

4 months, \$400,000 til Manor House reopens

By Tom Carter

THE DISCOVERY of faulty plumbing and other deficiencies at the shuttered Manor House Restaurant will cause a delay of at least four more months and cost upward of \$400,000 to fix before the once low-cost dining haven for hundreds of poor folks in the Tenderloin can reopen.

Lease-holder John Atkins told The Central City Extra that problems had been discovered during an extensive cleanup earlier this year.

"We had plumbing issues," Atkins said at his baked goods stall in Heart of the City Farmers Market. "None of us knew what (else) needed to be done." The nonprofit developer TNDC brought in experts, he said. "They looked at everything" and, lo, more things needed attention.

"When a restaurant stays closed a certain amount of time, things may have to be done. There will be a renovation. It will take four months, start to finish."

Cost estimates range from \$200,000 to \$400,000, Liz Orlin, TNDC's chief operating officer, told The Extra. "No one anticipated it would take a lot of work," when Atkins took over the restaurant last year, she said. "We thought it would be a relative quick turnaround." But Atkins found that the plumbing, grease traps, even the walls posed problems. Then TNDC brought in contractors and architects to evaluate what needed to be done.

Manor House closed Feb. 18, 2013, when Mimi Yee, who managed it for 17 years, serving a sometimes rough crowd six days a week, announced she was quitting because of the failing health of her husband John, the head cook. TNDC searched for months for a successor, before finding Atkins, a small-restaurant

owner and baker and farmers' market purveyor who was looking for a second restaurant and accepted the challenge of providing affordable meals at 210 Jones St.

Atkins signed a seven-year lease with TNDC in December, intending to open a few months later. But during cleanup the plumbing problem was discovered.

Orlin acknowledged "the great delay" and was eager that the humble eatery open "as soon as possible."

"But once you find one thing (wrong), it leads to another and another," she said of the 1926 building. The restaurant had been renovated in 2004.

A more thorough on-site examination will soon be conducted, then bids accepted, a construction contract signed and time-consuming permits pulled.

TNDC will cover the "huge cost," and Atkins won't be charged rent until the restaurant is ready for business. "We don't want to burden him with payments."

But these are details yet to be renegotiated in a new, long-term lease, she said, adding how happy TNDC is with Atkins.

"We are thrilled to have him, and we're excited to have him there," Orlin said.

Atkins said he was going to raise prices, The Extra reported in March, but that the hikes would be reasonable. Yee's prices, he said, were too low for today, reflective of an economy 15 years ago.

"The \$3.50 breakfast, no way I can do that," he said. "The variables have gone up. I can't afford to give it away, but I'm not there to gouge anyone."

Atkins has a thriving hole-in-the-wall restaurant in Cow Hollow called Golo, the name deriving from the first two letters of Gough and Lombard streets,



PHOTO LENNY LIMJOCO 2008

Robert Mathena and Johnny Martin were among the throngs of Manor House regulars when Mimi Yee ran the restaurant that featured affordable meals.

where it's located. In recent years, its cleanliness evaluations from the Department of Public Health inspectors scored higher than Manor House did when it was open. Atkins' business card calls it a "boutique cafe" that also does catering. It features his baked goods, which he also sells at Heart of the City and the Alemany Farmers Market.

Atkins doesn't know if he'll keep the Manor House name. For now, the iconic restaurant is a darkened shell and its \$3.50 belly-filling breakfasts and generous \$4.95 lunches delivered by quietly helpful Chinese American waitresses are another fading memory of the changing hood. Chained and padlocked, it sports two signs: "Closed" and "No Dogs Allowed." ■

Eva Langman
yolka.palka@gmail.com
or 415.666.5072

Kick your writing up a notch with my support. Over a decade's experience as **freelance writer & editor of poetry, prose and non-fiction**, I've guided progress on **memoirs, web content, critical essays & dissertations**. Meticulous, well-versed and patient.

HOUSING APPLICATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED FOR THE KNOX AND BAYANIHAN HOUSE



The Knox

Bayanihan House

Please go to 241 6th Street, San Francisco, CA for applications

The TODCO Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Housing Waiting List is open for the Knox and the Bayanihan House. If your name is currently on any TODCO Housing Waiting List and you would like information on your current status please call the TODCO Marketing Office at **415-957-0227** on Fridays' only.

Building	Size & Amenities	Max. Household Income Limits	Rent as of September 01
The Knox SRO located at 241- 6th St. & Tehama is accepting applications and has an WAITLIST OPEN	SRO – 1 Person, or Couple Room size: 10 ½ x 18 (Semi-Private) bathroom 7 x 7 Unit amenities: sink, micro-wave, refrigerator, 2-burner stove, closet, single bed. Building amenities: small gym, library, private lounge, roof top garden, community kitchen, laundry facility & 24 hour staff & surveillance	1 person \$34,600.00/Year	Move in Deposit \$865.00
		2 person-Income \$39,520.00/Year Minimum income of \$1,730.00/Month	Monthly Rent \$865.00 plus utilities
Hotel Isabel located at 1095 Mission WAITLIST CLOSED	SRO – 1 Person Shared bathroom Unit amenities sink, micro-wave, refrigerator, 2- burner stove, closet and single bed.	1 person \$34,600.00/Year No Minimum Income	30% OF INCOME Requires a Certificate of Homelessness
Bayanihan House (Non Assisted Units) located at 88 – 6th St. & Mission. WAITLIST OPEN	SRO – 1 Person, or Couple Room single: 10 ½ x 12, shared bathroom Double occupancy: 12x12, shared bathroom Unit amenities: sink, micro-wave, refrigerator, 2-burner stove, closet, single bed Building amenities: community kitchen, 24 hour staff & surveillance, laundry facility	1 person \$30,275.00/Year	Move in Deposit \$572.00
		Couple \$34,580.00/Year Minimum income of \$877.40/Month	Monthly Rent \$572.00 Utilities included

TDD: (415) 345-4470



Did You Receive A Mandatory Retrofit Letter?

You Are Running Out Of Time To Submit Your Screening Form!

Call Today: (415) 558-6699

e-mail: softstory@sfgov.org

visit: www.sfdbi.org/softstory

You have only six more months to comply with City Ordinance No. 66-13. Submit your Screening Form, signed by an engineer or architect, to DBI IMMEDIATELY. ALL PROPERTY OWNERS MUST RESPOND WITH THIS COMPLETED SCREENING FORM BY SEPTEMBER 15, 2014.

After September 15th, you will receive a **Code Enforcement citation and be liable for financial penalties. Avoid a citation – submit your engineer or architect-completed Screening Form today!**

Soft-Story wood-frame buildings are those where the first story is much 'weaker' than the stories above – such as apartments and condominiums with parking under this first story and making these kinds of buildings vulnerable to collapse in an earthquake.

Protect your building and those living in it by calling DBI today to learn how to strengthen your soft-story building and **Comply with the Mandatory Retrofit Law**. Please obtain helpful information on the DBI website, www.sfdbi.org/softstory.

Thank You! The Department of Building Inspection welcomes your building improvement projects, and appreciates your cooperation in making your buildings better prepared for the next major earthquake.