

Temple to be reincarnated in 7-story building

By Marjorie Beggs

Attend a Tenderloin Futures Collaborative meeting and you'll think you're back in the flush 1990s. Despite the city's most dire economy, there's clearly still money around for new buildings, including in the Tenderloin.

At the Oct. 9 meeting, architect Joseph Chow presented plans for a seven-story building at 380-86 Ellis that would replace the single-story Congenital Taoist of America temple currently scheduled for demolition.

The temple would move into the ground floor of the proposed building, which will be funded by SOAR International Exchange, which sponsors Asian scholars' attendance at religious events. The upper floors include 53 rooms for guests and students, the basement parking spaces for eight cars. The current temple holds about 50 people; the new assembly area will accommodate 100.

"The biggest drawback to our original design was that it cast some shadow on Boeddeker Park, but now that it's saw-toothed [stepped back], it will be okay," said Chow, holding up a modest cardboard model of the building and its environs.

The building has been in

the design stage "for many, many years," Chow said, and will require a little more city scrutiny but not an EIR.

"Our hope is that we'll get city approval by the end of the year and be able to start construction in June 2003," Chow said. "The building owner is Twan Chan and his 85-year-old father is the master of the temple — his greatest hope is to see this done in his lifetime."

Richard Allman, member of the U.N. Plaza Working Group, asked if the building's guests will be using community resources.

"Yes, they'll be eating all their meals out — there are no cooking facilities in the building," Chow said, "and they'll also be using public transportation and other services, too."

No one raised any objections to the project.

Reached later by phone, Chow told *The Extra* that the Planning Commission has tentatively scheduled a project review for Dec. 6. He hopes the rest of the process will be blessedly simple.

Pavilion road show

Collaborative members, however, had a lot of questions for Mel Carriere and Jeff Lous-tau of Glide Economic Development Corp. (GEDC), there to

tout the multimillion-dollar Pavilion project with its 400 housing units, conference facility, office space, retail and parking for 550 cars.

Carriere cheerfully announced that GEDC already has acquired four sites using some of the \$6.75 million left from the days when the Lower Eddy/Leavenworth Task Force tried unsuccessfully to pull off the Pavilion.

"We're creating an economic engine to revitalize the Tenderloin," Carriere said.

Ed Evans of the Mayor's Disability Council asked if small businesses are part of the grand scheme.

Indeed, Carriere said. "We're hoping for a small market, maybe a produce market, and other businesses so there will be a lively presence, especially on Ellis and Eddy." [Covering most of the block, the Pavilion also fronts Mason and Taylor.]

"I'm concerned about the ripple effect of the project on the small hotels," said Sam Dodge of the SRO Collaborative, referring to the potential of large projects to smother the residential character of a neighborhood. "Have you made any efforts to protect them?"

"We [GEDC] with TNDC as our partner hope to keep housing as a priority," Carriere

said. "We want to maintain the fabric of the neighborhood. This is not a Pavilion project — it's a community development project."

He described how any excess revenues from the conference rentals, for example, will go into the Tenderloin Community Fund at the San Francisco Foundation, which was set up in the 1980s as part of a mitigation package that new hotel projects had to pay into. The Pavilion revenues will be earmarked for grants to neighborhood services.

"Our biggest challenge right now," Carriere concluded, "is to acquire the rest of the land."

In the meantime, traffic flow studies have begun, and GEDC planned to submit an EIR application by mid-October. The EIR is expected to take at least a year to complete.

Power to the people

For those still pinching pennies, there's the Power Savers Program, explained to Collaborative members by Patricia Parra from the S.F. Department of the Environment.

In the program, which began in April and ends next June, small businesses get free advice on how to save 30%-50% on their utility bills.

"We've helped about 1,000

businesses so far and hope to double that by the time we're done," Parra told the group. "Almost any small business can qualify — nonprofits and churches as well as retailers."

The program looks at an applicant's utility bill and determines whether it qualifies by how much electricity it uses — generally under 20 kilowatts — then sends out a team to do a lighting survey. The applicant gets a written proposed work plan that includes an average 30% discount on labor and materials. A program rep oversees the work done by a contractor of the participant's choosing.

"One of the first participants was right here in the Tenderloin," Parra said, "Daldas Grocery, at Eddy and Taylor. Owner Jimmy Shamieh is saving \$210 a month — that's more than \$2,500 a year."

As with most program participants, the grocery's main savings come from the installation of energy-efficient lamps and ballasts, she said.

Of course, you don't get something for nothin', she said. "The work cost the owner about \$4,000 in up-front costs, but the savings will go on year after year."

More information: 355-3750 or go to sfgov.org/sfenvironment/power_savers/

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Coalition still owes \$70,000, president says

NOMPC, from page 3

years." Instead, he explained, the Development Corp. "invested in essentials" such as fixing the Dalt's faulty elevator and retrofitting the three hotels that would continue to be operated by nonprofits.

Restructuring the deal

The Tenderloin Hotels LP partnership ended in December 1997. In the restructure, which began in January 1998, four separate partnerships were created with Goldrich and Kest as the limited partner of each.

By remaining a partner with the nonprofit, G & K avoided paying capital gains taxes. In exchange, Goldrich and Kest would transfer the Dalt to TNDC, preserving it as a nonprofit hotel, and put \$500,000 toward the Dalt's rehab. The Development Corp., using the agreement as leverage, also convinced the city to help pay for retrofitting the Dalt, scheduled to begin in 2003, Cullen explained.

Today, the general partner of each hotel's partnership is an affiliate of CCDC or TNDC. The Development Corp. still exists, but its only role is to distribute the rent subsidies, and its only board members are Executive Director Valerie Steinberg (a tax accountant who came to the position with many years of accounting work

with nonprofits), Cullen and Chin.

The court fight between NOMDC and NOMPC began in 2000 when Wells Fargo Bank, trustee of the rent subsidy funds, decided to hold the funds until the two parties settled their quarrel. The bank appealed to Superior Court on Oct. 5, asking where to send the rent subsidy payments.

Missives flew: A letter from the city said it was unsure who the bank should pay; a letter from the Development Corp. lawyer demanded the bank pay the subsidies; an equally self-serving letter from the indignant Planning Coalition settled it for Wells Fargo's legal counsel: "NOMPC and NOMDC were unable to resolve the matter, compelling petitioner to file this petition," the lawyer wrote.

Missives turned to accusations: The Development Corp. accused the Coalition of using some held-back subsidy money for administrative and political expenses. "NOMPC is an inconsistent organization with limited resources... without staff and with no real role in the Tenderloin community," wrote the Development Corp.

The Coalition countered with pointed concerns about the Development Corp.'s three-member board of directors, saying that the trio "are tied into the ownership of the Tenderloin hotels. . . . In effect

those payments would be given directly to the parties whose primary effort would appear to be that of the owners, that of the landlords and not that of the resident tenants."

Superior Court rules

The court ruled on Aug. 21, 2001, that the Development Corp. had spent the rent subsidy properly. It ordered the Coalition to pay the Development Corp. subsidies it owed, plus \$28,986 in penalties and attorneys' fees, \$29,321 in interest at 7% per year, and the \$4,525 NOMPC had left in its account.

The Coalition, unable to

find a lawyer to take on its case, on April 19, 2002, lost its chance to appeal.

Phillips told *The Extra* that the Coalition has paid back all the subsidies but still owes about \$70,000, which it does not have. He believes the interest should be forgiven — as compensation for all the years that the Coalition was fiscal sponsor for the rent subsidy funds.

One lawyer, Jenkins recalled, advised the Coalition file bankruptcy and put the name North of Market Planning Coalition out to pasture. That way, the organization could start fresh but with its original mandate to

serve the community. But a majority of the board voted against the idea, he said. They didn't want to give up the name that carries so much history.

According to TNDC, the Dalt's rents today are \$235 for a room without a bath, \$280 with a bath. The rents are higher than the original agreements in 1982, but the increase reflects allowable raises. They're also far below the market rate for nonprofit residential hotel rooms, which, says SRO Collaborative Program Director Sam Dodge, is \$550-\$600. ■

Seeking Additional Public Members For Presidio Environmental Advisory Board

The Restoration Advisory Board for the Presidio of San Francisco is searching for new community members. The board advises the Presidio Trust on the removal of environmental contamination at the Presidio. If you are interested in helping to guide the environmental cleanup of the Presidio and can dedicate time to attend evening meetings, please contact Denise Fraga at (415) 561-2720 or dfraga@presidiotrust.gov for an application.



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- STATE PROPOSITIONS**
- Proposition 46** Housing and Emergency Shelter Trust Fund Bonds Act
YES YES YES
- Proposition 47** Kindergarten-University Public Education Facilities Bonds
YES
- Proposition 48** Court Consolidation
YES
- Proposition 49** After School State Funds
YES
- Proposition 50** Water Quality, Supply and Safe Drinking Water, and Coastal Wetlands, Purchase & Protection Bonds
YES YES YES
- Proposition 51** Transportation allocation of Sales and Use Taxes
YES
- SAN FRANCISCO PROPOSITIONS**
- Prop A** - We lose local control of water supply and our water rates could triple
NO
- Prop B** - Affordable Housing Bonds
YES YES YES
- Prop C** - Bonds for War Memorial
NO
- Prop D** - People are homeless, streets are dirty, General Hospital must be rebuilt and they want to buy PG&E
NO NO
- Prop E** - Stepchild of A & D:
NO
- Prop F** - Entertainment Commission Appointments
YES
- Prop G** - Assistance to Elections

- Department
YES +
- Prop H** - Retirement Benefits for Public Safety Workers
YES YES YES
- Prop I** - Paid Parental Leave
YES
- Prop J** - Civil Service for Supervisors Salary
YES
- Prop K** - Removes Affirmative Action from Public Notice contracts
NO NO NO
- Prop L** - 100% increase Property Transfer Tax
NO
- Prop M** - Economic Development Plan
YES
- Prop N** - The system is broken, let's fix it
YES YES
- Prop O** - This could have been done at the Board of Supervisors
NO
- Prop P** - Public Utilities Commission Oversight Committee
YES
- Prop Q** - Prohibition of the Use of City Funds for Political Purposes
YES
- Prop R** - Home Ownership Program
YES
- Prop S** - City Provision of Medical Marijuana
YES
- BB** Bart Improvement Bonds
YES YES YES