

Sprinklers contained Y Hotel fire



A MATTRESS FIRE in a seventh floor room at the Turk Street YMCA hotel (left) was contained to the room in which it started before being put out by Battalion Two of the San Francisco Fire Department around 11 a.m. on Monday, March 10. Battalion Chief Jim Bolton (right) said that fire damage was limited to the room in which the fire began, with only minor water damage to some rooms below. When asked if sprinkler heads in each room were responsible for keeping the fire contained, he responded, "Absolutely! Individual sprinkler heads keep fires from spreading."

— Mark Ellinger



PHOTOS BY MARK ELLINGER

FUTURES COLLABORATIVE

Collaborative finally finds its niche

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The best way to pull in new members, all agreed, was to get their attention. Send them the mission statement and invite them to more accessible evening TFC meetings [10 a.m. is a killer for restaurant owners], or meetings in different locations, or approach them one-on-one. Hope offered to pitch the Southeast Asian Community Center. Shell said she will talk to parents at the Bay Area Women and Children's Center.

At the full TFC meeting, Mullin presented a schematic for what the Collaborative might look like, slightly reorganized, and asked members to review it. Monthly meetings would include a major presentation, updates, events and news, and a report from a new zoning committee whose members would stay on top of permit issues and draft letters of support or opposition that TFC members could sign, if they wished.

Elaine Zamora, building owner at 118 Jones, reported that she would take temporary responsibility for reaching out to merchants and small business owners.

At the end of March, a fledgling steering committee met to suggest agenda topics for future meetings. Among the many suggestions: Invite DPW to talk about the

deplorable physical condition of sidewalks; get someone to update the group on the Community Court that formed last year; ask reps from the Police Department and the D.A.'s office to confront each other — at a TFC meeting — about how to reduce drug dealing in the neighborhood.

The steering committee is open to any Collaborative participant and doesn't require regular attendance. With TNDC's blessing, Mullin will continue to staff the Collaborative.

At the March meeting, no one said "nay" to the idea of keeping TFC an informational forum. But then there was no actual vote. Tacit approval ruled. ■

4 new TL businesses

Viet coffee shop, burger joint, noodle house, variety store

NEW at the March TFC meeting was updates on new small businesses — open, opening or planned — with the owners invited to tell the group about their ventures.

Of four owners invited, only one showed, but he was greeted warmly. After all the talk about getting merchants involved, this was indeed progress.

"This won't be your typical Vietnamese coffee shop," said Tam Nguyen of the 20-seat restaurant he hopes to open at 442 Hyde by the end of April. Nguyen was upbeat but clearly a little nervous about promoting himself to a table full of unknown neighbors. "Yes, we'll have the strong Vietnamese coffee, but sandwiches, too. We want people of all races to feel comfortable here, wherever they come from."

The site, vacant for two years, was formerly a travel agency and before that a coffee shop, Nguyen said. "And I may try to get a liquor license, but I know that would be hard."

Will he hire from the community? he was asked. Yes, he said, he plans to hire two people.

And the name of the shop? Nguyen laughed. "No name yet."

Mullin summarized the other new businesses: Cabbie's Burger at 393 Eddy that will be open 10 a.m. to midnight and will serve burgers, of course.

Permits are pending for an International Noodle House at 690 Van Ness, formerly a Lyons Restaurant.

And Cool Super Discount at 199 Eddy, owned by John and Marie Duggan, who own Original Joe's, opened March 10. On the corner of Taylor, a few doors up from Joe's, Cool Super replaces a longtime liquor store disguised as a mom & pop.

Open 9 to 5, the variety store sells cigarettes to baby supplies but no alcohol. Mullin said the Duggans plan to restore the store's projecting neon sign as part of the Façade Improvement Program.

"I've been in there and the aisles are wide and I can get around really easily in my wheelchair," reported Ed Evans, rep of the Mayor's Disability Council. "It's really great."

— MARJORIE BEGGS

GOOD NEWS for...

PEDESTRIANS In 2001, 16 pedestrians died and 819 were injured in traffic-related incidents citywide. To cut stats like that, the S.F. Dept. of Public Health has awarded grants — from \$19,000 to \$28,000 — to 10 organizations that will conduct one-year traffic-safety projects targeting their neighborhoods' specific needs. [DPH's money comes from a California Office of Traffic Safety grant.] Tenderloin Housing Clinic, one of the 10 recipients, is using its \$23,000 grant to distribute questionnaires to TL and SoMa SRO tenants. "So far, we've gotten out 750 questionnaires," said Rebecca Dorman, THC's project coordinator. "As soon as we get back 500, we'll schedule six community meetings to announce the results and come up with an action plan based on the responses." Another TL grantee, the S.F. Bicycle Coalition, is about to launch a \$28,000 program comprised of two safety trainings, one to help taxi, bus and truck drivers learn to share the streets with bicyclists, the other to teach bicyclists safe practices around commercial vehicles. According to DPH's Michael Rudetsky, the bad news for the Tenderloin is that in the last 10 years here, 21 people died and 609 were injured in traffic-related accidents. The good news — as befits this column — is that there have been no fatalities here in the last two years. For more info about THC's project, contact Dorman at 771-9850 x125 or rebecca@thclinic.org.

BOEDEKER PARK Want to see your park prosper and have some beta testing techno-fun? S.F. Neighborhood Parks Council, sponsor of the 100 Friends of . . . park groups, last year got a \$450,000 grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation in New York to launch ParkScan, an 18-month pilot project to improve city parks. Teams of volunteers go into parks in their neighborhood every couple of weeks for about three months carrying handheld computers loaded with aerial photos of the park, routes to follow and park features to observe, all preprogrammed by ParkScan staff. [The computers use GIS raster images and ArcPad software, for readers who understand this brave new world.] Then, with digital cameras, the teams photograph a uniform set of specific conditions, good and bad, which become part of a central database that the public can view at www.sfneighborhoodparks.org. The aim, says Project Manager Hal Voegel, is to have 18 parks — and at least one in each of the 11 supervisorial districts — scanned by October, when the grant money runs out. The Parks Council has already begun fund raising for post-pilot programs: It will scan the rest of the city's 230 parks, then pass the info to Rec and Park so it can allocate resources efficiently and equitably. Because of its location, Boeddeker Park is a prime candidate for inclusion in the ParkScan pilot, but that will depend on getting about eight neighborhood volunteers willing to commit to the project for three months, Voegel says. Check out the Web site to see what's been done at three parks: the 24th and York Mini Park in the Mission, Precita Park in Bernal Heights and the James Rolph Playground at Potrero and Cesar Chavez. Want to get involved? Contact Sam Shaw, ParkScan outreach coordinator: 621-326, sshaw@sfneighborhoodparks.org.

— MARJORIE BEGGS

This column needs regular infusions. If you have some good news (no events, please), send it to marjorie@studycenter.org.

CENTRAL CITY EXTRA

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