

Glide's pavilion taking shape – on paper

Huge undertaking TL's biggest since '06 quake

BY GEOFF LINK

THE Tenderloin pavilion, conceived a decade ago as a cash cow for the community, is moving forward – on paper, at least. Groundbreaking on this biggest development in the neighborhood since the rebuilding after the 1906 quake is likely at least a year away.

Meanwhile, City Planning has released a Notice of Preparation detailing Glide Economic Development Corp.'s plans for each parcel it owns on the square-block site. This notice precedes the drafting of an environmental impact report by Planning staff. The NOP lists the project's potential procedural hang-ups, as well as its aspects that Planning has already approved.

The report gives notice that height limits will be exceeded, traffic will be a problem, shadows will be created, and the character of the

vicinity will change. If some of these changes are to occur, it will require variances and amendments to the city Planning Code. The excess height limit, the notice says, will require creation of a special-use district defining the area that incorporates the necessary exceptions to Planning Department rules.

Noise levels, health and safety hazards, water quality, geology, biology, cultural and natural resources already pass muster in the NOP.

The Tenderloin pavilion is a big project, even for Glide –

\$67 million and growing. The two-acre site, only three blocks from Union Square, will have 735,000 square feet of new development that includes 144,000 square feet of convention facilities, 343,000 square feet (400 units) of housing, plus a 550-car garage and 22,000 square feet of retail and office space.

Glide's pavilion will target conventions too small for Moscone, too big for any one hotel, offering amenities Civic Auditorium and other sites lack, including a 9,100-square-foot kitchen.

After hours, this conference center has the added attraction of ready access to the community's nonprofit theater district with the EXIT Theatreplex on two sides of the block.

According to Planning's Notice of Preparation, the project will demolish and replace most of the buildings bounded by Eddy, Mason, Ellis and Taylor streets, leaving only the Empress and William Penn SRO hotels and the Bijou Hotel for tourists, plus two residential buildings at Taylor and Ellis. In all, 98,000 square feet will be razed along with 20,000 square feet of parking.

The 38-unit Crystal Hotel on Eddy Street and the 15-room Globe Trotters Inn above Red's Corner will be demolished and their combined

"Our concern is the large number of traffic problems... and (the) impact that will have on 135 seniors."

Jose Vega

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PRESENTATION SENIOR
COMMUNITY

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CENTRAL CITY



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DIVINE INTERVENTION



PHOTOS BY LENNY LIMJOCO

Father Floyd Lotito sprinkles holy water on one of the lined-up cabs.

Holy hacks!

Cabdrivers line up for blessing, free sandwiches

BY PHIL TRACY

THEY blessed the taxicabs once again outside St. Boniface, and given the relative sparseness of the turnout (see sidebar), you'd have to wonder whether the cabbies were starting to question the overall effectiveness of the ritual.

This tradition had been allowed to lapse

in the early '70s and is associated, somewhat arbitrarily, with St. Fiacre, whose feast day is Aug. 28. A sixth century saint who knew a good hustle when he saw one, Fiacre was told he could have all the land he could plow in one day for his monastery. He defined "plowing" as running his staff over the ground. Needless to say, with nimble feet and a long summer's day, St. Fiacre's monastery wound up with quite a land grant. Donald Trump holds him in high esteem, we're told.

The taxicab connection comes from a hotel in Paris that bore Fiacre's name and let the first, horse-drawn hacks in the early 18th century. They came to be called fiacres. Go figure. He's also the patron saint of gardeners, but don't get me started on that one.

So the blessing occurred for the third year in a row. The Extra covered the 2001 blessing and we decided to revisit the event. Not unexpectedly, little changed in the intervening two years as far as the taxi industry is concerned. The economy that was poised to turn the corner on the road to recovery is still so poised, although the words rigor mortis occasionally spring to mind.

There were also few changes in the blessing ritual. Father Floyd Lotito once again held the aspergillum, the silver instrument designed to sprinkle holy water. Father Louis Vitale, St. Boniface's pastor, preferred a bundle of leaves he dipped into a bowl of holy water. (Being a



Father Louis Vitale uses buckleberry branches dipped in holy water for the blessing.

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