floor building with 273 housing

## Twitter tax break

The Central Market Street and Tenderloin tax exclusion was designed to keep Twitter in San Francisco while revitalizing the Mid-Market area. Here's how it compared in 2011 with other payroll tax breaks the city gave, including those on stock options, biotechnology and clean technology companies, and businesses that hire disabled, economically disadvantaged or other qualified workers while located in an "enterprise zone." The zone includes a large swath of the city, including the Financial District, SoMa and Bayview-Hunters Point

Type of tax break	Businesses approved	Total eligible employees	Payroll tax forgone by city
Central Market Street and Tenderloin area	3	140	\$41.064
Enterprise zone	94	406	\$297.144
Clean technology	22	629	\$863.453*
Biotechnology	27	704	\$1.4 million
Stock-based compensation	1,000	1,975**	\$1.5 million

\*Includes \$8,592 forgone under small business exemption for clean-tech companies. \*\*Total San Francisco employees. Some may not have received stock options

Source: San Francisco treasurer & tax collector

'We couldn't be more excited about the transformation of Mid-Market and the vibrant neighborhood that will emerge in the coming years," Wilson

On the corner of 10th and Market streets, the Crescent Heights development with 750 units had sat in limbo since getting approvals in 2007. Construction began late last year.

At Eighth and Market streets, construction has begun on the second phase of the three-phase, 1,900-unit Trinity Place project. A block away, construction should begin in August on a boutique hotel and youth hostel in the historic Grant Building at 1095 Market

With 7,000 people projected to work in the Market Square project when it's completed at the end of 2013, ancillary businesses from a coffee and wine bar to breakfast and lunch spots have sprouted up.

CityPlace, a dormant shopping center project that propo-

nents said would breach the invisible wall that seemingly halts foot traffic at the Fifth Street gateway to Mid-Market, was recently bought with plans to build the project as already approved.

Elsewhere on Mid-Market, an area that roughly runs from Fifth to 11th streets, arts groups are thriving. In the last year, at least three galleries and studios have opened.

The American Conservatory Theater converted its costume shop at Seventh and Market streets into a small theater in late 2011 and then in February bought the vacant Strand Theater with plans to reopen it as a 300-seat venue and restaurant in 2014.

"In every area that revitalizes, artists come and they're at the forefront of it and then they and other low-income people get moved out," said Darryl Smith, co-founder of the Luggage Store Gallery. "But I really feel that there is something different about it

this time."

Vocal advocates, along with rent control and safeguards against converting single-room occupancy hotels to marketrate housing, will help ensure current residents can remain, Smith and others said.

"I've seen zero effect on housing itself" in the area, said Gail Gilman, executive director of Community Housing Partnership, a nonprofit that owns and manages 11 buildings that provide permanent, supportive housing to the homeless.

The nonprofit recently moved its headquarters to 20 Jones St., just above a checkcashing business that sees a regular crowd of loiterers out front, to have more space. The partnership negotiated their lease in October and has since seen commercial rents surge in the neighborhood.

What we hear is that a lot of folks are speculating," Gilman said, "which could be hard for small businesses or

Mid-Market continues on A17

#### Mid-Market from page A16

others that want to move into the neighborhood."

### Leery of gentrification

Others are more skeptical of the housing impact.

Mark Johnson, 55, has lived for nine years in a building owned by Gilman's group that now has the Show Dogs gourmet sausage restaurant on the ground floor. He is wary of increased living costs.

"I don't know if we're going to be priced out of the city," said Johnson, who commonly goes by Mark Anthony. "Real estate is already high. I don't want it to get any higher."

Around his apartment, Johnson says, he's seen street crime shift from Sixth Street, where a long-promised police substation is supposed to open by the end of the year, to a few blocks away.

Crime rates have been uneven in the area roughly covered by the tax break since it took effect a year ago, with rapes and drug offenses down considerably but robbery, aggravated assaults and burglaries all up, according to police figures.

"Its definitely getting better out there," said Deputy Police Chief Kevin Cashman.

Still, some building owners



Sarah Rice / Special to The Chronicle

Twitter CFO Ali Rowghani tours the S.F. Furniture Mart, which is under renovations to house the company's offices. His firm has leased 215,000 square feet of space there.

and others aren't seeing that progress and want the city to do more in terms of policing and quality-of-life issues. Public intoxication, drugs and homelessness remain a part of everyday life.

Sources: CrimeView - Cable; Homicide data - Homicide Detail, The Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development

#### **Persistent problems**

Well aware of those concerns, Lee recently spurned an effort to place a center for parolee services in the neighborhood, citing community leaders' concerns over the dense concentration of residential hotels that serve as a first stop for those released from prison.

Rehabilitation "won't happen if you just locate services and concentrations of them in

an area where bad habits get reinforced," Lee said.
In March, the most recent

reports available, community guides for the Central Market Community Benefit District logged 668 public assistance, safety or emergency incidents, including numerous drug deals, "ferocious drummer banging on pipes" at a 7-Eleven, and indecent exposure by a wheelchair-bound woman who then put her pants back on and agreed to be taken to shelter. That's up from 577 such

John Blanchard / The Chronicle

incidents the guides reported in March 2011, the month before the tax break was ap-

"The first part of the process to deal with that is just taking off the plywood, turning on the lights and getting people to come in and out," said Samek. part of the team redoing the Renoir Hotel.

A block away, about 15 downtrodden people sat on the low wall in front of the Trinity Plaza apartments planned to be demolished to make way for new housing.

"The cops come by, run us off, we go around the corner," said Jimmy Rokas, 46, as he sat recently with a crew he identified as Gino, Sisco Kid and Chico.

Rokas, who, unlike his homeless colleagues, has a room on nearby Sixth Street, said things are not the same,

"The city is changing a lot around here at Mid-Market," he said. "There really is a dif-ference."

John Coté is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: jcote@sfchronicle.com

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# Save Market's unique charr

Will we ever learn from our past "urban renewal" mistakes ("Reality of Mid-Market renewal," June 10")?

The Mid-Market project will once again destroy the unique charm and character of a San Francisco district and turn it into yet another glass-covered box - generic vernacular architecture that would be at home in the San Fernando Valley, San Jose or Sunnyvale.

Why can't we appreciate and preserve the historic, irreplaceable buildings of San Francisco, built at the more human level? People don't visit and move to San Francisco for the bland. big-box buildings. In fact, they detract from our world-famous ambience.

Can't we learn from the loss of the City of Paris and the Fox Theater? Let's encourage renovation of the historic Mid-Market buildings rather than destruction and construction of a boring, generic mall.

Jonathan Pritikin, Mill Valley

### Police wasting tax money

I'm delighted that Alameda County prosecutors have decided not to file charges against seven of the Occupy the Farm protesters accused of unlawful assembly ("Activists won't face charges," June 8).

But how I wish police departments that round up protesters on flimsy grounds were obligated to repay taxpayers for the extreme waste of money represented by such actions. If they were, we would instantly see an end to it.

Carol Denney, Berkeley

### **Groveling Gavin**

"Where have you been, Gavin?" (Editorial, June 8). Well, last week our peripatetic lieutenant governor was the first to greet President Obama upon his arrival on Air Force One.

Newsom's groveling was shameless. How do you editorialize on Newsom with such admirably humorous restraint? I wish I were as charitable.

Great reading.

Virginia Newball, Greenbrae

### Leukemia vs. tobacco money

At the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society banquet at the Fairmont Hotel on Saturday night, at which the man and woman of the year awards were announced, the attendees were genuinely thrilled that the woman of the year had raised more than \$200,000 for the society's research projects and that the campaign had raised more than \$500,000.

Does it bother anyone else that the tobacco industry has invested by some reports \$40 million to defeat Proposition 29, the revenues from which were earmarked for cancer research and tobacco education and prevention?

Malcolm McLorg, San Anselmo

## Park damage: new attitude

All the stories and letters regarding vandalism in the parks hit home when I visited the new lookout at Lands End.

When it opened recently, the restroom was spotless and as pristine as the surrounding environment.

However, later I sadly noted that the mirrors and hand dryers were defaced with graffiti - ugly omens.

I don't believe prison sentences and extensive surveillance are the answer.

What is needed is a new attitude promoted by a long-term commitment to changing the culture regarding public spaces.

We've seen the positive effects of antismoking, anti-drug and anti-litter campaigns.

San Francisco is home to many creative advertising and design agencies - surely there is some organization with the talent, know-how and concern to take on this chal-

Our parks and public spaces are a trust and legacy that we hold in common and it is only through a consensus of understanding and the support of the community that their preservation and integrity can be assured.

Steve Abney, San Francisco

# Big mall planned for seedy S.F. strip

Investors put Mid-Market retail project back on track

#### By Carolyn Said

San Francisco's CityPlace, a stalled retail development on a seedy section of Market Street between Fifth and Sixth, is being purchased by investors who plan to build a sleek, glass-front-

ed, five-story mall.

The CityPlace deal, coming as Twitter finishes moving into its new headquarters on Market between Ninth and 10th streets, adds a key piece to the long-promised revitalization of the blighted Mid-Market area, San Francisco's main thoroughfare from Powell Street to Civic Center.

"We are very bullish on Market Street and on

CityPlace continues on A7

## FROM THE COVER

## Investors plan to build big mall on Mid-Market

CityPlace from page A1

San Francisco," said Chris Maguire, chief executive officer of Dallas real estate firm Cypress Equities, which signed a purchase contract for CityPlace last week and plans to build a 260,000-square-foot retail center. "It will have good, clear (rentable floor space) with high ceiling heights and great visibility - all the things that retailers want - and that will make it unique."

## In receiver's hands

CityPlace, located on a little more than an acre at 935 to 965 Market St., was supposed to break ground early this year. But instead, the four buildings remain boarded up and in the hands of a court-appointed receiver after the previous owner's lender went bankrupt.

Cypress will keep the original architecture design for the complex with "some tweaks" that retail tenants might request, Maguire said. "We think they designed a beautiful proj-

"Your whole city out there seems to be doing really well right now," Maguire said. "There is a lot of interest in this project from retailers. Existing retailers are moving around;

new ones are coming in. There are not a lot of options for

CityPlace's original owners "purchased as many buildings as possible to create enough (critical mass) to turn around that block, which at the moment has an unsavory flavor," said Vikki Johnson, senior managing director for Colliers Retail Services Group, who worked as predevelopment consultant to pension fund Commonfund, CityPlace's original owner. "You can't just open one little building in the middle of a blighted block. You have to have enough capacity to make a difference.

Maguire said he thinks the project will be able to excee San Francisco's current limit of 90,000 square feet per store.

"We believe there is more than one large-scale retailer interested that would need 100,000 square feet plus," he said. "The city has indicated to us that for the appropriate retailer, they would be quite interested."

## Mayor plans to move fast

Mayor Ed Lee met with Cypress as it was considering the purchase and promised to help cut through red tape to get the complex built as soon as possible, a city official said.



Investors envision a large mall on Market Street between Fifth and Sixth after the previous owner's lender went bankrupt.

"Revitalizing Central Market with new jobs, small business, tech and the arts is clearly a high priority for me," Lee said in a statement. "The news that CityPlace is now moving forward is yet more good news and I'm looking forward to welcoming more retail to the neighborhood."

Real estate experts were similarly enthusiastic.

"It's great to see the vision

finally coming to reality," said Kazuko Morgan, executive vice president of Cushman & Wakefield commercial brokers.

Reacting to reports that J.C. Penney will move into City-Place, something that Maguire did not confirm, she added: "That is exactly what that project needs — a big anchor tenant like J.C. Penney to kick-start the project and solidify the area."

The Mid-Market corridor

"was a central point of commerce back in the day, but that changed over time," said real estate analyst Colin Yasukochi. "This is a good connection point to help unify that portion of Market up to where Twitter is at Market Square. That area is definitely in need of more amenities, and this project will certainly bring that. It will be another catalyst for further improvements along the corri-

### Sale expected to close in July

CityPlace's "shovel ready" status - it has gone through the entitlement process - and prime location spurred a competitive bidding process.

"There was a lot of interest," Maguire said. "We were fortunate to be able to make a deal."

Asset manager the Carlyle Group is Cypress' partner in the deal, according to the San Francisco Business Times, which reported the purchase price as more than \$20 million.

If all due diligence checks out, the sale should close in July, Maguire said.

Groundbreaking will depend on city permits, but "realistically starting construction early next year is a viable target for us," he said. He expects construction to take 24 months as it will involve demolishing buildings and creating underground parking.

"Perhaps in late 2014 we could get the first retailers open, but certainly by the first quarter of 2015," he said.

Carolyn Said is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: csaid@sfchronicle.com

NATIVE SON By Carl Nolte

# Less famous Painted Ladies easily match renown sisters



Jill Schneider / The Chronicle

Victorian homes, many built in the 1860s and '70s, line South Van Ness Avenue in the Mission District.

Sometimes, the best things in San Francisco are hidden in plain sight, for example, a collection of stately Victorian houses along the otherwise slightly seedy South Van Ness Avenue in the heart of the Mission District.

The Mission District Victorians are not nearly as well known as the row of six "Painted Ladies" on Alamo Square. "I think the South Van Ness houses are better," said Michael Nolan, a Bernal Heights resident who began to notice the grand Mission Victorians when the 14-Mission bus was

Street to South Van Ness this spring.

"You get a free architectural tour right out the window of the Muni bus," he said. "It's a delightful surprise."

His favorite block is on the east side of South Van Ness, between 20th and 21st Streets. There, a dozen Victorians are all in a row, capped by a threestory residence at 959 South Van Ness, built in the Queen Anne style, with an enormous turret that resembles a witch's

A historical study by the San Francisco Planning Department calls 959 South Van Ness "one of the city's most dramatic Queen Anne-style mansions."

It was built in 1889 for John Coop, a leading citizen, and is the centerpiece of "Mansion Row," a remnant of the days when this part of the Mission was among the most fashionable areas in the city. One of the houses on the block was built in 1868, ancient by West Coast standards.

Up the street and around the corner are more Victorians. The 1300 block of South Van Ness, between 24th and 25th streets has two old mansions that are official city landmarks. At 1348 South Van Ness is a Queen Anne with bay windows and a tall brick chimney. Just across the street, at 1381, is another beauty.

There are more Victorians on tree-lined Shotwell Street, just east of South Van Ness.

"I happen to love it," said Jonathan Lammers, a historical architect with the Page and Turnbull firm, of this corner of the Mission. "I think it's the best preserved and most interesting part of the city."

The old buildings —
there are well over 150 of
them in and around
South Van Ness Avenue
— illustrate both the past
and the future of the city.

This part of the Mission started as a suburb, some miles from the center of San Francisco. It began to develop in the 1860s and '70s, because of its famous sunny weather and easy transportation, including a horsecar line down Howard Street, as South Van Ness was then called.

Lawyers, doctors and developers built substantial houses in the area — redwood and oak, trimmed with the gingerbread Victorians loved.

Most of them survived the 1906 earthquake and fire.

They also survived the changes that swept over the city. First, the transformation of the Mission into a working-class area, then later the demographic shift that brought in thousands of Latinos. The old Irish Mission became Hispanic. The district was colorful and vibrant — and inexpensive by San Francisco standards.

A glance at the real estate records would make an old San Franciscan weep. The landmark mansion at 1348 South

Van Ness — six bedrooms, 5,000 square feet — sold in 1997 for \$450,000. The beautiful Queen Anne at 959 South Van Ness went for \$203,500 in 2002.

Now Zillow, the real estate website, values 1348 at \$1.9 million, and 959 at \$1.7 million. The average price for a Mission property, says Trulia, another site, is \$791,082.

Some blocks of South Van Ness Avenue feature auto repair shops and dive bars, while a few blocks away are newly restored mansions. Whiz Burgers, which looks like a 1955 drive-in, is at 18th Street; Limon, a hot Peruvian spot, is at 22nd.

A beautiful little Queen Anne at 22nd and Shotwell streets, one block off South Van Ness, has been restored and houses Pushbike, which sells upscale bicycle clothes.

What's happening in the old Mission? "Rampant gentrification," said Lammers, the historical

Carl Nolte is a San Francisco Chronicle columnist. His column appears every Sunday. E-mail: cnolte@9sfchronicle.com



# SFMOMA closing for expansion

By Carolyn Copeland Special to S.F. Examiner

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art is working to make its collection more accessible to members of the public, but art lovers throughout The City are going to have to wait a few years to enjoy it.

SFMOMA announced Tuesday that it will shut its doors in June 2013 to make way for a major expansion project expected to be completed in early 2016.

The expansion will be designed by the architecture firm Snøhetta and is projected to cost approximately \$555 million. It will run along the rear of the existing building and will feature a two-story gallery with glass enclosed on three sides on Howard Street, a new façade and entryway on the east side of the building, several outdoor lerraces, sculpture gardens and pedestrian walkways beside the building. Additionally, here will be an 18-foot wide promenade that will provide more public spaces.

All of the museum's programs and exhibitions will be moved off-site during the three-year construction period. In the interim, the art will be displayed at traveling museum exhibitions, outdoor commissions and neighborhood festivals throughout the Bay Area.

SFMOMA hopes the addition of free



**Growth:** The museum's expansion, designed to add new entrances and galleries to engage the public, will take more than three years and \$555 million to complete.

galleries on the ground level and new entrances in every direction will help engage the public.

Discussions about a possible expansion

began in 2009 in order to accommodate the museum's growing audiences and increased collection.

ccopeland@sfexaminer.com

C8 | Wednesday, June 20, 2012 | SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE AND SFGATE.COM WB 社会社会

## FROM THE COVER

## Museum will go dark, but it won't be asleep

SFMOMA from page C1

most contemporary art museums are. I think most of them tend to speak more to each other than to the public. So we wrote a strategic plan last year for an institution that's more accessible and welcoming to the community."

"If you look at Snøhetta's work," Benezra said, referring to the museum expansion's Scandinavian architects, "it's very open and hospitable. .... I'd love that psychology to continue and expand in the

SFMOMA's staff members and their counterparts at other museums are still planning which prominent and lesser-known works from its collections will go on exhibit, but first on the interim agenda, in 2013, will be a show of 60-odd works in all media from SFMOMA staged by the Contemporary Jewish Museum. It will include defining works by Piet Mondrian and Mark

Rothko and have art and spirituality as a theme. It will involve curators from multiple disciplines and both institu-

"In the last month, we've really been working on putting the sequence of projects in place and themes that made sense in each venue," said SFMOMA senior curator Janet Bishop. "The CJM checklist is pretty well set, but all the others are still in development."

In 2014, lending photographs in the main, SFMOMA will partner with Yerba Buena Center for the Arts to present a cross-disciplinary survey of the arts in South Africa after apartheid. Also in 2014, senior curators from SFMOMA and the Asian Art Museum will collaborate on a show, drawing deeply on their respective collections, surveying the cultural roots of various ideas of beauty.

SFMOMA has also commissioned Los Angeles architect



Snøhetta / Courtesy SFMOMA

An artist's depiction shows how the expanded SFMOMA will look when it reopens in 2015 after a nearly three-year hiatus.

Greg Lynn to build a floating architecture and design pavilion that will double as an outdoor exhibition venue and a viewing point for the 2013 America's Cup races.

Other plans include the first

presentation in its entirety of Los Angeles media artist Doug Aitken's epic three-part video "Empire" (2008-14). The artist is still scouting venues for the piece, which is intended for projection on outdoor walls or

billboards.

During the hiatus, some staff members will be busy consolidating all the museum's holdings under one roof at a recently acquired building at an undisclosed location in South San Francisco. Until now, collection storage has been divided among three locations, including SFMO-MA's Third Street building and an off-site warehouse.

"We've stored things at the Veterans Memorial Building since 1935," Benezra said, referring to the Civic Center building SFMOMA occupied as a tenant before it opened its dedicated building in 1995. Soon the Veterans Building will close for an upgrade of its own.

SFMOMA's open-handed board has already funded purchase of the South San Francisco building and its soon-to-be-begun redesign and build-out as top-drawer

"Most of the work of the museum takes place behind the scenes," Benezra said. During its downtime and preparations for reopening in 2016, the people involved in art handling, exhibition design, conservation and publications "will be as busy as ever."

Kenneth Baker is The San Francisco Chronicle's art critic. E-mail: kennethbaker@ sfchronicle.com both describe the case brewing against him as a "political witch hunt."

Records of the phone calls, which will show only the dates and times the calls were made, and to what numbers, have not yet been released.

- Rachel Gordon G-27-20 [2] Growing pains: Mosco-

Growing pains: Moscone Convention Center, the centerpiece of the convention trade in San Francisco for the past three decades, doesn't have enough space to keep up with demand, threatening to put the city at a disadvantage when it comes to competing with other cities to nab the lucrative trade shows and conferences.

The answer to the city's dilemma: "We are going to expand Moscone Center," Mayor Ed Lee told a packed luncheon hosted by the San Francisco Travel Association. The venue: Moscone

Convention Center, of course.

As for the details, Lee said that's a work in progress. Architectural firms Skidmore, Owens & Merrill and Mark Cavagnero Associates have been tapped to develop 25-year master plan for the expansion.

"We're at the very, very front end, the vision process," said John Noguchi, the city's convention facilities director.

The goal is to have a preliminary plan drawn up in about six months, with the first phase of construction completed in late 2017 or early 2018.

Moscone Center, located at three different sites on Howard Street between Third and Fifth streets, hosts about 50 events a year.

- Rachel Gordon

E-mail: cityinsider@ sfchronicle.com Twitter: @SFCityInsider.



## S.F. board endorses arena idea

Score another point for the Golden State Warriors' efforts to build an arena on Piers 30-32 in time for the 2017 basketball season. The majority of the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday gave the team an assist with a resolution backing the general idea for the project and waiving the city's traditional competitive bidding rules — meaning the Warriors, and nobody else, get to develop the piers.

"Obviously, this is an opportunity we need to move quickly on," said board President David Chiu.

We told you recently about some South Beach neighbors' concerns over a huge arena moving in next door, including traffic woes, blocked views and the potential of an ugly parking garage. Mainly, the neighbors are ticked they weren't alerted to the idea before a who's who of city officials and sports legends took to the piers to announce it.

Supervisor **Jane Kim**, who also signed off on the resolution and represents South Beach, said supervisors met with the Warriors last week and were assured community meetings would be held imminently — before an arena is actually designed.

The supervisors are scheduled to hear more about the arena at Tuesday's meeting, Chiu said. (0 - 6 - 2012)

- Heather Knight

## Nob Hill neighbors continue to go after Masonic Center

Local neighborhood association demands environmental review

By Andrea Koskey S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

A neighborhood group opposing increased use of the Nob Hill Masonic Center filed a cease and desist order this week to stop the venue from hosting events until an environmental review is completed.

If the order is not complied with by Friday, the Nob Hill Association

will file a lawsuit.

"They're almost certainly going to ignore us," said David Harmer, vice president of public affairs for the association. "The City is allowing and encouraging them to be so devious. We feel we've got no choice."

The association even claims that a judge in April 2011 ordered operations to cease until an environmental

report was completed.

The Masonic Temple received a permit this past January to allow

Live Nation, a concert promoter, to hold 68 live events and 219 large evening events at the center.

Neighborhood groups appealed to the Board of Supervisors in March, and a compromise with five of the six groups dropped the permit to 54 live events and 176 nighttime events. The Nob Hill Association was not a part of that agreement.

The association said that historically, 25 to 30 live shows have been held at the center. A lawsuit was filed last month saying the increase requires an environmental review before approval.

Harmer said a lawsuit will be filed next week if the organization is not

compliant.

Despite the protests and pending lawsuits, the Entertainment Commission approved Live Nation's permit. The permit has been granted previously at the California Street venue.

According to Matt Prieshoff, chief operating officer for Live Nation, it's permitted to hold concerts, standup comedy and other evening events in the 3,200-seat venue.

akoskey@sfexaminer.com

## THE BOTTOM LINE By Andrew S. Ross

# Noe Valley plans parking-lot project

The Noe Valley Ministry needs at least \$4 million to renovate the 126-year-old Presbyterian church in San Francisco's Noe Valley.

The immediate thought was to sell a parking lot the church owned on 24th Street to an interested real estate developer. That is, until residents came up with another option: They would buy the parking lot and turn it into a mini town square.

The quixotic idea, born two years ago, looks like it just might work — and be a model for other neighborhoods looking to preserve or create open space.

To date, organizers have raised \$250,000 in pledges, have held a number of matchingfund drives (just like public broadcasting) and have a financial commitment — size to be determined — from the city.

They've also roped in an architect at

Ross continues on E6

## Noe Valley residents plan parking-lot tow

Ross from page E1

CMG Landscape Architecture, which has worked on a number of open-space projects in San Francisco, including Crissy Field and Yerba Buena, to come up with preliminary designs for the town square.

"It's been a grassroots campaign. Now we're looking for lead donors," said **Todd David**, one of the organizers who can be found pitching the idea to neighbors shopping at the Noe Valley Farmers' Market, which uses the parking lot every Saturday.

A number of businesses in Noe Valley have made pledges or matching grants, including Realtor BJ Droubi, First Republic Bank ("they're making a five-figure donation," said David), Patxi's Pizza, and Eco+Historical Homes, which, as its name implies, buys and restores historic homes in San Francisco.

Assuming enough money is raised — the deadline with the church is December — work would start soon after on what the organizers visualize as a "central gathering place." In addition to the farmers' mar-

ket, the site will offer food pantries, music events, evening movies, neighborhood bingo, exercise classes, senior citizen events and more.

Supervisor **Scott Wiener**, whose district encompasses Noe Valley, enthusiastically supports the plan. "The main stretch of Noe Valley has no open space, except around the edges. If we were to lose that 24th Street space to development, I think it would be very damaging."

Again, assuming the money is raised, the city, in the form of the Park and Recreation Open Space Fund, will open its wallet. Organizers are hoping for \$2 million, to match the \$2 million they're looking to raise privately.

Once the project is built, maintenance and cleaning would be handled and paid for by the Community Benefits District, not the city. Organizers anticipate another revenue stream opening up with the increasingly popular farmers' market.

"This is a public-private setup that could really work for other neighborhoods," said David.



Noe Valley Town Square

The project envisions using the parking lot area for events including the weekly farmers' market, music, films and bingo.

Mayor **Ed Lee** appears to agree. A regular patron of the farmers' market — a short distance from his home in Glen Park — Lee said, "This is a very good model for the city. We're very willing to explore it."

Down to the details: "We're very close," Lee said Wednesday when asked about the possibility a Chinese stateowned bank will invest up to \$1.7 billion in the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard and Treasure Island redevelopment projects.

"We're not all there yet. There's some sensitive language and details about how the money would be used."

Lee, who was scheduled to iron out details this week with the president of Lennar Urban, the projects' lead developer, said it certainly won't be spent on imported labor, as Chinese companies are wont to do in other countries.

Lee said he had no objection to the **China Development Bank** bringing another stateowned company, **China Rail**-

## derail subway project

The San Francisco Municipal Transporta-tion Agency, which is overseeing the \$1.6 billion

"We are a destination shopping area, with many small, unique shops," he said. "If you lay heavy equipment down on Columbus Avenue and

close due to the construction.

Possible traffic impacts Proposal: Merchants say they were told Central Subway work would affect Columbus between Filbert and Vallejo. Vallejo Street

uld project that has no direct community benefit.

6-12-2012

wreisman@sfexaminer.com

dead at a hospital.

Just two weeks earlier, after having broken the Strava record, Flint wrote on Twitter: "49.3 mph, on a bike. How I find religion on Sunday morning."

According to Kang, the accident has parallels to the case of Chris Bucchere, the bicyclist charged in San Francisco last week with felony vehicular manslaughter for running down a 71-year-old pedestrian in the Castro. Prosecutors say the crash happened at the end of a ride in which Bucchere was tracking his time on Strava. "We don't have a comment," said Rachel Parsons, Strava's marketing vice president, when asked Friday about the pending suit and the Bucchere case.

Incidentally, the Flint family's lawsuit doesn't specify the exact damages. But Kang says, "It will not be a small amount."

Birthday surprise: On Monday, San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee showed up to honor Supervisor Christina Olague—whom he appointed to the board—at a \$500-a-head birthday bash at the Ferry Plaza benefiting her November campaign.



Lea Suzuki / The Chronicle

Mayor Ed Lee and Supervisor Christina Olague visit Haight Street merchants in January.

The next day, Olague repaid the favor by signing on as cosponsor of a business tax plan being pushed by one of the mayor's rivals.

**EXTRA!** Catch our blog at www.sfgate.com/matierandross.

San Francisco Chronicle columnists Phillip Matier and Andrew Ross appear Sundays, Mondays and Wednesdays. Matier can be seen on the KPIX-TV morning and evening news. He can also be heard on KCBS radio Monday through Friday at 7:50 a.m. and 5:50 p.m. Got a tip? Call (415) 777-8815, or e-mail matier andross@sfchronicle.com.

## Open spaces downtown not always so easy to find



Samantha Sabatelli of San Francisco talks with friends as she sits on the terrace on the 15th floor of 343 Sansome St. The space offers flowers and a view of the Financial District and a narrow slice of the bay.

## Law would make S.F. havens more apparent to passers-by

#### By John King

If you're someone who enjoys the solitude of downtown San Francisco's hidden public spaces, your secret rooftops and interior nooks soon may be secret no more.

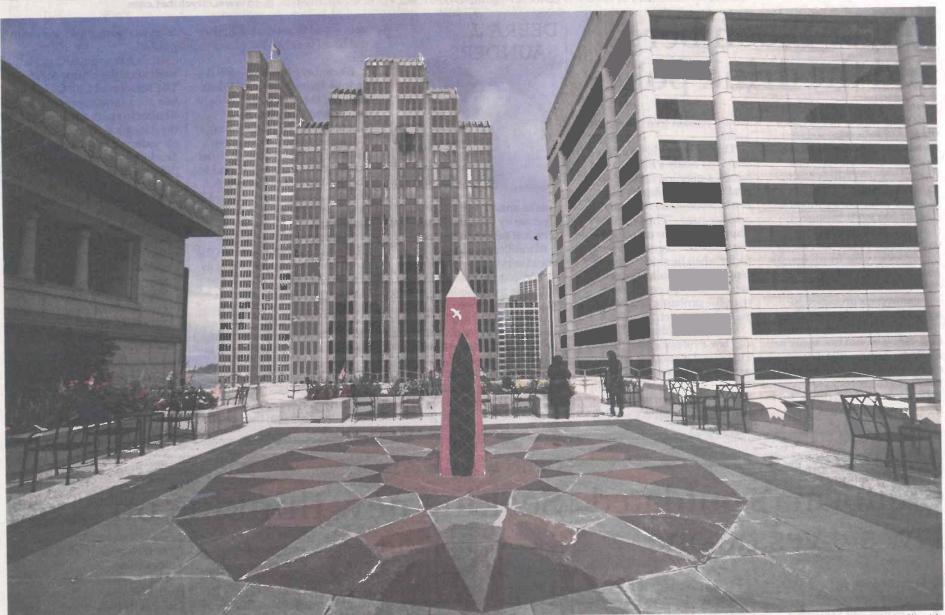
The signs that announce their presence may soon be bigger, bolder and more plentiful. There even could be a city website mapping all the locations — the first official guide since the program requiring such spaces kicked off in

The proposals are aimed at raising awareness of public spaces that often aren't known to the public at large. They go to the City Planning Commission on Thursday and then, if approved, to the Board of Supervisors.

"These spaces help enliven the experience of Downtown continues on A11



The rooftop plaza at 343 Sansome St. is open to the public but is marked only by a small plaque on the building.



Lea Suzuki / The Chronicle

The terrace on the 15th floor of 343 Sansome St. in the Financial District is open to the public. The space is sunny and is a popular lunch spot for office workers.

# pen spaces not so easy to locate

Downtown from page A1

being in our dense urban downtown, but workers and residents first have to realize they're there," said Supervisor David Chiu, who introduced the legislation being reviewed by the commission.

Chiu's legislation focuses on spaces that are privately owned and maintained but open to all passers-by during the times that office workers might be present. At least 15 such spaces have been created since 1985 in an effort to "offer office employees, residents and visitors a breaking room to rest and refresh," in the words of the Planning Department.

#### Not always visible

The size of the spaces is related to the amount of new commercial development, with 1 square foot of publicly accessible space per 50 square feet of new office or hotel space. The trade-off has generated such spacious plazas as the landscapes outside the towers at 555 and 560 Mission St., but also getaways found on rooftops and within buildings.

While the hidden spots include some of the best privately owned spaces, The Chronicle in February showed

## Finding places

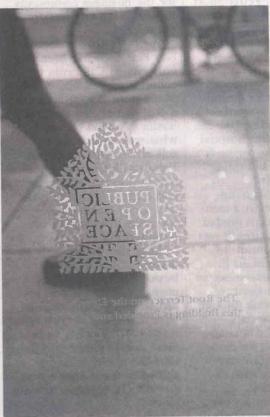
A list of spaces, including corporate plazas from before 1985, compiled by the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association, is at bit.ly/TNZps.

how difficult they can be to find. The 11th-floor roof terrace at One Kearny is announced via a see-through emblem at knee level in a glass panel next to the front door. At the Millennium Tower, an enclosed plaza along the sidewalk is so dimly lit that it's easy to miss especially because the metal

plaque on the wall by the door is 6 inches square.

The updated regulations would require plaques to be 20 inches high and 16 inches wide, with "PUBLIC OPEN SPACE" in inch-high bold lettering. The hours of operation would be in bold letters directly beneath, followed by symbols that spell out the amenities that the owner agreed to provide when the space was approved.

For spaces not visible from the sidewalk, a plaque must be placed at each building entrance, located at least 54 inches above the sidewalk. Additional plaques would be re-



quired within the building with directions on how to reach the publicly accessible

The signage recommended by planners is smaller than the 2-foot-square dimensions called for in Chiu's original

before the City Planning Commission, such signs would need to be larger and more visible. listing the amenities that the owner agreed to provide when the space was approved.

A sign etched

knee level, to

the right of

the lobby's

front door,

public open

Kearny in

Francisco.

legislation

San

Under

space at One

notes the

in glass at

Liz Hafalia / The Chronicle

legislation. But planners toughened the legislation by making the regulations retroactive — so that any space created under the program will have one year to install the distinctive new signs.

"We want to make sure that

all the (affected) public spaces are branded," said Joanna Linsangan, a spokeswoman for the Planning Department. "We want to make sure that when people downtown walk by any such public space, they'll know it."

Chiu supports the revisions: "That's the point of the process, to take a good idea and make it better."

#### Online map coming

Another Planning Department initiative doesn't require legislation.

According to Linsangan, by the end of the summer, the department's home page at www.sf-planning.org will contain an annotated map to all the so-called POPOS, for "privately owned public open spaces."

Similar maps have been compiled privately, including one by The Chronicle in 2008. But a city document would be the definitive guide, as well as a resource that could be used to make sure that spaces include the amenities originally promised by developers.

John King is The San Francisco Chronicle's urban design writer. E-mail: jking@sfchronicle.com Twitter: @johnkingsfchron

## **LOCAL NEWS**

# Sharing gems of downtown with public

Better signs pitched for privately owned slices of green in sea of gray

By Joshua Sabatini S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

People walking around San Francisco's downtown are likely unaware they are missing out on enjoying a variety of unique public spaces.

But that could change under a proposal being voted on Thursday by the Planning Commission to require uniform and noticeable signage for what are known as privately owned public open spaces, sometimes referred to as POPOS.

Ensuring people know about the open spaces has been a focus of the public policy think-tank San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association. In 2009, the group wrote: "Unbeknownst to many, downtown San Francisco has a rich and diverse network of privately-owned public open spaces in the form of plazas, atriums, terraces and small parks that support the city's more well-known public park system. Fortunately, for



Oasis: A site at 100 First Plaza is one of many downtown spaces of privately owned land created by developers for public use.

downtown workers and residents, these privately owned spaces make up for the lack of more publicly provided open space downtown."

Before 1985, downtown developers created public spaces in exchange for permission to build more densely or as a condition of approval for projects. But with the adoption of the 1985 downtown plan, developers started being required to provide public open space "to provide in the downtown quality open space in sufficient quantity and variety to meet the needs of downtown workers, residents and visitors."

SPUR has identified 45 such pre-1985 spaces, mostly urban gardens and very small snippets of land, and 23 that have been built since then.

The group said "insufficient and

deficient signage" is the "most glaring defect in the implementation of the open space requirements."

These public open spaces "are usually small or tucked away inside, on the back, or on the roof of buildings. These characteristics might create an impression that the space is private and only to be used by building occupants," a staff report for the Planning Commission said.

The legislation creating the sign regulations was introduced by Board of Supervisors President David Chiu. The Planning Department staff recommends applying the proposed sign regulations to all the existing privately owned public spaces, not just new ones. and requiring compliance within one year. The signs would include a POPOS open-space logo; the hours the site is open; and information on amenities such as bathrooms, number of seats; food served; and ADA accessibility. Signs would have to be located within 5 feet of spaces on sidewalks or by pedestrian entrances.

The proposal would ultimately require approval by the Board of Supervisors to go into effect.

jsabatini@sfexaminer.com

JOHN KING

## Outside architects can bring new ideas

Talk with any ambitious local architects for any length of time, and they'll probably steer the conversation to the evils of out-of-town firms getting all the good jobs.

Then they'll get back to work — which often includes of hopping on a jet to try and snag out-oftown commissions.

This tension defines what the business of architecture has become. The black-clad profession today is pulled by a global gravity where there are boutique firms and big firms and precious little in between.

I've never seen this as evil, because the result is what counts: new buildings that are stylish and smart, eco-friendly and urbane. Outsiders can be guilty of generic designs, but they can also bring a fresh eye that spots solutions the locals would never dare to propose.

Still, it's a balancing act that becomes even more complex when big firms buy regional firms to establish a local presence, wherever that locale might be - and I'll be curious to see if Perkins + Will can pull it off in proudly rooted San Francisco.

The firm was founded in Chicago in 1935 and now has 1,400 employees in 24 offices worldwide. It has had a San Francisco presence for a decade or so but ramped up efforts here in 2008, when it purchased local firm SMWM.

The office here includes such well-respected local designers as SMWM's Cathy Si-

## outside architects



Ralph Johnson's 47-story Chicago residential tower exemplifies the city's spirited modern architecture.

tectural Record and Dwell - his best work radiates the confident architectural energy of the city where he works and lives. His most recent residential tower there is a perfect ex-

ample: a 47-story shaft brought to life by deep balconies framed in as a brash Morse code.

Johnson also has done institutional work in

locales as varied as Angola and Arizona and China. The tone always is modern, at once lyrical and strong, but never feeling as if it were dropped into place.

"I've been asked to speak on panels (in Chicago) about the importance of hiring local architects, but it wouldn't be honest," shrugged Johnson, 63, after his talk. He described his challenge in new settings as "being responsive to the regional conditions but adding something unique. Finding that balance is the goal."

The fact of the matter is that architecture is in flux - just like so many other professions in our tumultuous times. I wouldn't want to see global design conglomerates be the only game in town. But the Bay Area has never had a monopoly on architectural insight or talent. If smart locals use the new fluidity to catch wind of resonant trends, we'll all be the better for it.

Place appears on Wednesdays. John King is The San Francisco Chronicle's urban design writer. E-mail: jking@ sfchronicle.com

E4 | Wednesday, June 13, 2012 | SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE AND

## What Bay Area ga

King from page E1

mon and Karen Alschuler. But the new managing director is Peter Busby, an architect who made his name in Vancouver, British Columbia, until his firm came under the Perkins + Will umbrella in 2007.

In many ways it's a natural fit: Busby has been a proponent of stylish, sustainable design for decades. He's championed everything from sun shades and natural ventilation to computer modeling of energy-efficiency systems.

"The world is a fragile place, and it's under (environmental) attack from so many directions," Busby, 59, said at the firm's office above Mission Creek. "If we can start to think of buildings as places where humans and nature are not at war, but co-exist, we'll be ahead."

At the same time, such Busby comments as "there's an amazing opportunity here for the ideas I have about the environment and urbanism" had an air of the worldly sage bringing wisdom to the rubes. They have an awkward ring in a region where still-vibrant firms like



Among Peter Busby's recent works is Vancouver's Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability.

Leddy Maytum Stacy, EHDD and Pfau Long Architecture were green before green was the color of the day.

Yet Perkins + Will also shows what the Bay Area has to gain from architecture's new world order: exposure to talents shaped by different cultures.

The local office had a visit last month by Ralph Johnson of Chicago, who spent the day in project reviews and then gave an informal evening talk to members of the office.

Though this Johnson is hardly a household name — even in houses that subscribe to Archiperforated white metal. The facade could double



Smoke and water: Firefighters were called to the scene of a blaze at Pier 29 at 1:50 p.m. Wednesday. The mostly vacant building was being used for storage for a nearby construction project related to the America's Cup yacht regatta.



MIKE WOOZMIN/THE S.F. EXAMINER





# Massive blaze ravages Pier 29

Fire at vacant building not likely to interfere with America's Cup

By Andrea Koskey S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

A four-alarm fire destroyed threequarters of Pier 29 on Wednesday afternoon, halting traffic along the busy Embarcadero corridor and causing a historic archway to tumble to the sidewalk.

The building — known as a shed — was vacant, said Port of San Francisco Executive Director Monique Moyer. But some space was being used for storage during construction work on the neighboring Pier 27 in preparation for the America's Cup race, and Pier 29 was expected to be used in some capacity for the regatta.

The exact cause of the fire is under investigation, said Fire Department Lt. Mindy Talmadge, noting that initial reports indicated welding might have been going on at the building.

There were no injuries and the

fire is not considered suspicious at this time, Talmadge said.

The blaze was first reported at 1:50 p.m. When firefighters arrived at the scene, Talmadge said, the entire roof was fully engulfed in flames. The fire burned for more than two hours.

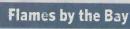
Flames shot high above the building and black smoke billowed across the Bay.

Muni's historic F-Market line was stopped due to the blaze, forcing thousands of commuters and tourists to walk from the Ferry Building to The Embarcadero. Large crowds gathered to watch the action.

The fire is not expected to affect construction work related to the America's Cup race, said both the Port and race spokeswoman Amelise Javier. Turner Construction Co., in contract with the Port, was housed in the building, Javier said in a statement.

A small portion of Pier 29 was expected to be used for spectator seating and food concessions during the 2013 international regatta.

Pier 29 also is the site of the new cruise ship terminal expected to be completed by 2014.





Telegraph Hill Dwellers President Jon Golinger said he's never seen anything like Wednesday's fire in the 12 years he's lived in the neighborhood.

"It's sad," he said. "This has been the heart of the northeastern waterfront for many years. We've been fighting to preserve it, only to lose it to a fire."

The building and pier were built in 1915, Moyer said. At the time, the Renaissance-style facade was created to compete with the Port of New York for big cargo.

The overall structure of the pier was considered "sound" compared to others in The City. Port officials were hopeful the infrastructure remains intact, but said an inspection must be performed.

What did not remain intact, however, was the bulkhead displaying "Pier 29." Less than an hour into the fire, the gigantic piece of concrete fell from the front of the building and crumbled to pieces on the sidewalk.

"It's too soon to tell, but if we can refurbish the façade in historical resemblance, there should be no impact to the America's Cup other than the unsightly building," Moye said

Due to the age and wood composition of the structure, Talmadge said firefighters primarily defensively attacked the blaze in order to keep it from spreading.

The last time the Port experienced a massive fire was in 1996, when a five-alarm blaze ravaged Pier 48. There also were no injuries in that fire.

akoskey@sfexaminer.com

# 4-alarm fire damages waterfront landmark

Pier 29 was being readied for America's Cup spectators' site



Sarah Rice / Special to The Chronicle

Firefighters spray down the Pier 29 warehouse that burned. It was to be used for America's Cup concessions.



Paul Chinn / The Chronicle

The four-alarm blaze attracted throngs of spectators who watched as chunks of the entryway crashed to the street.

#### By Kevin Fagan and Vivian Ho

A waterfront building being converted for next year's America's Cup yacht race was severely damaged Wednesday by a fire that spewed thick smoke over the bay and stopped traffic along San Francisco's Embarcadero for hours.

The blaze broke out at the warehouse building on Pier 29 at 1:50 p.m. and escalated to four alarms before 110 firefighters contained it nearly two hours later. At its height, with flames leaping through the roof, throngs of passers-by watched chunks of the Neoclassical entryway crash to the street.

Fire Chief Joanne Hayes-White said threequarters of the front section of the nearly century-old building was destroyed. But crews stopped the blaze's advance before it reached the rear portion or any adjacent structures on the triangular pier that juts

Fire continues on A13

# Fire damages Pier 29 warehouse

Fire from page A1

into the water at the foot of Telegraph Hill.

The concrete-and-wood pier had been unoccupied for months while construction crews reconstructed it to host spectator services for the America's Cup. Nobody was injured in the fire. The cause is under investigation.

#### Not suspicious

Police spokesman Officer Albie Esparza said the fire "doesn't appear to be suspicious at this time," but cautioned that it was too soon to tell how it started.

Among the uses planned for Pier 29 during the America's Cup are food concessions and an exhibit marking handbag and shoemaker Louis Vuitton's 30-year collaboration with the yacht race. Cup organizers said the fire wouldn't affect their plans.

The blaze apparently broke out in the front of the structure and quickly spread to the roof, Hayes-White said. Firefighters attacked it with hoses from all sides of the building, using trucks on the street and a fireboat in the bay, avoiding the roof as much as possible for fear of it collapsing. It took until 3:30 p.m. for firefighters to contain the blaze.

As the fire hit its peak, the massive Pier 29 sign hanging over the arched entrance to the building crashed to the ground, followed a few minutes later by another chunk of concrete from the entrance.

#### Crowds gather

Emergency officials blocked off the Embarcadero from Broadway to Bay Street throughout the afternoon and evening. With traffic stopped, large crowds gathered to watch the battle.

The blaze also affected Muni service in the area, with the F-line historic streetcars being turned around at the Ferry Building.

Area residents were dismayed at seeing such a prominent part of their landscape savaged by flames.

"If there was going to be a devastating fire anywhere on the waterfront, this would be the worst place to have it," said Jon Golinger, president of the



Megan Farmer / The Chronicle

It took 110 firefighters nearly two hours to contain the four-alarm blaze that severely damaged a warehouse on Pier 29.



Todd Trumbull / The Chronicle

Telegraph Hill Dwellers neighborhood association. "It's front and center on San Francisco's waterfront. This is the main place where tourists come."

He said the neighborhood association has been fighting for years to preserve Pier 29 for public use.

"It's incredibly sad to see it



Firefighters climb to the roof of the building that was to house America's Cup food concessions and Louis Vuitton products.

go up in a puff of smoke," he said.

#### Dates from 1915

The pier was built in 1915 as part of a design competition with New York City and has about 115,000 square feet of warehouse space. All tenants were moved out before work began last winter on the demolition of the adjacent Pier 27 for that pier's use as a cruise

ship terminal.

"Pier 29 is pretty much an empty shed right now," said Renee Martin, Port of San Francisco spokeswoman. "We have no tenants."

Construction workers did use the building for parking,

Despite the damage, officials are hopeful the blaze won't hinder preparations for the America's Cup. Monique

Moyer, port executive director, said efforts would be made to reconstruct the artful facade of the arched entryway.

"There does not appear to be anything that will impact the city's ability to host the America's Cup or on construction of the new cruise terminal," said Christine Falvey, spokeswoman for Mayor Ed

The America's Cup organization issued a statement before the flames were even extinguished, saying, "We do not anticipate that this will have any impact on our plans for the site, and we look forward to moving ahead with the future construction of the America's Cup village at Pier

San Francisco Chronicle staff writers John King and Rachel Gordon contributed to this report.

Kevin Fagan and Vivian Ho are San Francisco Chronicle staff writers. E-mail: kfagan@ sfchronicle.com, vho@ sfchronicle.com

JOHN KING

### Pier 29 facade should be easy to fix after fire

As the smoke cleared last week from the fire that toppled the historic entryway to Pier 29, San Francisco officials vowed to rebuild the neoclassical facade as good as new

After all, the arched bulkhead dated to World War I. It marked the beginning of a robust procession that curves north along the Embarcadero to Pier 39 and is part of a 600-acre National Historic Landmark District.

All of which sounds as cozy as fog. But will the erection of a new facade that resembles an old friend in fact be "historic"? Or is it another step in the waterfront's journey from working port to atmospheric theme park?

Judging by the initial response of preservationists, this is one case where sleight of hand will be no problem at all.

"Enough of the structure remains to build from accurately," says Charles Chase, who chairs the city's Historic Preservation Commission and inspected the site last weekend. "Also, the port has incredible documentation" in terms of taking the same approach as before.

Another architect on the commission, Andrew Wolfram, stresses the need to keep a semblance of continuity along an Embarcadero that already has undergone substantial change. And while the historic facades look imposing, we're not talking earthy landmarks of granite and stone.

"Those bulkheads that appear so solid are an illusion," Wolfram points out. "They're just stucco on wood framing."

\* \* \*

Fort Mason Center's design competition is shaping up as the Bay Area's best architectural show in years.

No fewer than 15 design teams have made a pitch to be one of the three that will be asked to provide an "enhanced plan" for the bayside enclave that's now home to nonprofit organizations but served as a U.S. Army port of embarkation during World War II. This from a batch of 20 invitations that went out to, among others, some of the world's most

King continues on E3

# Fort Mason pulls major architects

King from page E1

buzzed-about architects and landscape architects.

The firms stepping forward couldn't just say "keep my name in the hat." Each one had to submit a detailed "statement of interest" and spell out who'd be on their design teams.

That last detail shows the depth of interest in the unique site that lies just east of Marina Green. Three examples pulled at random:

>> West 8, a Dutch firm that's a leader of the movement dubbed landscape urbanism, has forged ties with local talents Ila Berman, director of architecture at the College of Contemporary Arts, and landscape architect Marcel Wilson of the firm Bionic.

>> Two of the invitees, Oakland landscape architect Walter Hood and Chicago architect Jeanne Gang, have joined forces. Among their consultants: art curator Cheryl Haines, whose For-Site Foundation is responsible for such creative landscape interventions as the "International Orange" exhibition now at Fort Point.

» One of the local invitees, CMG Landscape Architecture, has given its team a national angle by pairing with Allied Works Architecture — an Oregon firm whose work includes the new Pixar building in Emeryville but also the rapturously praised new Clyfford Still Museum in Denver.

The center's design

jury will meet in July to whittle the list to three, each of whom will receive \$20,000 stipends to craft full proposals over the summer. I can't wait to see the results.

\*\* \*\* \*\*

If the previous items didn't convince you that the preservation movement takes many forms, consider the lineup of upcoming lectures being sponsored by San Francisco Architectural Heri-

Among them: Aug. 16's "These Walls Can Speak: Telling the Stories of Queer Places," a panel discussion on efforts to preserve and interpret buildings of cultural significance to California's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities. There's also a Sept. 13 discussion on how to preserve neighborhood murals of recent vintage, being held, fittingly, at the muralcloaked Women's Building at 3543 18th St. in the Mission.

The series concludes Nov. 15 with "Then and Now: Preservation in the Tenderloin," where more than 400 buildings now form a national historic district that includes lovingly restored singleroom-occupancy hotels.

The full list of talks, dates and ticket details can be found at www.sf heritage.org.

John King is The San Francisco Chronicle's urban design critic. His column appears Wednesday. E-mail: jking@sfchronicle.com



Enough remains of the historic entryway to Pier 29 after last week's fire, above and below left, to rebuild the facade accurately, preservationists say. "They're just stucco on wood framing," an architect says.

### Tim Frye/CTYPLN/SFGOV 06/22/2012 05:16 PM

To CTYPLN - CP TEAM (TAC - Preservation)/CTYPLN/SFGOV

CC

bcc

Subject Fw: Pier 29

FYI.

Timothy Frye
Preservation Coordinator
San Francisco Planning Department
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103
tim.frye@sfgov.org
v: 415.575.6822

---- Forwarded by Tim Frye/CTYPLN/SFGOV on 06/22/2012 05:16 PM -----



#### Mark Paez/SFPORT/SFGOV

06/22/2012 05:01 PM

To Tim Frye/CTYPLN/SFGOV@SFGOV, c.chase@argsf.com, mcorbett@lmi.net, alice@careyco.com, bill@careyco.com, Jay Turnbull <turnbull@page-turnbull.com>, Mike Buhler <mike\_buhler@nthp.org>, nshan@mindspring.com, Pilar LaValley/CTYPLN/SFGOV@SFGOV, awmartinez@earthlink.net, Richard Sucre/CTYPLN/SFGOV@SFGOV, MWDONALDSON@parks.ca.gov, TBRANDT@parks.ca.gov, mr.morton@gmail.com

CC

Subject Pier 29

Just a quick update on the status of Pier 29.

The Port assembled a project team consisting of members from our Planning and Engineering Divisions, Cregan & DeAngelo (Structural Engineers) and Carey & Co. (Historic Architects) that inspected the site and assessed the extent of the fire damage and defined the scope of immediate demolition work necessary to respond the risk of falling debris or building collapse which has resulted in the closure of the Embarcadero promenade to the public.

The scope of work that the Port approved this morning includes the following:

- Remove and salvage the cornice at the top of the west and south walls of the bulkhead on the south side of the arch.
- Removal of the arch and salvage of the remaining quoins.
- Removal of the wings that flank the arch leaving the bottom 5 or 6 feet of the structure in place
- Salvage of the Pier 29 identification signs/lettering
- Removal of the roll-up door
- Removal of the roof and supporting trusses behind the arch back to the connection between the

bulkhead and pier shed

 Install temporary shoring to support the west and south walls, as well as fencing to secure the building and allow the promenade to be opened

The team concluded that the above demolition work is reasonable given the extent of the fire damage and the hazardous conditions observed on the interior of the building. The Port's plans for the repair of the bulkhead building are unknown at this time, but will be developed once the immediate hazard is addressed.

Please feel free to contact me at 415-705-8674 if you have questions or concerns.

Thanks.

Tim Frye/CTYPLN/SFGOV 06/21/2012 05:25 PM To CTYPLN - CP TEAM (TAC - Preservation)/CTYPLN/SFGOV

CC

bcc

Subject Fw: Port of SF Press Release on Fire at Pier 29

FYI.

Timothy Frye
Preservation Coordinator
San Francisco Planning Department
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103
tim.frye@sfgov.org
v: 415.575.6822

---- Forwarded by Tim Frye/CTYPLN/SFGOV on 06/21/2012 05:25 PM -----



#### Mark Paez/SFPORT/SFGOV

06/21/2012 04:34 PM

To c.chase@argsf.com, MBuhler@sfheritage.org, Tim Frye/CTYPLN/SFGOV@SFGOV, awmartinez@earthlink.net, karlhasz@gmail.com, MWDONALDSON@parks.ca.gov, Nancy Shanahan <nshan318@gmail.com>, Pilar LaValley/CTYPLN/SFGOV@SFGOV, Richard Sucre/CTYPLN/SFGOV@SFGOV, mcorbett@lmi.net, Jay Turnbull <turnbull@page-turnbull.com>, Alice Carey <acarey@carey-sf.com>, bill@careyco.com, david@argsf.com

CC

Subject Port of SF Press Release on Fire at Pier 29

#### Port of San Francisco

#### Statement on Fire at Pier 29

June 21, 2012

The Port of San Francisco is saddened by yesterday's fire at the historic Pier 29. Fortunately, no one was injured and thanks to the quick response of the San Francisco Fire Department, the 4-alarm fire was contained in about two hours and damage was limited to the bulkhead portion of the building fronting on the Embarcadero and the roof.

San Francisco Fire and Police investigators are continuing their efforts to

determine the cause of the fire.

Port engineers and maintenance crews worked throughout the night to secure the area and restore electrical power to neighboring piers. The Port's Chief Harbor Engineer has "red tagged" the bulkhead building, deeming it unsafe to enter. He hopes to grant permission for official inspection of the premises to take place later today.

This afternoon, Turner Construction (the construction company on site at Pier 27 for the cruise terminal project) is mobilizing cranes at the site to remove the severely damaged area on top of the building and the roof to reduce the hazard and risk of falling debris or collapse. Historic preservation architects and the City's Historic Preservation officials are consulting with the Port's engineers to make every effort to retain as much of the historic building as possible.

The Port anticipates re-opening the sidewalk in front of Pier 29 by this weekend.

The fire damage at Pier 29 will NOT impact the 2013 America's Cup racing event. The portion of Pier 29 that has been damaged is to be used to support the America's Cup event with parking, storage and office space. The America's Cup Village will be located at Pier 27, where the new cruise terminal is currently being constructed.

#### Pier 29

Pier 29 is one of the 18 pier buildings on the waterfront that are within the San Francisco Embarcadero Historic District which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Pier 29 was built by the State Board of Harbor Commissioners in 1915 and extends 800 feet into the Bay. The pier shed building is approximately 164,000 square feet in area. The bulkhead portion of the building fronting on the Embarcadero was built in 1918 in the neoclassical architectural style together with Pier 31 in an effort to beautify the industrial waterfront. In 1965 the Port built the former Pier 27 terminal diagonal to the Embarcadero to accommodate larger vessels and the truck transport of cargo. The construction of Pier 27 resulted in the alteration of the outboard end of Pier 29.

Two of the more notable tenancies in Pier 29 were the China Mail

Steamship Co. which operated between San Francisco and China from 1918 to WWI and Luchenbach Gulf Steamship Co. which operated between New York and San Francisco through the Panama Canal from 1935 to 1960.

Media Contact: Renée Dunn Martin, (415) 274-0488 or Email: Renee.martin@sfport.com

Renée Dunn Martin Manager, Media & Public Relations Port of San Francisco Pier 1, The Embarcadero San Francisco, CA 94111 (415) 274-0488 ph. (415) 274-0412 fax Renee.martin@sfport.com www.sfport.com



Firefighters battle a blaze Wednesday afternoon at Pier 29.

#### **GOOD WEEK**

#### Ellison

Larry What does the billionaire who seemingly has everything buy for himself when able? Why, the Hawaiian

Warriors are no longer availisland of Lanai, of course!

Fremont Tesla Motors starts rolling out its Model S luxury sedan, a big boost for a city that had

been hit by the collapse of old ventures (Nummi) and new ones (Solyndra).

LeBron Miami Heat superstar finally lives up to the hoopla that accompanied his move from Cleveland. He gets MVP as Heat wins NBA title.

#### **BAD WEEK**

America's Big fire at San Francisco's Pier 29 destroys waterfront landmark that was being converted into a spectator area for next year's big event.

Eric House committee votes to Holder hold U.S. attorney general in contempt for refusing to hand over documents related to Fast and Furious guns-tonarcos debacle.

Ecuador Look who just walked into the nation's embassy in London: Why, it's WikiLeaks' Julian Assange, creating yet another diplomatic headache.

#### SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE AND S \*\*\*

#### BAY AREA



### Cleanup, probe of fire at S.F. Pier 29 goes on

The cleanup and investigation of the four-alarm blaze that tore through a warehouse on San Francisco's Pier 29 Wednesday is continuing. The fire destroyed part of the roof and the front of the building, causing more than \$2 million in damage and knocking out power to nearby buildings, fire and port officials said. The building, which was being readied as an America's Cup venue, was empty except for five cars parked inside. Most of the \$2.37 million in damage was to the structure and to equipment supplying electricity to businesses at Piers 31 and 33 next door. The fire destroyed the warehouse's Neoclassical archway but spared the back warehouse and the pier itself. Pier 29 is supposed to house food concessions and Louis Vuitton products during next year's America's Cup yacht races. Cup organizers said the fire would not affect that plan.

6-23-2012



#### 6-6-2012 JOHN KING

### Neglect of 'secret' public spaces is no secret

The rooftop garden above San Francisco's One Montgomery St. is a strange space indeed, at once cherished and unloved.

The affection comes courtesy of the Financial District workers who line the wooden benches and concrete ledges at lunchtime, savoring fresh air and sun amid towers of three eras. The neglect is revealed when they leave: Benches are faded and warped, the painted concrete surface is blotchy and worn.

The culprit isn't a cash-strapped city; the rooftop is one of a dozenplus downtown spaces that are privately owned yet reserved for public use. Rather, look upon One Montgomery as a cautionary tale. Legislation can mandate the creation of such spaces and even make sure they receive attention. Ultimately, though, only the owners can make sure that they shine.

I mention this because on Thursday, the city's Planning Commission is scheduled to vote on guidelines that would require bigger and bolder plaques to announce the privately owned public spaces tucked into the downtown landscape since the early 1980s. The updated guidelines are prompted by legislation sponsored by Supervisor David Chiu, who calls the spots "urban oases."

Make no mistake: I'm thrilled that planners and politicians want to make these public spaces known to, you know, the public. After 30 years of requiring such spaces, ramping up awareness is

King continues on E2



Photos by Liz Hafalia / The Chroni

Office workers eat their lunch on the One Montgomery's rooftop terrace, which was added in the 1980s and offers weathered and repaired benches.

A recent renovation of the spacious plaza at 303 Second St. includes sculptures by Jon Krawczyk (background) and seating areas perfect for lounging.

# Neglect of spaces very easy to find

King from page E1

long overdue.

But signs are only part of the issue. An underlying problem is that all too often these (semi-) public spaces are maintained in such a way that it's clear they're viewed as obligations rather than assets. Developers followed the rules and wrote the checks, then shifted to autopilot.

That seems to be the case at the rooftop terrace of One Montgomery, a 1908 landmark designed by Willis Polk. It can be reached via elevator from a lobby off the palatial Wells Fargo hanking hall at the hase

but most people enter by stairs from the adjacent Crocker Galleria shopping arcade.

The terrace was added as part of a 1980s development that included the Galleria, and the design hasn't changed one bit since then. The columned pergola that adorns the southeast corner of the terrace, for instance: very postmod-

And after 30 years of being exposed to the elements, very decrepit. Seven of the 16 plaster columns have cracks running up their sides. Several of the quaint wooden benches have slats that are broken or



The terrace at One Montgomery, reached through Crocker Galleria, has seating in need of repair.

askew.

While this isn't the only space from that era in need of loving care, it's the one that's most madding. Here's a unique setting already embraced, but it could be so much more.

Contrast this with the recent renovations to the spacious plaza at 303

Second St.

When this two-building low-rise opened in 1989, it was positioned as a little bit of suburbia in the city; after all, back then the corner of Second and Folsom was off the downtown map. The large central plaza offered seating and sun. It also was stiff and statu-

These days, Second Street is the main pedestrian link between the Financial District and the ever-livelier environs of South Park and Mission Bay. An edgier look was called for.

The plaza now sports broad wooden lounging areas that take their cues from New York's High Line. Pyramid-like landscape features were lowered and topped with miniature meadows ideal for sprawling. They also sprout tall bands of steel that loop above an existing watercourse, a 75foot-long sculpture by Jon Krawczyk that makes it clear Things Have Changed.

The redesign by Gensler and landscape architects Smith + Smith is part of a larger update of 303 Second for owner Kilroy Realty. What I like

is that it shows an awareness of what our corporate spaces can be: enticing places to gather and unwind.

"You want to have shade, you want to have sun, you want various seating options, and you want to have food," says local landscape architect Ken Kay, who has done several Financial District plazas.

You also want owners who care. Or who realize, like Kilroy, that one way to put yourself on the map is to create opportunities for potential tenants and shoppers to enjoy one of the most beguiling big cities on Earth.

Place appears on Wednesdays. John King is The San Francisco Chronicle's urban design writer. E-mail: jking@ sfchronicle.com

#### Pressuring the port

I'm a bit confused on the extent of coverage of Larry Ellison's recent acquisitions of real estate and how it has captured the attention of three or four writers in your paper ("Oracle's Ellison buys a slice of paradise," June 21). Ellison spends his money — not someone else's.

I think the bigger story is that of an ex-supervisor, Aaron Peskin, blackmailing the San Francisco Port into settling a lawsuit he filed over the America's Cup by demanding a study on the effect of sailing on bird life in the amount of \$150,000 and a reimbursement of legal fees of \$75,000. ("City's bird study to keep America's Cup on course," Matier & Ross, June 17)

As reported over many years, it is common knowledge that the port has no money, yet it is being forced to shell out \$225,000 of the taxpayers' money to this person and his friends at the Audubon Society. What about a study of the Blue Angels' effect on bird life and sending the Navy an invoice for \$500,000?

At least this gets the port off the hook and might help save a small law firm from the possibility of eating its own fees. I can only dream of what the improvements to our decaying port could have been if a rich uncle had been allowed to spend his money here in San Francisco.

6-26-2012 Norman Pearce, San Francisco

# S.F. city attorney argues counties, cities can regulate pot dispensaries

By Bob Egelko

Cities and counties in California have authority to issue permits for medical marijuana dispensaries and regulate their activities, San Francisco's city attorney told the state Supreme Court on Monday in a challenge to an appellate rul-

ing that would prohibit local operating permits for pot collectives.

The state's top court has agreed to review a decision in October by an appellate panel in Los Angeles that said a city's decision to authorize medical marijuana suppliers puts a stamp of approval on

activity that federal law forbids and interferes with federal drug enforcement.

The ruling, suspended when the high court granted review in January, would not ban pot dispensaries in California. It would instead require local governments to either prohibit them or allow them without permits, subject to local zoning requirements and health and safety laws.

That would actually reduce local regulation of the dispensaries and make it less effective, City Attorney Dennis Herrera said in Monday's filing, which was joined by Santa Cruz County Counsel Dana McRae.

By issuing a permit, a local government can require a dispensary to take security measures, control parking, traffic and fire hazards, and reduce water pollution, Herrera and McRae told the court. They said the October ruling prompted at least 12 local governments, including Napa and Santa Cruz counties and the cities of Albany and Union City, to suspend or repeal their dispensary permit systems.

The ruling, if upheld, could also jeopardize legislation already approved by the state Assembly to create a statewide board to regulate medical marijuana suppliers, the lawyers said. 6, 19-2012

Bob Egelko is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: begelko@sfchronicle.com

LOUNE HE HO

# City attorney wants to keep medical pot regulation local

By Ari Burack S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

City Attorney Dennis Herrera's office asked the California Supreme Court on Monday to overturn a lower court's ruling last year that could potentially threaten the permitting of medical marijuana dispensaries throughout the state.

Long Beach is petitioning to overturn a decision by the Court of Appeals in October that found The City's law permitting dispensaries invalid and pre-empted by federal law.

That precedent effectively halted local permitting of dispensaries throughout the state, including in San Francisco, until the California Supreme Court agreed to take up the case, Herrera said.

San Francisco joined Santa Cruz County on Monday in a brief to the court also opposing that decision.

Herrera's office said in a news release that the "potentially landmark case" threatens California's Compassionate Use Act enacted in 1996 to ensure the availability of marijuana to medical patients.



**Dispensary:** A court ruling threatens San Francisco's current jurisdiction.

"San Francisco's model regulatory system has for many years carefully balanced the needs of patients and caregivers with neighborhood concerns over health and safety," Herrera said. "Our ordinance works. But an unworkable interpretation of federal law, which would undercut local regulation, serves no public interest — not for patients, not for neighbors."

The Supreme Court has not yet scheduled a date to hear the case, Herrera's office said.

aburack@sfexaminer.com

DAY, JUNE 19, 2012 · Sfexaminer.com · THE EXAMIN

# Impact of Prop. B

By Dan Schreiber S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

Coit Tower advocates won voter backing Tuesday for restoration of the historic landmark with the famous Depression-era murals, but it is far from clear what their victory will look like.

Despite being greatly outspent by opponents of the ballot measure, neighborhood groups narrowly succeeded in urging San Francisco to "prioritize" funds raised at the tower for its ongoing maintenance, and to "strictly limit" private fundraisers sporadically held by The City's Recreation and Park Department. But what those vague statements really mean isn't exactly clear.

Jon Golinger — head of the Protect Coit Tower Committee, which spearheaded Proposition B - said that he'd like to see funds flow to the 210-feot-high landmark as they are needed, and he believes The City should nix a plan to hold monthly fundraisers there.

Recreation and Park Department General Manager Phil Ginsburg had opposed the measure by claiming that it would unduly restrict the overall parks budget and could even force the closure of some city parks, particularly those in poor areas.

But Wednesday, Rec and Park officials could provide no specifics about what Prop. B will mean in reality, saying that its actual impact is out of the department's control. The tower nets \$600,000 to \$700,000 per year, but how much of that revenue actually goes back into the tower isn't well-defined.

"Our budget, and this policy, are ultimately in the hands of the Board of Supervisors," spokeswoman Sarah Ballard said.

Mayor Ed Lee — who also opposed the proposition announced just days before Tuesday's election that he would dedicate \$1.7 million to fix the tower's problems. On Wednesday, mayoral spokeswoman Christine Falvey said those plans have not changed as a result of the new policy. 6-7-2012 dschreiber@sfexaminer.com

PUC BUILDING

# Touches of green aid the design

By John King

The headquarters of San Francisco's Public Utilities Commission was conceived in 2007 with aspirations to be the greenest office building in the urban United States.

As the sleek, 13-story box at 525 Golden Gate Ave. is readied for its Wednesday ribbon-cutting, reality falls short of the early grand vision. But the finished product still includes sustainable design features that push the norm and — most promising of all from an architectural standpoint — enliven the building's presence on the skyline and along the sidewalk.

You see this in the unusual landscaping along Polk Street that blurs the line between inside and out, and the hori-

PUC continues on C5



Photos by Yue Wu / The Chronicle

The new 13-story PUC building at 525 Golden Gate Ave. is green, but falls short of the early grand vision.

# Tower — touch of humanity

PUC from page C1

zontal blades of opaque glass that soften the appearance of the side of the building that faces City Hall. Above Golden Gate Avenue are the most expressive strokes of all: four egg-beater-like wind turbines on view behind a 200-foot-high, 22-footwide curtain of polycarbonate squares that ripple in the wind and, when the sun goes down, form a grid of flickering lights.

These touches humanize what in essence is a sleek modern slab.

The north-facing wall is clad in dark glass except for a thin band of white granite at each floor, with a rectangular form that folds in toward the tall stack of turbines and flares out above the corner entrance. The other facades have a more traditional look and increase the ratio of granite to glass, a nod to the Beaux Arts formalism of the Civic Center.

#### Closed since '89 quake

The corner was filled for decades by a squat state office building that never reopened after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. Various city uses were reviewed before the commission stepped in and KMD Architects and Stevens Architects began design work on the \$190.6 million, 277,500-squarefoot building that will house 950 commission employees as well as a cafe and child care center.

But commission officials stress the educational side of what they bill as their "building for the future." One example is in the planters that frame the sidewalk and continue inside for several feet; they're designed to filter the building's wastewater as would a tidal wetland. The water then will be recycled for use in building toilets and urinals, one of the first "gray water" systems on a public building in the region.

The quartet of turbines is unusual as well.

While solar panels have become commonplace in the Bay Area, wind turbines on buildings remain a rarity. Here, though, KMD has



The PUC building features a visual layer to the facade that's a precise contrast to the monolithic nature of other recent Civic Center buildings.

shaped the tower to maximize the rush of winds along the facade and scoop it behind the wall that holds the rippling artwork. The turbines form a whirling stack, each rotating at a different pace.

Even with such innovations — and a
hoped-for LEED Platinum ranking from the
U.S. Green Building
Council — 525 Golden
Gate is a step in the right
direction rather than the
culmination of the journey toward environmentally spotless large
buildings.

#### Shift in water usage

The most dramatic shift is in water usage. Between the gray water recycling and the storage of rainwater and wastewater in a 250,000-gallon subterranean tank, the building is expected to use 60 percent less water than office buildings of similar size.

The energy conservation target is 32 percent below standard office towers, while the turbines and 691 rooftop solar panels together will generate 7 percent of the building's energy needs. That's far less than the original target of generating 40 percent of the building's energy through turbines alone.

This isn't the first ultra-green building to fade as costs mounted and the allure for innovation was tempered by the desire for dependability. Gone are turbines on the roof,



for instance, and embedded solar panels on the walls.

At the same time, the visible moves that were made reinforce the commission's efforts to encourage its customers — San Francisco residents and businesses — to find creative ways to conserve water and energy.

More than that, 525 Golden Gate demonstrates how sustainability efforts have a positive architectural effect.

By extending the sidewalk plantings that filter wastewater into the building, visible through the lobby's tall glass wall, the tower engages pedestrians in a way that most office buildings don't.

As for the horizontal fins of glass on the facade facing City Hall, they do

More information on the environmental features of 525 Golden Gate Ave. are at www.sfwater.org/HQ

more than block direct bright sunlight, instead deflecting it onto ceilings and adding natural light to the spaces. They also add a visual layer to the facade that's a precise contrast to the monolithic nature of other recent Civic Center buildings.

Best of all is the environmental sculpture "Firefly" by Sebastopol artist Ned Kahn.

#### The force of wind

The installation rises straight from the Golden Gate Avenue sidewalk, row upon row of 5-inch-square polycarbonate tiles intended "to show you the force of wind on the building," in Kahn's words. The area's strong gusts come in waves, making the wall rustle like a monochromatic LED display that never quite resolves into legible images.

It's as if the office block has an elusive presence all its own, lithe and alive. The churning turbines prod us to think about the connection between buildings and nature. The shimmering wall reminds us that buildings, like nature, can take on an unexpected beauty all their own.

John King is The San Francisco Chronicle's urban design critic. E-mail: jking@sfchronicle.com

20 20 20

I played tour guide to visiting friends and went to the de Young Museum for the Jean Paul Gaultier exhibit, out to the restored windmill in Golden Gate Park, back to the living roof of the Academy of Sciences, then off to the Golden Gate Bridge, where we drove through the new Doyle Drive tunnel. It is really a marvelous engineering achievement.

Another real find of the week was the tour Ed Harrington gave me of the Public Utilities Commission building on Polk Street near City Hall. It will open to the public on Wednesday and it should be on everybody's must-see list. It is that spectacular.

# 'Submerged Queer Spaces' showcases architectural history

By Christina Troup Special to The S.F. Examiner

Skeptical of claims that The City has been home to some of the oldest gay haunts around, composer-filmmaker Jack Curtis Dubowsky set forth to unveil the true story behind lost and unknown cultural relics of the queer community.

His first feature-length documentary, "Submerged Queer Spaces," premiering Saturday at the San Francisco International LGBT Film Festival, captures the urban archeology of past and present locales across alleyways, bathhouses, bars and other gathering hot spots of The City.

In conjunction with the screening, on Sunday, Dubowsky and cinematographer Wilfred Galila will lead a tour of places in the film.

Architecture, as luck would have

#### IF YOU GO

#### Submerged Queer Spaces

Where 1:45 p.m. Saturday Where Roxie Theater, 3117 16th St., S.F.

Tichets: \$10

Contact: www.frameline.org

#### **Walking Tour**

Where 11 a.m. Sunday Where: Meet at GLBT History Museum, 4127 18th St., S.F. Tickets: Free; \$5 donation

encouraged
Contacts (510) 303-4946, www.
submergedqueerspaces.com

Jack Curtis Dubowsky

COURTESY GUA

it, doesn't come with the attitude or baggage of a diva.

"Buildings are not moody. They're always there — always on set," says Dubowsky. This made for an easy transition from modest projects to this full-length film, which uses a match-cut editing process to link buildings with

archival images from the Henri Leleu Papers of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

Identifying interview subjects was more difficult. Dubowsky wanted to include a rich cast representing different genders and ethnicities, who could recount long-forgotten monuments. The San Francisco Prime Timers, a social group for older gay and bisexual men, was a worthy resource.

The match-cut process prompted Dubowsky to search for physical remnants, such as old signposts and hardware, linking past and present. Blue and gold tiles on a building wall on Turk Street serve as a reminder of the defunct bar Blue and Gold.

Meanwhile, the legendary leather bar Tool Box on Fourth and Harrison streets has been converted into a Whole Foods and housing complex. The Ramrod, which opened in the late 1960s on Folsom Street, has evolved into other queer-centric spots such as Chaps and now Kok Bar.

But Dubowsky adds that many submerged queer spaces disappeared. He says, "Anything to do with ethnic communities and women's spaces is gone."

# THE INSIDE SCOOP

By Paolo Lucchesi

### Chefs scout for space at Twitter

Twitter moved into its new and much-ballyhooed San Francisco headquarters this week on Market Street. But while the Twitter flock settles into its nest upstairs, local restaurateurs are being courted for the spaces on the street level.

The two-building collection, freshly dubbed Market Square, takes up the entire block between Ninth and 10th streets and was remodeled by BCV Architects — the same firm that did the Ferry Building restoration

Depending on how the space gets sliced up, there is room for four to seven

restaurants, ranging from 1,000 to 6,000 square feet. "We know this will be a dining destination just like Ferry Building," says Market Square's Julie

Taylor, adding that there are "discussions in progress" with high-profile Bay Area restaurateurs, with a goal of offering a mix of casual and white-tablecloth restaurants.

"What's most important to us is we select restaurants that resonate with the residents of the building and the surrounding area, but are also so noteworthy that they draw from a significant distance," she says.

She's mum on the folks who have scoped out the possibilities, but the rumor mill is churning away. More than a few heavyweights have checked it out, but no one has signed on the dotted line yet.

The theater crowd is certainly a draw for prospective tenants, as is the ever-growing workforce at Twitter, even though cautious restaurateurs might think it tricky to compete with Twitter's free cafeteria for lunch. (Oh, but imagine the tongue-in-cheek possibilities of poultry dishes — let alone a rotisserie joint — if Twitter is your neighbor.)

Taylor anticipates the restaurants opening by early 2013. 6-14-2012

#### Diamonds in the rough

SPUR's 2009 Secrets of San Francisco list included 68 green spaces at 56 downtown locations. For descriptions, visit spur.org/files/popos-guide.pdf.



ALL: MIKE KOOZMIN THE S.F EXAMINER, GODOFREDO VASQUEZ/SPECIAL TO THE S.F EXAMINER

#### Gardens

- = 100 Pine St.
- 101 California St.
- = 123 Mission St.
- 14 Fremont St.
- 160 Spear St.
- 199 Fremont St.
- 201 Mission St.
- 201 Spear St.
- 25 Jessie St.
  - = 301 Howard St. - 425 Market St.

  - = 456 Montgomery St.
- = 525 Market St.
- 555 California St.
- 555/575 Market St.
- = 560 Mission St.
- Empire Park, Commercial and
- Montgomery streets ■ 1 Bush St.



#### Greenhouses

- 1 Sansome St.
- 101 Second St.
- 505 Sansome St.



#### Parks

- 135 Main St.
- 50 Beale St.
- 55 Second St.

Walkways

49 Stevenson St.

- Marathon Plaza
- 505 Sansome St.



Stevenson St.

■ 71 Stevenson St.

- = 211 Main St.
- = 221 Main St.
- 235 Second St.
- = 333 Market St.
- 444 Market St.
- # 45 Fremont St. = 555 Mission St.
- = 595 Market St.
- = 611 Folsom St.
- 650 California St.
- 77 Beale St.
- Foundry Square, First and Howard streets
- 1 Market St.
- Trinity Alley, Bush and Montgomery



#### Terraces ==

- 1 Kearny St.\*
- 100 First St. ■ 150 California St.
- = 343 Sansome St.,
- 15th floor
- Crocker Galleria, Sutter and Montgomery streets

\*Not on SPUR list



- 200 California St.
- = 345 California St. ■ 50 California St.
- 600 California St. ■ Embarcadero Center West
- Golden Gate University, Mission
- between First and Second streets Marriott Courtyard

Golden Gate

- -1 Cali ornia St.
- 1 Post St.

Source: San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association

# Secret gardens set for si

New downtown signs will tout privately owned public spaces

By Ari Burack S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

Plaques directing San Franciscans to oftenhidden public open spaces downtown will be more visible under new rules adopted Thursday by the Planning Commission.

The guidelines for dozens of privately owned public open spaces - small parks, gardens, plazas and sunny sitting areas, some located atop high-rises - aim to create signs that are of uniform size and design, and are easier to notice and read, under legislation introduced by Board of Supervisors President David Chiu.

Planning commissioners approved the new guidelines unanimously Thursday, adding suggestions about requiring property owners to keep the spaces in good shape, providing workers at the sites with information about them, and looking into whether The City can pursue no-smoking regulations there.

Although there was little dissent among the

commissioners, one owner of a mixed commercialresidential property expressed concern that better signage would attract homeless "vagrants" and drug users into the open spaces.

The so-called POPOS were designed to meet the "quality open space" needs of downtown workers, residents and visitors, according to the Planning Department.

In 2009, the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association compiled a list of 68 such spaces scattered throughout the downtown area. The City is working to update that list.

6-8-2017 aburacka sfexaminer.com

SHARING ECONOMY

# Offering room or running a hotel?

Explosion in short-term rentals disrupts market, runs afoul of regulations

#### By Carolyn Said

First came the noisy upstairs neighbors who said they were just "renting the place for a couple of nights" but refused to tone it down. Then came the people who would try to open the front door of the Castro/Duboce Triangle apartment where Barnaby Thieme and Rebecca Reagan live, saying they thought it led to the lobby.

The couple looked online and discovered what was behind the disruptions — a unit in their building was being rented out through Airbnb, the market-place for short-term housing in private residences.

"The big surprise for us was when we tried to contact Airbnb" to complain, said Thieme, a writer and editor. "The phone tree had no option remotely relating to people in our circumstance — neighbors." When they finally got through, "the first gentleman didn't seem too concerned about our problem."

Their story underscores some unintended consequences

Rentals continues on A16

"We're seeing a significant growth in the number of San Franciscans ... utilizing websites to share their homes, apartments or couches."

David Chiu, president, San Francisco Board of Supervisors

# Short-term rentals disrupting already-tight housing market

Rentals from page A1

of the runaway success of Airbnb, VRBO, HomeAway and other online services for booking stays in people's homes. A growing number of residents — close to 2,000 in San Francisco alone — use these services to sublet their apartments or houses while out of town or to occasionally host visitors in a spare room or sofa.

#### Ad-hoc hotels

But others, encouraged by lax oversight and lucrative payoffs, use the rental sites to run ad-hoc hotels, which besides annoying neighbors, takes long-term rentals off a market that desperately needs them — and in cities like San Francisco violates zoning regulations

Now the city is grappling with how to address the prob-

lems while still encouraging "collaborative consumption" businesses that let people connect to share assets and skills.

"We're seeing a significant growth in the number of San Franciscans who are utilizing websites to share their homes, apartments or couches with visitors from around the world," said San Francisco Board of Supervisors President David Chiu, who has been meeting with stakeholders before introducing legislation to address the trend. "We need to protect scarce rental housing, make sure visitors are respectful within buildings and neighborhoods, and make sure these practices take into account planning, safety and quality-of-life concerns.

San Francisco's Airbnb said it has 1,600 active hosts in the city and another 5,400 San Franciscans who have hosted and may become active again HomeAway of Austin, Texas, which owns both the VRBO and HomeAway sites, has 331 listings in San Francisco. Most of its listings are for entire residences (generally second homes), while Airbnb ranges from couch space to whole houses.

#### Tax dispute

Both services said they require that their hosts comply with all applicable laws and regulations. But in April, city officials felt compelled to make clear that San Francisco's 14 percent hotel occupancy tax applies to Airbnb visitors, something the service didn't collect in the past and fiercely opposes. "The elected family of Mayor Ed Lee, Board of Supervisors President David Chiu and his colleagues are focused on fostering San Francisco's Sharing Economy, of which we and our hosts are a



Paul Chinn / The Chronicle

Barnaby Thieme and Rebecca Reagan say temporary tenants in their San Francisco building caused problems.

part," Airbnb said in a written response to questions. "We are now and will continue to meet with the various stakeholders, neighbors, property owners and tenant groups as the city's codes and zoning laws are updated to reflect the reality of short term rentals." Carl Shepherd, HomeAway co-founder and chief strategic officer, said: "Our terms and conditions say

someone has to have the right to rent the property. We verify listings as much as we can, and we actively police and kick off people who do not comply with our rules." Complaints from neighbors have not been an issue, he said.

Spokespeople for tenants, neighborhood associations and landlords, groups that rarely, if

Rentals continues on A17

#### Rentals from page A16

ever, find common ground in San Francisco, agree that the lodging websites are causing problems.

"Many landlords decided they would be able to make more money by renting (their properties) as tourist space," said Ted Gullicksen, president of the San Francisco Tenants' Union, which promotes renters' rights. "We're seeing a big loss of rental housing stock, which we're already losing through other means. This is added pressure."

Jon Golinger, president of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers, an association for residents of Telegraph Hill and North Beach, had similar objections.

"We are very concerned with reductions in available housing for people to live in the neighborhood," he said. "We want to keep San Francisco a place where people don't just visit and take pretty pictures, but where people actually live."

Landlords are equally unenthusiastic, but for different leasons. "Many tenants in buildings in San Francisco are running illegal bed-and-breakfast businesses out of their rental units (as can be seen) by viewing many of the public listing sites," said Janan New, executive director of the San Francisco Apartment Association, which represents more than half of the city's landlords, both big and small.

#### 'No accountability'

"If you sublet your San Francisco rental unit on a nightly basis, you are breaking the rent-control law; you could be subject to eviction (for violating leases that ban subletting); and you're putting the other tenants in the building at risk," she said. "There's no accountability to the actual owner of the property if there is vandalism or theft or fire or some other catastrophe."

Some building owners have evicted tenants who violated the terms of their lease by subletting to short-term visitors, she said. And San Francisco has a long-standing but little-known ban on renting residential spaces for fewer

than 30 days.

"It's become so common that people don't even realize it's not legal," said John Rahaim, San Francisco planning director. His department has received 31 complaints over the past four years about illegal short-term rentals. "We'll look online and see if they're advertising somewhere on a regular basis, and then ask them to stop," he said. "In almost every case they've done that."

San Francisco residents who want to host short-term visitors can apply for a bed-and-breakfast license, which costs thousands of dollars and requires various documents and hearings — but few do.

"It is allowed everywhere except single-family residential districts," said Scott Sanchez, the city's zoning administrator. "If someone is using their building (for short-term rentals), as zoning administrator I would say they need to go through the proper paperwork to legalize the use."

However, he said, the city doesn't see many applications.
"The process is very tedious

"The process is very tedious; there are lots of reviews and requirements," said a woman who has been seeking a B&B permit for two years for her Panhandle Victorian, where she hosts out-of-town visitors. "You have to hire specialized people to provide site plans and floor plans. You have to make modifications such as putting in gates for the drive-

If the process were easier and cheaper, "absolutely" more property owners would apply, said the woman, who asked not to be identified.

#### **Neighbor complaints**

In fact, a streamlined registration system for guest rentals is among the ideas Chiu is considering, along with creating a system to help investigate neighbor complaints.

In the case of Thieme and Reagan, their leasing agent eventually contacted Airbnb and explained that subletting violated the building's rental agreements, and the visitors stopped coming. In general, Thieme has no issues with the service — and in fact has used it himself.

"We used Airbnb happily in

Europe last summer," said Thieme. "I want to extend them the benefit of the doubt that they are still evolving their business model and have had explosive growth, but they need to evolve appropriate mechanisms of monitoring and control. They should deal with zoning laws and tax laws more aggressively and realistically, or they will antagonize people."

Chiu said his legislation, which will be introduced in the next few weeks, will try to take all viewpoints into consideration.

"There are hundreds if not thousands of San Franciscans who have benefited from being able to do this once in a while," he said. "We need to create a balance between allowing San Franciscans to take advantage of this creative way of sharing spaces while not permanently displacing (other) San Franciscans from scarce rental housing (and) ensuring that visitors are being respectful."

Carolyn Said is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: csaid@sfchronicle.com

# South Beach fret - the Warriors

When **Lawrence Stokus** moved into the Bayside Village apartment complex in South Beach 10 years ago, his friends had one question: "Why?"

They saw the industrial warehouses, the decrepit piers and the empty streets and heard the rumble of traffic overhead on the Bay Bridge. Stokus said he simply desired the sunny weather in his retirement — and now loves surveying the bustling streets, palm trees and Giants fans from his rooftop deck.

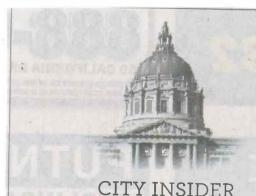
The historically maritime neighborhood's ship has come in — but Stokus and some other longtime residents wish it would turn back, at least a little. They're leery of the Golden State Warriors' pro-

posal for a basketball arena right across the street on Piers 30-32 and say there can be too much of a good thing.

"Everybody realizes this is the area, the hot area," said the 67-year-old retired mortgage banker. "Of course, now that it's come into its own, everybody wants the front row seat."

And that means blocked views, more rowdy crowds and increased traffic, some neighbors argue. They're also curious about the fate of the triangular parking lot across the street from Piers 30-32 that comes with the package deal. The Warriors say it will be developed, and neighbors fear that means a big parking gar-

City Insider continues on C4



#### From page C1

age.

For Stokus, the sticking point is that the plan would eliminate the potential for more park space. He'd love to see a Marina Green replicated on the eastern waterfront.

"This has turned into a Marina Green in concrete," he said, referring to the stretch immediately around Piers 30-32.

That should be helped by a new park being built just south of Piers 30-32 that is due to open next year, but Stokus believes city planners should think bigger and replicate the area around AT&T Park, which sports a harbor, a playground, sloping lawns and kayak and bike rentals. City officials and the Warriors owners have said they consider that area a model for the new development, as well.

The neighborhood was originally a hub for ships, industry and railroad terminals until containerized cargo shipping made the finger piers there much less important. South Beach became a wasteland until it was eyed by City Hall for downtown workers' housing

And then, whoosh, came the Giants ballpark and the tech industry and now the neighborhood is a booming go-to destination.

The Waterfront Land Use plan, adopted by the Port Commission in 1997, spelled out a vision for the South Beach waterfront, which now sounds downright adorable in its reference to a future baseball stadium.

But this part could have been written today with regards to Piers 30-32:

"Residents and employees in the area should be able to enjoy the benefits of living and working along the waterfront in an environment that is safe and

inviting," the document reads.

"The deteriorated condition of the piers and general lack of waterfront activity do not foster that feeling of security and, in fact, tend to create a physical and aesthetic barrier to public enjoyment."

Whether that will be helped by a basketball arena

is, of course, up to interpretation.

"We're still trying to get used to the Giants," said **Katy Liddell**, president of the South Beach, Rincon

and Mission Bay Neighborhood Association, who has lived in the Portside condo complex since 1995.

"Everybody around here, even though they love the Giants, they love it when the season is over and we get a little bit of a break," she said. "If the Warriors went into 30-32, we wouldn't get a break."

She said her neighborhood group is pretty split on the idea of a basketball arena, but is uniformly ticked off that they first heard of the plan in the newspaper.

"That's always the thing that angers people is when people do things in your backyard and don't bother to ask you first," she said.

The Warriors say they're keenly aware that they need to do a better job of reaching out to the neighborhood, but that once their plan for an arena got out, they felt they had to make the announcement earlier than they would have liked.

**P.J. Johnston**, a spokesman for the Warriors arena, assured that the plan isn't just for a giant arena and nothing else — and that it will be a big boon to the neighborhood.

the neighborhood.

"There will absolutely be open space," he said.

"There will absolutely be water access and there will absolutely be a better, more attractive use of space for everybody in the area, not just when they're at basketball games."

The Warriors shared polling data from May 15 that showed support for the project among city residents is 66 percent. For those who live within 1½ miles of the site, the figure jumped to 75 percent. Both numbers climbed above 80 percent when provided a more detailed description.

Stokus, by the way, wanted it stated very clearly that he wants the Warriors to move to San Francisco — just on the other side of AT&T Park. The fate of his marriage could be at stake considering his wife, Janice, is a huge Warriors fan and goes to Oakland regularly for games.

"You know the phrase football widow?" Stokus asked. "I'm a basketball widower. I'm not kidding."

#### Quote of the week

"Like one day a week, tops. There's no reason. It's just so dull. Sadly, I just, ugh, God."

Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom when asked how many days a week he spends in Sacramento



Heather Knight is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail hknight@ sfcbronicle.com

## Hospital deal hits snag on future of St. Luke's

Mayor Ed Lee's staff acknowledged Monday that the city needs to renegotiate a key provision of the deal with California Pacific Medical Center after it was revealed that the deal does not guarantee the long-term operation of a new St. Luke's Hospital in the Mission District.

Lee had touted a viable. rebuilt St. Luke's operating for at least the next 20 years as a selling point for the deal. The hospital's future is a crucial component for many supervisors, who are being asked to approve the \$2.5 billion construction project whose center-

piece is a new 555-bed hospital on Cathedral Hill.

When Lee rolled out the agreement in March, the deal included an escape clause that allowed CPMC to



S.F. Mayor **Ed Lee** 

Luke's if its systemwide operating margin fell below 1 percent for two years in a row.

While original projections showed operating margins well above that level, new cost and revenue projections that CPMC provided within the past two weeks come "close" to the trigger point, said Ken Rich, the city's main negotiator.

"In light of this information, the exact terms of the (agreement) do not work anymore, and we need to renegotiate,' Rich said.

Participants in the Board of Supervisors' Land Use Committee meeting Monday were astonished at the revelation.

Insider continues on C2



From page C1

"I have to admit that this announcement is shocking on a number of levels," board President David Chiu said.

Supervisor David Campos, whose district includes St.

Luke's, blasted Rich for springing the information on supervisors at a hearing set up to advance the approval process.

"That you did not tell me when you knew 12 days ago is mind-boggling," Campos said.

A time frame for a revised deal is unclear. The medical group had hoped to begin construction this fall.

Dr. Warren Browner, the medical center's chief executive officer, said they were committed to operating St. Luke's for many years.

- John Coté

**Undercover Dodgers:** Some San Francisco police officers

are going undercover - way undercover - this week. They've agreed to, gasp, wear L.A. Dodgers jerseys at AT&T Park.

The Giants started a threeday series against their archrivals Monday night, and Police Chief Greg Suhr and Mayor Ed Lee announced that they're sending many officers posing as Dodgers fans to the games in hopes of catching any over-thetop behavior before it erupts into violence. Lee said it's an effort to prevent an incident like the beating of Giants fan Bryan Stow after a Dodgers game in Los Angeles last year.

"We want to make sure there isn't anyone out there intent on

Suhr said he wasn't sure he could convince his officers to don the hated jerseys, but that several, shall we say, stepped up to the plate. He said he's pulling a page from his own playbook (oh, sports puns are just way too easy!) since he similarly sent officers undercover in New York Giants gear to a playoff game against the 49ers in January.

- Heather Knight

Port commissioner: Mayor Ed Lee on Monday appointed William "Willie" Adams, a former longshoreman and current official in the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, to San Francisvacated by another labor figure, longtime stagehand and theater workers union leader F.X. Crowley. Crowley resigned from the commission and his union post last month to focus on his run for the Board of Supervisors in District Seven on the city's west side.

Adams spent 24 years as a longshoreman and marine clerk, starting in 1978 in Tacoma, Wash. He was elected international secretary-treasurer of the ILWU in 2003 and moved to San Francisco.

Adam's appointment is subject to confirmation by the Board of Supervisors.

- John Coté

E-mail: cityinsider@ co's Port Commission. doing harm," Lee said. "We're sfcbronicle.com Adams was tapped to fill the going to keep our city safe for Twitter: @SFCityInsider seat on the five-member panel everyone to enjoy the game."

# Oakland's credibility

# STERN GROVE FESTIVAL

# TAKING THE PICNIC TO AN ART FORM

By Nate Seltenrich

There are picnics, and then there are picnics. The latter sort seems to thrive at Stern Grove Festival concerts, where up to 90 percent of attendees pack their own lunch and have since the Festival's earliest days. Three years ago, Festival organizers decided to sanctify the tradition. Taking a cue from the San Francisco Opera's summertime picnic competitions, Director of Development Jessica Zeidman figured Stern Grove's over-the-top diners deserved some recognition of their own.

The Grove Gourmet contest, now in its fourth year, takes place only a few times each season. The classical shows

— San Francisco Symphony, Ballet, and Opera — tend to attract the most extravagant spreads, so that's where the judges focus their attention. Zeidman and another staff

member or two first wander the Grove at around 11:30 a.m., rallying up interest and searching for competitors; usually about seven make the cut. Then, shortly after noon, they return for the tasting.

Suffice to say a little crackers and cheese won't cut it. Instead, think foie gras mousse, champagne pitchers, and homemade ice cream sandwiches. "The competition is stiff at the opera," Zeidman said. And that extends to presentation: winning picnickers serve their provisions on bone china and crystal over folding tables swathed in elegant tablecloths. Locally sourced foods and creative cuisine earn bonus points

Neil McNamara of South San Francisco won the contest a couple years ago with his family, which has attended nearly every Stern Grove Festival concert over the past 12 years. He can't remember the entire winning menu, but it

included an Asian noodle salad and a cilantro marinade on shrimp he'd grilled early that morning. Another time he prepared a roasted tomato tart with feta cheese that he was sure would prevail, but ultimately lost out to a team that he suspects included a few pro chefs...

"I try to make something nice for my family, but also something that I think will win," he said. "I think people have to think outside of the box. You have to make something that doesn't look like you bought it at the Whole Foods

take-out counter."

Beyond momentary bragging rights, Grove Gourmet winners receive a small prize such as a bottle of wine, tickets to the opera, a reserved table for an upcoming show, or a deluxe picnic set. Judges, meanwhile, get to meet the audience and enjoy one heck of a free lunch.



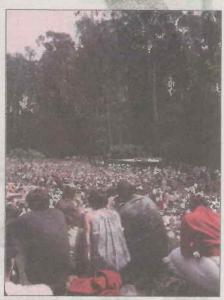




1943



SIGMUND STERN



1968

# **MUSICAL OFFERINGS HAVE EVOLVED OVER TIME**

By Nate Seltenrich

Stern Grove Festival began as a celebration of classical music. Thousands turned out to watch the San Francisco Symphony, Opera, and Ballet. These were the big names in town, and well aligned with the emerging institution's somewhat refined sensibilities. By no means were the concerts intended to be exclusionary — they were free, after all — but it took time for other genres to make their way in. The Grove's first jazz concert, featuring San Francisco native Vince Guaraldi, finally happened in 1966.

Today the symphony, opera, and ballet performances remain the pillars of each season, but the other seven weeks represent a rainbow of genres designed to reflect the Bay Area itself. This summer's lineup, for example, features gospel, jazz, blues, pop, soul, funk, rock, R&B, hip-hop, Latin,

and more — with multiple styles often lumped into a single afternoon.

"Our Festival gives people a chance to be a little adventurous," said Director of Programming Judy Tsang. Over the last two decades, she noted, the Festival's board and chairman Doug Goldman have been particularly encouráging of diversity.

Most Stern Grove regulars have come to cherish the attendant variety of moods, audiences, and even lunch items. "It expands my appreciation of music," said Neil McNamara, whose family has hardly missed a show over the last 12 years. "You get to see a blues performer, then you get to see a dance company or a Hawaiian band. We've seen some phenomenal performers." Over the years, he said, he's picked up at least 50 albums recorded by musicians he discovered at Stern Grove.

Joan Levy Zentner is equally open-minded when it comes to new music, a relative rarity within her age bracket. She's 86, and has attended the Stern Grove Festival throughout her entire life — with the exception of just six seasons in the late '50s. She was even at the inaugural concert, where her cousin performed on viola with the San Francisco Symphony.

While many of her peers still attending the Stern Grove Festival stick steadfastly to the classical shows, Zentner branches out whenever she can. She says she's thrilled to see a broader mix of races and cultures represented at the Grove these days, and appreciates opportunities to hear new genres and artists. "What's better than sitting out in the fresh air and having a concert?" she said. "That really is the best of all."

also given three small cans of International Orange paint so he can touch up his bridge.

And finally, when the two got ready to leave Thursday, the staff at the Handlery Union Square Hotel called United Airlines to see if they might be able to get Larry and Barbara into the passenger lounge. Instead, they were upgraded to first class all the way to Wichita.

There's one sure way to get change something. Readers, including Planning Commissioner Mike Antonini, are upset about the change in street signs.

"Out of nowhere," Antonini wrote, "our traditional 'all caps,' easy to read street signs are being replaced city-wide with new ones with smaller letters."

It's true, said Paul Rose, the spokesman for the Municipal Transportation Agency. In 2009, the city adopted something called the Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, which says street signs are harder to read in all capital letters, he said.

Therefore, new signs will capitalize the first letter and make the rest lowercase.

"However," Rose said, "we are only doing it as signs need to be replaced."

C.W. Nevius is a San Francisco Chronicle columnist. His columns appear Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. E-mail: cwnevius@ sfchronicle.com Twitter: @cwnevius

#### **BAY AREA**

CITYSCAPE By John King

# A standout that settles right in

The architecture of the Sunset too often is characterized as faceless flats and tired tract homes, but anyone familiar with the district knows reality is not so prim. Along the Great Highway strands of modernism are as visible as the dunes - up to and including this bright preschool with a roofline that snaps up as if to greet the nearby ocean. The visual accent allows natural light and air to flow down to the children inside, while the recessed corner frames a mural of whales at play. New buildings can be jarring; this one already feels at home.





Sunset Co-Op Nursery School 4245 Lawton St. | Architect: McCall Design Group with Gillern Designs. Mural by Chris Del Moro | Style: Contemporary | Size: 1 story and loft | Date built: 2010

Cityscape is spending June in the serene Sunset. If you have favorite buildings out west, drop a line to jking@sfchronicle.com

#### **BAY AREA**

CITYSCAPE By John King





Photos by John King / The Chronicle

1500 block of 36th Avenue Developer: Oliver Rousseau | Style: Take your pick | Size: 2 stories | Date built: 1932

For this month's western rambles, jking@sfchronicle.com is happy to have as a resource Lorri Ungaretti's new "Stories in the Sand: San Francisco's Sunset District, 1847-1964."

# An architectural realm of make-believe that's real

The dominant architecture of the Sunset is the mass-market eclecticism that was popular before World War II, and no builder did it better than Oliver Rousseau. A licensed architect,

his hundred-plus homes defied the Depression with blocks of make-believe where storybook cottages stand next to French chateaus and Moorish fantasies bump Tudor estates. The

lots are small, the yards shallow, the dimensions all roughly the same. The goal wasn't to convince so much as delight, and the whimsy still shines through the clutter and fog.

6-17-2012

# Sutro Tower — still beautiful

Loved Peter Hartlaub's April articles on lost landmarks of San Francisco. I worked at Burlingame High with his dad years ago, so I'm old enough to remember these things.

I remember walking from 27th Avenue to go to Fleishhacker swimming pool with neighbors at 7 and 8 years old. We wore wool suits rented for 10 cents. I also walked past the Navy plane on the way to school.

My favorite for years is the Sutro Tower because my always-upbeat girl-friend's mother lived on Forestside and her front door faced the tower. Most people seemed to think it was ugly, but she changed my mind forever. She would always say, "Will you look up there! That's my ship coming in!" And of course, it was a large ship without the sails. Still beautiful with fog above and below it.

Marian Sweeney, San Bruno

#### Herb Caen column logo changed with the times

All the nostalgia over lost landmarks in the April 22 Datebook (thank you, Peter Hartlaub!) has moved me to write. The "bending Pyramid" skyline on the heading for Herb Caen's column did not appear until the mid-1970s. Of course, Herb loved the symbolism of his name pushing back against the modernities of the city, but on occasion, as appropriate to the reprinted column in Johnny Miller's Wayback Machine, could we have the old skyline that graced the heading before the bending Pyramid?

Ward Loveland, Redwood City



Paul Chinn / The Chronicle 2009

Sutro Tower reminded one neighbor of a large ship without the sails.

mance artist slurps it up," all I can say is, where is Gerald Nachman now that we need him more than ever?

Marc Feldman, Oakland

#### Weak KDFC signal sends listener to Internet radio

Kathryn Kasch of Oakland wrote in the April 22 issue how terrible the KDFC signal is in Oakland. I echo this for the Menlo Park-Palo Alto area—awful. The station raves about its new Los Gatos signal (which can be heard-only a mile or two from that city). KDFC has completely disregarded the heart of Silicon Valley, while people in the cultural bedrocks of Anguin and extreme Northern California have great signals. The station has had two years to correct this disgraceful situation. Kasch should go to the Internet—

#### LEAH GARCHIK

# Antique treasure sold for church

Seven leaded glass Tiffany lamps from the collection of **Norman Hobday**, who owned Henry Africa's and then Eddie Rickenbacker's, will be auctioned by Christie's in New York on Thursday as part of Luxury Week sales.

And alongside those lamps, says the New Fillmore, will be a copper and mica chandelier, perhaps created by metalsmith **Dirk van Erp**, that hung in the dining room of the former parsonage next door to the Swedenborgian Church. This is in the Arts & Crafts style, and it's being sold by the church to help pay for renovations to the church's stained glass windows and its chairs, which were said to be designed by **Bernard Maybeck**.

But according to the neighborhood newspaper, "no one can prove definitely the lamp is by van Erp. It does not bear

his distinctive windmill mark nor was van Erp known to make chandeliers." The Christie's website ascribes it to the metalsmith, some of whose work is in the collection of the de Young Museum. Curator Julian Cox said he was unaware of the piece - which has an auction estimate of \$50,000 to \$60,000, but will probably go for much more having been offered for sale to the museum.

Guy: "I'm : really big | game guy, more than games." Se guy: "Cool

Man to man, cafe on Divisi Bielawa

P.S.: The John Berggruen Gallery is showing a dazzling array of paintings and pastel drawings by **Wayne Thiebaud**, including works from the '60s to the present. Thiebaud probably is California's best-known living artist, and most of the works are in private collections, with only a few for sale. Prices are "upon request," meaning, as the old saw goes, if you have to ask, forget it. There's one in the five figures (\$80,000), though: "Cakes on Stands" is a black-and-white graphite drawing made in 1970.

This was bought by John Berggruen at auction in New York, its value a bit lessened, it was explained to me by the gallery's **Tatem Read**, because it includes next to its signature the penciled note, "Thanks for everything, Don."

Who was Don? Anyone out there know? P.P.S.: Last Friday's Magnet gallery opening of "Mike's Men: Sex, Guys and Videotape," an exhibition of drawings and video of Mike Kuchar, drew so many fans that the crowd spilled out on the sidewalk. Among the art-loving icons who attended were John Waters and Peter Berlin. Eric Smith, Mark Garrett and Margaret Tedesco curated the exhibition.

# When rent control provides a getaway for the well-to-do



Well-to-do people are taking advantage of the city's longprotected practice of limiting rent increases to preserve affordable housing by using their cheap apartments as weekend getaways.

Attorney Andrew Zacks represents landlords who work with the city to push out these cheaters. He says these tenants are cynically playing the system.

"You have this class of very rich, elite people benefiting from rent control," he said. "They have a good deal on a \$500 or \$800 place on Nob Hill and they use it as a pied-aterre when they come into the city."

Delene Wolf, executive director of the San Francisco Rent Board, is still fuming over a group from the South Bay that formed its own little housing cooperative. "It drove me nuts," she said.
"It was four doctors and their wives. They traded off on the weekends and used it to go to the Symphony."

Their co-op was disbanded after a 2001 law was passed that allows landlords to file a

Nevius continues on A8

# Sympathy for the landlord? In these cases, yes

#### Nevius from page A1

petition giving them the right to attempt to prove that the tenant is not a full-time resident.

Wolf feels the law is working and points to a decline in the number of cases heard. The first year there were 93, and the last couple of years it has averaged below 20.

#### Low-hanging fruit

But Zacks believes the law is only partially effective.

"The fact that the number of petitions have gone down is because the easy ones have been caught," he said. "There are certainly a lot of people working hard to protect their rent-control unit, particularly in large buildings where it is harder to prove. I think it is very widespread."

The suits are notoriously tricky, turning on the exact

definition of what it means to be a full-time resident. Tenants may be away for months, caring for a sick relative, or on an extended business assignment. Or so they say.

"It's gotten to be a battle royal," said Janan New, executive director of the San Francisco Apartment Association, a nonprofit organization that represents building owners.

New says that when the law was enacted a certain percentage of renters said, "OK, you caught me," and moved out. But not all of them. Because it is both expensive and difficult to prove residency, some renters think it is worth a fight.

"The burden of proof is on the landlord," said Zacks. "We almost always hire a private investigator, which costs several thousand dollars."

As an example, Zacks has a case that involves a couple who own a condominium in

Hawaii and have enrolled their children in school there, but wanted rent protection for a single-family residence in the Richmond District that they have rented since 1987. The landlord, who felt he had evidence the two were living full-time in Hawaii, wanted to increase the rent by \$1,500 a month to \$3,600.

Zacks' client won the case, but only after two appeals, \$50,000 in legal costs and four years of wrangling.

#### Challenging the law

And it isn't over. The couple filed a challenge to the 2001 petition law in Superior Court. Their suit argues that the Rent Board does not have the authority to rule on eligibility for rent control status because it is "beyond the power of the Rent Board to enact regulations."

This is not an academic argument. Buildings built after

1979 are not subject to rent control, but there are still more than 183,500 rent-controlled units, Wolf said. In a city of 222,165 apartments — which house 65 percent of the population, according to the 2010 Census — this is a volatile issue.

Zacks, and many landlords, would argue that the rentcontrol cheats are not only failing to pay their fair share, but they are also holding down the number of available rentals.

"People are hoarding the units," he said. "You have these beautiful homes being used for storage."

Or to turn a profit. As documented in a Chronicle story on Sunday, the recent influx of travel sites like Airbnb, which allow people to rent out units for short periods of time, can allow these renters to both get a place at a bargain rate and make money.

New says the experience can be surreal for rental property owners.

"We have had cases where our owners go on the sites and see their own buildings, renting for more than they are getting," she said. "They are gaming the system and getting away with it."

That's aggravating. But, Zacks says, imagine what it is like to be giving tenants a break on the rent and then finding out they are renting the place out for a profit.

The situation is so out of whack it has accomplished the nearly impossible — some people are actually feeling sorry for landlords.

C.W. Nevius is a San Francisco Chronicle columnist. His columns appear Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. E-mail: cwnevius@sfchronicle.com Twitter: @cwnevius

# Scurry up Taylor and stroll down

Saturday afternoon's walk up Taylor Street, from Market to the Exit Theatre, where we saw the Cutting Ball Theater production of "Tenderloin," was quite different from the walk down Taylor Street on the way back. That's the effect of the play, a "documentary play" of testimony from Tenderloin residents about their lives and their neighborheod. It's poignant, it's real, and by the time it is over, its message has gotten to you: Don't avert your glance. Look around with open eyes and fear not.

The day we saw this production, which has been extended until Sunday, Shomari Kenyatta, a city cleaning program worker who's one of the characters portrayed, was in the audience. That crossover between production and audience and environment is at the

heart of this theater experience. There were huge sheets of paper in the lobby on which members of the audience were invited to write down Tenderloin experiences they'd had. This is San Francisco: They ranged from eyewitness accounts of drugfueled violence to praise for Indian and Pakistani restaurants.

A few blocks south on Taylor Street, as we left the theater, I noticed someone who'd sat in front of us talking with a man slumped in a doorway. It's

"Do you English? yes, cert: "Oh, goo wonder, direct m Renaissa

Conversat female tou di Santa Croce Roberto

a modest show in a small theater, with a big aim. Director **Annie Elias** had told The Chronicle she hoped audiences would leave "feeling differently" about the neighborhood. I saw that happen.

#### BAY AREA



MIKE KEPKA The City Exposed

# Insider's tour of Tenderloin a labor of love

A recent Wednesday at 2:01 p.m.

Clutching the worn leather briefcase he's carried with him through the Tenderloin for 30 years, Deleano Seymour pointed out architecture at the corner of Turk and Taylor streets to a small group of local professionals. He also told them the corner is thought to be one of the country's most violent. His guests hung on every word.

Next, after stepping over more than a few sleeping sidewalk inhabitants, Seymour guided his curious crew through St. Anthony's soup kitchen.

Later, he showed them where, if you're homeless, you can safely stash your belongings for up to six months. He pointed out intersections where he witnessed four murders and shared fond memories of Original Joe's Italian restaurant, where he worked as a maintenance man for eight years until the day it burned.

Julie Mielich was among those on Seymour's "A Walk on the Wild Side" tour. She said having a guide helped ease the fears of being in the gritty neighborhood. Tim Murakami agreed.

"You never hear about the history of the TL. It's always glazed over," he said.

Seymour, 65, was born in Chicago but has lived in the Tenderloin for more than three decades. "I've lived in the homeless shelters. I've eaten in every soup kitchen. I've experienced a lot of ghosts and devils in the Tenderloin," he said.

For 15 years, he gave mini tours of the city from the front seat of the cab he drove. Two years ago he began his Tenderloin walking tour, hoping to make people more aware of the troubles facing his beloved neighborhood. The 90-minute tour is free, although Seymour eventually wants local companies to sponsor his efforts.

"This is not a business venture. It's a love affair," he said.

To find out more, e-mail tenderloin walkingtours@yahoo.com.

To see a multimedia production of this piece, go to blog.sfgate.com/cityexposed. If you have ideas for the City Exposed. e-mail Mike Kepka at mkepka@ sfchronicle.com.

### My solution for S.F. traffic mess

I have a solution to the traffic mess outlined by John King in "Fewer vehicles, more street life considered for Market Street " (June 20), the same solution I suggested to the Planning Commission a dozen years ago on the EIR for the Mission Bay Project.

Just build a large garage near Third and King that could serve the ballpark and Caltrain, and let commuters and visitors immediately park and take public transportation to their destinations. City planners said such a garage would have to be subsidized and wouldn't alleviate downtown traffic. I still think they were wrong.

Tim Donnelly, San Francisco

#### The Chronicle with Bloomberg

#### GALLERY







Photos by Michael Macor / The Chronicle

### Inside Twitter's new nest

Twitter employees have settled into their home in San Francisco's historic Market Square, where the company finished moving June 11. Twitter leased 215,000 square feet on three floors of the building, which is on Market Street between Ninth and 10th streets.

About 800 of Twitter's 1,000 employees work at the new headquarters, which has a nature theme, springing from the corporate logo, a bluebird, and the company founders' interest in sustainability.

Among the sights, clockwise from left: a tree theme in the elevator lobby leading to the reception area; a rooftop garden; and fresh salads for employees in the dining area. More photos are at blog.sfgate.com/techchron.

### Twitter fills new nest in mid-Market

By Ari Burack S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

The City's transformation of the mid-Market Street area has begun after Twitter's weekend move into a historic Market

Square building.

The microblogging company said Monday it had begun occupying its "new nest" at 1355 Market St., where about 800 employees are expected to fill at least three of the 11 floors of the formerly vacant building. Constructed in 1937, the art deco palace is being renovated by the firm Shorenstein, which purchased it last year.

"We're especially pleased to benefit from the considerable effort Shorenstein has taken to revitalize not only a beautiful landmark property, but a corner of The City that had fallen on hard times," blogged Gabriel Stricker, Twitter's vice president of communications.

Excepting planned groundfloor retail space, about 90 percent of the building is now leased out, according to Tom McDonnell, Shorenstein's vice president of leasing.

While Twitter got the ball rolling, three other firms now plan to move into Market Square: CallSocket, an international call services center; One Kings Lane, a luxury online home furnishings retailer; and Yammer, a social-network provider for businesses.

Twitter was among the first to benefit from Mayor Ed Lee's payroll-tax break for businesses that moved into the area, which has in recent years been troubled by crime, homelessness and vacant storefronts.

New businesses and the expected addition of thou-sands of nearby residential units could make it "a really fascinating neighborhood in a short period of time,"

McDonnell said.

While some worry about higher rents forcing out poor residents or businesses, Mark Woolway, a Yammer executive vice president, said gentrification would be welcomed in The City's new "tech epicenter."
"With that influx of highly

paid, very talented workers, the area's going to transform very rapidly, I think," he said. Yammer hopes to grow by 300 workers in the next few years.

aburack@sfexaminer.com

# Elsbernd doubts pitchfork-ready urban farm jobs

Tust minutes after the board voted to delay consideration of the temporary payroll tax break, Board of Supervisors President David Chiu introduced his legislation to "establish an urban agriculture program." This program would consolidate the efforts of seven city departments that are separately facilitating community gardens. It would require the creation of a one-stop shop for resources related to the gardens and require that one person be hired to coordinate all of this.

Oh, but wait just a minute. I thought we weren't passing any new laws that require funding that isn't in the budget? Sure enough, Supervisor Sean Elsbernd jumped right up and said, "I'd like to move that we continue this item to July 10. Just simply based on the precedent of a half-hour ago, I think it would be



Till the cows come home? Discussion about Board of Supervisors President David Chiu's proposed urban agriculture legislation was pushed back.

porderline hypocritical for us to vote for an ordinance when we know it is unfunded. That was the lesson I learned a half-hour ago. Hopefully we've all learned that. So I'd like to continue this item to July 10. We'll see if the budget committee

actually funds all these priorities, and then we can vote on it.'

Chiu laughed a little and seconded the motion to postpone, but asked if Elsbernd would work with Chiu's staff on the urban agriculture legislation.

"No," Elsbernd flatly replied. "For me, creating jobs in San Francisco is a much higher budget priority than creating urban farms. So, first I want to create jobs, then if there is money left over in the budget, yes I'll work with you to create some urban farms. But first and foremost, I want to create

Chiu replied lamely that urban farms employ people who sell their food at commercial markets. And Supervisor John Avalos said, "Calling people out for inconsistency or hypocrisy at the Board of Supervisors is probably as common as calling people out for running stop

signs in the Excelsior district." But still, Avalos had to support the continuance, which passed.

Added Supervisor Scott Wiener, "To Supervisor Elsbernd, I'm goma miss you come January" 6-21-2012 3 F EXAMINER

# **Urban farm could scatter**

Development may push Hayes Valley group to multiple locations

By Andrea Koskey SF Examiner Staff Writer

After nearly 2½ years occupying a 2.2-acre parcel off Laguna Street, Hayes Valley Farm's days are numbered.

The urban farm — one of The City's first and largest — used a former freeway off-ramp as a temporary location to compost, grow food and plants, harvest honey and educate the community about agricultural techniques.

This month, a condo project slated to permanently fill the property is expected to go before the Planning Commission for approval of its development plan. And city officials expect that they will serve the farm its 60-day eviction notice by Dec. 1, requiring it to vacate the site by February.

Although many farm volunteers still hope to "save the farm," organizers have been preparing for this day for about a year.



**Spread:** Jay Rosenberg, co-director of the farm, would like to see small farm plots in each city neighborhood.

Co-director Jay Rosenberg said many farm volunteers have met to discuss what's next. He said his organization is identifying potential locations and working on a moving plan. But they may end up replacing their current site with multiple locations.

"We think it's important that urban agriculture can use interim

spaces," he said. "One idea is to break it up. So we're looking at elements of the farm, how these elements can find themselves in other neighborhoods."

Rosenberg said he and other organizers would like small pieces of the farm located in every San Francisco neighborhood. The new sites don't need to be as large as the farm's current location, and could transform small plots on unused parcels of land into useful space.

"I'd love to see it explode into fireworks so that little farm projects start popping up all over, as a space to grow food, recycle, create compost, take classes and share tools," Rosenberg said.

City officials said the farm's success should not be squandered, and vowed to do all they can to help it obtain permissions to use any potential new locations.

"We're committed to being helpful," said Kelly Pretzer, project manager with the city Office of Economic and Workforce Development.
"There's certainly a sensitivity to plopping down in a new community and saying 'We're doing it here."

6-19-2012

akoskey@sfexaminer.com

#### MATIER & ROSS



# Building inspection chief stepping down

Under pressure from the mayor's office, the head of San Francisco's Building Inspection Department is taking a step down — but not in pay.

Vivian Day, who recently took a week of leave because of what she said was stress caused by efforts to get rid of her, will take a new special assistant job within the department — but at her current \$206,000-a-year salary, according to City Hall insiders.

Day will focus on special projects — most notably, helping whoever replaces her transition into the job and overseeing the installation of a computer system to track permits.

Day isn't talking publicly about what went down, but did confirm her new duties in an e-mail sent to staffers late Friday.

Mayor **Ed Lee**'s office isn't saying much, either.



Vivian Day

However, Jennifer Johnston, spokeswoman for the city's Department of Human Resources, which has been working on Day's exit, said she's never heard of a case where an employee was "going to be paid less to stay on and help."

She said Day's status is supposed to go before the Building Inspection Commission on Wednesday.

M&R continues on C7

#### FROM THE COVER

### **Building inspection chief stepping down**

M&R from page C1

Just before she went on leave in late May, Day sent an e-mail to commission President Angus McCarthy and city human resources boss Micki Callahan, complaining that the mayor and McCarthy were trying to oust her for seeking to scrub the building inspection agency clean after a series of corruption probes.

Day called the alleged efforts to bounce her "a perfect example of the kind of political influence that has plagued the department for many years."

Building Inspection
Commission member
Debra Walker, a Day ally,
said the director has been
"incredibly effective in
running the department"
and was pushed out for
insisting on strong code
enforcement, particularly
in Chinatown and the
Tenderloin.

For his part, we're told, Lee viewed Day as an obstructionist blocking the mayor's efforts to build more housing and boost neighborhood economic development "These are the big priorities of the mayor," said one administration source, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the personnel issues involved.

Also on the outs: Alameda County's chief probation officer, David Muhammad — who has been on paid leave since being hit with a sexual assault claim by a deputy in February — will soon be exiting his post.

"Unless there is some wrinkle, he will likely step aside next week," said county Supervisor **Keith Carson**.

Muhammad was brought into the department in 2010 with the expectation he would shake things up. He was put on leave after a female deputy accused him of making passes at her in May 2011.

Carson said an investigation has so far shown that "there was nothing there," but that both Muhammad and county officials agreed it would be too distracting for the probation chief to return

# Inspection chief's exit questioned

Building department change stirs rumors of a political ouster

By Ari Burack and Dan Schreiber S.F. Examiner Staff Writers

Four years after taking over a department plagued by corruption, the director of The City's building inspections resigned Wednesday amid accusations that Mayor Ed Lee's office had orchestrated her ouster.

While the departure of Department of Building Inspection Director Vivian Day was officially called a resignation, one agency commissioner, Debra Walker, said she had been "forced to resign."

Walker suggested that a majority of commissioners — the four of the seven who were appointed by the Mayor's Office — had agreed to fire Day unless she resigned. She said she thought the firing had originated in the Mayor's Office and surmised that Day had been considered too tenacious about enforcing building codes.

"I think it's code enforcement in general; she knows the code and she applies it," Walker said.

But Lee insisted Wednesday that he had no involvement in any effort to force her out.

"I've never engaged with any personnel matters in DBI," Lee said. "I'm letting them handle it." However, he acknowledged the department's history of dysfunction calling it "sort of a mess."

Day was hired by the commission as a permitting manager in 2007,



after a series of FBI raids and an internal anti-corruption probe of the department ordered by then-Mayor Gavin Newsom. She quickly rose to the position of acting director in 2008. Her position was made permanent in February 2009

permanent in February 2009.

She had been one of the department's longest-serving directors until Wednesday, when the commission accepted her resignation following a pointed discussion about whether the matter should be aired publicly

or discussed in closed session.

The commission split 4-3, with those appointed by the Mayor's Office voting to discuss the matter privately. The three appointees of the Board of Supervisors, two of whom complained angrily that they had not been told of Day's

departure, disagreed.

"It's a slap in the face to the rest of the commission," said Walker, who defended Day's efforts to bring DBI's budget into the black and implement new programs and technology upgrades. "We, the commission, have a right to know what happened and the public has a right to know."

Under San Francisco's City Charter, the commission has exclusive authority to hire and fire its director.

Following the closed session, the commission announced that Day's resignation would be effective at the end of the month and that, on July 1, she would become "special assistant for transition purposes," presumably to train her replacement. Tom Hui,



Change: Above: Building Inspection Commissioner
Debra Walker, right, shakes hands Wednesday with
newly appointed DBI Acting Director Tom Hui, who
is taking over for the departing Vivian Day, left.

DBI's deputy director of plan review services, was named acting director while the department conducts a search for a permanent head.

Day said she had been called to a meeting with city officials May 22, when she had been made an offer to stay on. She would not elaborate on the meeting or what the offer was. After the hearing, she declined to comment about the reason for her resignation.

"It's just been a pleasure working for the department," Day said.

This is how we treat people who

Walker was less cordial.

"I just don't think it's in the best interests of The City," Walker said.

do good jobs." 6-2[-10[2]
aburack@sfexaminer.com
dschreiber@sfexaminer.com

#### WARRIORS' ARENA

# Is Embarcadero site really the best place?

By John King

Public officials were smiling in 2007 when Gap founder Donald Fisher announced his desire to build a museum in the center of the Presidio to hold his family's vast collection of contemporary art.

All agreed this would be a coup for San Francisco — until

Behind the scenes: An inside look at how the Warriors' front office handled a major trade and the lottery.

the intrusive actual design was released a few months later. Then support faded as quickly as a watercolor in the sun, and Arena continues on A6

A6 | Tuesday, June 26, 2012 | SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE AND SFGATE.COM

### FROM THE COVER

# Warriors' arena plan

Arena from page A1

the family dropped its plans within the year.

The lesson bears repeating as Mayor Ed Lee and the Golden State Warriors begin their quest to build an arena complex on Piers 30-32. It's not enough to talk grandly of icons and legacies: The team must craft a detailed proposal that shines within the larger context of the Embarcadero, one of the city's most distinctive promenades.

And the team would be smart to consider at least two other options if this site doesn't work out — one obvious, one not. Both are in the Mission Bay district to the south, on blocks where a prominent arena won't be so blatant.

Of course, turning heads is a big reason the team's owners want to transform the longdormant pier just south of the Bay Bridge. There, on a 13-acre parking lot in need of \$100 million of structural improvements, the Warriors promise a spacious arena capable of hosting concerts and conventions as well as basketball. Ancillary buildings would contain restaurants and nightclubs and team offices. The perimeter of the pier would be public open space.

While Lee was quick to embrace "my legacy project" after it was unveiled last month, the images released so far are as substantial as cotton candy. One shows people enjoying festive plazas, no buildings in sight. Two aerial perspectives show a gauzy white orb along a gorgeous blue bay.

And all three are purely for show. The team hasn't hired an architect.

#### How would it fit?

The pretty pictures don't soften the stark fact that it's difficult to imagine *any* arena complex on the pier that would relate to today's Embarcadero, a bayside boulevard that embodies San Francisco's unique

blend of dense urbanity amid natural splendor.

Strictly in terms of the site, a hypothetical filling in the blanks, the scheme is doable.

The expansive pier is 626 feet wide and as much as 937 feet long; by contrast, the Warriors' home at Oracle Arena is an oval 584 feet long, 488 feet wide and 106 feet tall. Today's arenas tend to be a bit more snug — roughly 550 feet long, 450 feet wide and at least 125 feet tall, say architects who specialize in the genre — so there'd be ample room for other buildings.

Yet even with broad walkways around the edge, the centerpiece would be a bulbous structure more than twice the height of anything between Pier 39 and AT&T Park except for the slender 245-foot clock tower of the Ferry Building.

Arena boosters hold up the Giants' ballpark as a precedent: a large, private facility the public embraced from day one. It created waterfront access that didn't exist, and 12 years after opening remains a neighborhood catalyst of the most positive sort.

#### No common elements

But the sites have nothing in common except the neighboring bay.

AT&T Park is at the hinge where the Embarcadero turns inland, a pivot that marks the transition from open bay to building-lined creek. And the structure of the ballpark recedes as it meets the water, from 115 feet at the top of the stands along King Street to just 24 feet along the right-field wall. That variation isn't possible with an arena, which by definition is a closed-in world unto itself.

The allure of the pier is obvious. It's the most spectacular blank slate on the bay, extending out above the water as though it were a platter waiting for something flashy to display.

No wonder Warriors President Rick Welts calls Piers 30-32 "an iconic location." He



Sonja Och / The Chronicle

also strikes the right chord on public access: "Our commitment is to return the pier to a state where everyone in the city can enjoy it 365 days a year."

Welts and city officials say the arena design will evolve during a process that ranges from informal community meetings to make-or-break hearings at the California State Lands Commission, which has ultimate say over development proposals along the bay. In the meantime, the team is huddling with event planners to fashion the ideal space for the maximum range of uses.

"We're trying to do the programming on the front end and then hire the architectural expertise to bring that program to form," Welts said.

#### Public access

But the state regulators who decide if a large non-maritime structure belongs on a prominent pier don't care about interior layouts. Their job is "to make sure the public interest is protected," in the words of Curtis Fossum, the commission's executive officer. "Public access, which is a constitutional right, is something we look at as fundamental."

It may be that the Warriors' proposal will hit the spot. The team might convince regulators and skeptics that an arena is necessary to give the huge pier new life while giving people new options for encountering



John Blanchard / The Chronicle

the bay.

If they don't, the game by no means is over.

For starters, an arena-concert venue seems like a comfortable fit for the mixed-use development being shaped by the San Francisco Giants for the 25-acre parking lot on McCovey Cove across from the ballpark. Plans at this point are sketchy enough that they could be adapted to the Warriors' needs.

#### **Mission Bay site**

The 14 acres in Mission Bay owned by Salesforce.com could fill the bill as well. The software firm bought the land across from UCSF Mission Bay in 2010 The Golden State Warriors hope to build an arena at Piers 30-32, a distinctive spot along the Embarcadero.

with plans to build a 2-millionsquare-foot corporate campus, then decided this February to stay downtown instead. Now they're stuck with land to sell and the central four blocks together would hold an arena.

A Muni light-rail line stops next to the site on Third Street. Two large parking garages are steps away, each geared to the neighborhood's daytime population. There's even waterfront access: The bay lies directly to the east, with a shoreline park already in the works.

There are drawbacks to be sure, starting with the fact that one neighbor is a hospital complex set to open in 2015. The Financial District and BART aren't nearly as convenient as at Piers 30-32. The blocks are zoned for offices and research, job sectors that the city seeks to grow.

The point is, options exist. When the Fisher family was rebuffed at the Presidio, it found a willing home for its art collection at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. If history repeats itself, the Warriors should have a backup plan ready to go.

John King is The San Francisco Chronicle's urban design critic. E-mail: jking@sfchronicle.com

# Warriors arena talks

# 8 Washington condo project approved, but fight not over

By Joshua Sabatini S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

A politically charged 134-unit luxury condo development along San Francisco's waterfront that has been years in the making finally received city approval Tuesday.

Board of Supervisors President David Chiu, whose district includes the development site at 8 Washington St., fought the project up until its approval. He failed Tuesday to gain support for several amendments to the development that would have required developer Simon Snellgrove of Pacific Waterfront Partners to pay more for city benefits such as affordable housing.

In the end, the development was approved in an 8-3 vote. Chiu, along with supervisors John Avalos and David Campos, opposed it.

Last week, Supervisor Jane Kim successfully obtained additional concessions, including pool access for low-income youths, a 50-cent surcharge on parking for area transit improvements and a decrease in underground parking spaces from 255 to 200. The developer also is paying \$11 million in affordable housing fees, \$2 million more than mandated.

But the fight is not expected to end quite yet. As Chiu noted during Tuesday's hearing, project



Chiu

opponents have said they plan to gather signatures for a ballot measure opposing the project, and others are expected to file lawsuits seeking to block the development.

The 8 Washington development ignited a political feud and angered members of the private Golden Gateway Tennis and Swim Club, which it would displace. The project would eliminate the facility's tennis courts and replace an existing pool. Labor unions have rallied behind the project's expected construction jobs, but progressives say The City needs affordable housing, not multimillion-dollar condos.

jsubatini@sfeitaminer.com

6-13-2012

# Warriors on the Embarcadero?

The answer to John King's headline question, "Is Embarcadero site really the best place?" (June 26), is a resounding "no."

When the rest of the world is learning to build in ecologically sound ways, erecting a basketball stadium over open water on piers in San Francisco Bay is the most ridiculous idea to come along since shaving off the top of San Bruno Mountain and dumping it into the bay.

Why cover a limited resource like open water, which can serve so many water-related uses, like boating, fishing and sightseeing, with a structure when there's plenty of good, solid earth around the bay to build on?

If Piers 30-32 are too dilapidated to use in their present condition, the remaining structure should be removed to reveal the open water for all citizens to enjoy, not just basketball fans.

Bill Levinson, Oakland

#### City that knows how

John King's concerns about the proposed Warriors arena miss all the things that have made places in our

city work.

Places for people are successful, and it's the spaces around the arena that will define how most people will utilize it. This is where the Warriors have an opportunity to create an amazing project. It is close enough to Market Street for people to walk to events and be part of downtown, just like the ballpark. South of China Basin isn't.

The Embarcadero is defined by the historic bulkhead piers and Ferry Building that repeatedly block views of the bay for more than 600 feet at a time. People are drawn to the Ferry Building because of the activity and then find the bay views behind it.

A glass box arena, tight against Herb Caen Way, leaves lots of space for shops and restaurants that face onto a half-mile-long bayside promenade surrounding the arena. It's these places that people who could care less about basketball will inhabit. It will be more lively than the alternative: a decrepit bayside parking lot that can't even support crowds for a fireworks show or X-Games.

Michael Kiesling, San Francisco



Michael Short / Special to The Chronicle

Owner Joe Lacob and team **President Rick Welts** announce move to S.F.

#### View-blocking

John King's article on the location of the Warrior's stadium is dead right.

It took decades to get rid of the view-blocking Embarcadero Freeway. Who today would say that was a bad

Now the proposal is to mosey down the road and build a looming, view-blocking wall 125 feet high and a block long. However brilliant its design, that is what the stadium will be. There has to be a better location

John Hudson, San Francisco

#### Livability

John King suggests two sites in Mission Bay as alternatives to Piers 30-32 for the Warriors' new are-

Let me remind him that the latest plans as announced recently by the Giants for the property south of AT&T Park consist of a fine-grained development of smaller blocks, parks and mixed uses.

As a resident of Mission Bay, I am hoping for fewer mega-blocks and something more along these lines. The Salesforce site mentioned also was to be more along those lines, but, alas, this great concept is on the shelf.

I'm not sure what site is appropriate for a large arena, but I just know that this area is already getting pinched by the suburbanlike blocks of the UCSF campus and other office buildings. Give us some good ol' down-home livability here!

> Jackson Fahnestock, San Francisco