

GOOD NEWS for...

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

The new mural at Turk and Leavenworth pulls no punches: Right-side-up buildings on one side of the mural represent healthy domestic and personal relationships; upside-down buildings on the other side mirror relationships threatened by domestic and dating abuse and violence. Tenderloin After-School Program and the 509 Cultural Center launched the mural project in January with a \$12,500 grant from the Department of Public Health. Six boys and girls in the after-school program, 12 to 18, researched domestic and dating abuse and violence, wrote and distributed a three-page survey to 80 other kids in six neighborhood youth agencies, did 10 in-person interviews, and, based on survey responses, conceived and painted the 8' x 16' mural on wooden panels. Besides demographic information, the survey asked participants such questions as whether they'd ever been the victim of abuse or violence and whether they knew who to contact if they observed or experienced it. An impressive 75 surveys were returned, helped along by an incentive of \$10 AMC passes. The kids officially installed the mural May 23 and presented the survey findings at a May 28 ceremony in Boeddeker Park.



Kids from TL After-School Program put finishing touches on the mural.

TENDERCHAMP WINNERS

Glenda Hope of San Francisco Network Ministries received one of Hospitality House's annual TenderChamp awards "for more than 30 years of building community and working for social justice in the neighborhood." The other awards went to Arriba Juntos for its HomeWORC (Homeless People Working for Opportunities and Resources) Project, and, in memoriam, to client advocate Amett Watson. Hospitality House presented the awards at its March anniversary event. S.F. Network Ministries also will receive a special award for justice advocacy at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church's 216th annual conference, June 29 in Richmond, Va.

— MARJORIE BEGGS

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

Shooting an elephant

Pot shots at land use map, neighborhood 'scrubdown'

BY MARJORIE BEGGS

TENDERLOIN Futures Collaborative members flexed their community muscle after hearing about think-tank Urban Solutions' land use-mapping project for the neighborhood. Jamie Cutlip made the presentation as part of the regular show-and-tell at the May meeting.

Volunteers, Cutlip explained, were about a month into their site-by-site survey of building conditions, uses, types of businesses and other details that can be observed from the outside. The survey boundaries are Mason, McAllister, Van Ness and Geary.

"When the mapping is done, in two to three weeks, we'll compile it into a computer geographic information system (GIS) database," Cutlip said.

Hands shot up all around the room.

"Who's funding this project?" asked resident activist Michael Nulty.

"It's just coming from Urban Solutions' general budget," Cutlip answered, "and we're funded by the Redevelopment Agency, foundations and private donors."

Several people asked, almost simultaneously, why this project now?

Cutlip said they'd read the Tenderloin 2000 report, and felt it would be useful to do a comparison of then and now to get "a running knowledge of what's happening in the Tenderloin, a baseline."

"Are you looking at housing differences or ownership?" asked Mark Aaronson, director of Hastings' in-house Civil Justice Clinic.

No, Cutlip answered. "It's a physical survey only."

"So it's eyeball only — all from the outside?" asked Sam Dodge, Central City SRO Collaborative program director.

"Yes," Cutlip said, "but all of the volunteers have experience in this kind of mapping."

Asked how people will get the report, she said it won't be on a Web site, but will be available from Urban Solutions.

"Is the Planning Department doing any [surveys] like this?" asked resident David Baker.

"No, Planning isn't focusing on the Tenderloin," Cutlip said.

John Nulty asked if Urban Solutions planned any follow-up survey of the interior of buildings.

"No," Cutlip answered a little wearily. "We're just beginning the project."

TFC Chair Glenda Hope of S.F. Network Ministries took a moment to give Cutlip some background on why her presentation on a seemingly low-key project had turned into a grilling session.

"The elephant in the room," Hope said, "is people's concern that this information might be the beginning of trying to

make the Tenderloin into a redevelopment area. It's happened before."

"I get tingles in my fingers thinking about how this information might be used," said Ed Evans, resident and Mayor's Disability Council member. "Surveys offer an excuse for displacing people, for gentrification."

John Nulty emphasized the importance of making the collected information public. "It shouldn't be private information for Urban Solutions," he said.

At the end of the 15 minutes allotted to Cutlip, she did get some support.

"In defense of this [project], this is a grass-roots effort that can show where things are, a snapshot," said Entertainment Commissioner Terrance Alan.

Added Lynn Valente, Market Street Association associate director, "This is not Big Brother — it's a private entity doing a survey at no cost to the neighborhood, giving residents information to help ward off outsiders, keeping them from getting their mitts on the community."

Cutlip had the last word: "This is a tool," she said. "Beyond that, we need to work with the community."

KEEP IT CLEAN

Also presenting at the May meeting was Public Works' No. 2 man, Mohammed Nuru, who said the Tenderloin has been getting a multidepartment "scrubdown," including street flushing, extra sidewalk cleaning, graffiti removal, tree maintenance and planting, and streetlight repair.

"The next step," Nuru said, "is to form a partnership with the

neighborhood. The city can't keep this up forever."

The elephant in the room stirred.

"How can we continue to maintain these services as you exit this big sweep program?" asked Alan.

"We haven't planned an exit yet," Nuru said. "I'd say we're here through December, at least." DPW would explore working with youth groups, as it's done in other neighborhoods, he said, or look into creating a jobs program in which someone on each block keeps tabs on maintenance.

Apartment manager Jim Thompson seemed skeptical: "The Tenderloin has a long tradition of community-based efforts — in the 1990s, the YMCA had a program, and there was the Tenderloin Community on Patrol and now there's TSIP — but programs seem to have dissipated."

The elephant shifted.

"What can we do about the trash receptacles?" asked Baker. "They're all askew, not where they've been placed, and sometimes there are none where they're needed."

"You know, people just move them around for us, even though they weigh 900 pounds," said Nuru's DPW colleague, Scott Shaw. "And there's a science to placing them — they need to be where the collectors can get to them."

Nuru conceded that DPW is open to ideas. "In some areas we've taken receptacles out. Other places we put them in. If you have a problem with the receptacles, just call me."

His number is: 554-5447. ■



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