

GOOD NEWS for...

GREENING THE TL St. Francis Memorial Hospital wants more trees in its neighborhood and the North of Market/Tenderloin Community Benefit District does, too. In a match made in heaven, the hospital gave Friends of the Urban Forest a donation and asked that money go to the CBD to plant up to 40 new trees. "The hospital has always been very supportive of us," said CBD Manager Elaine Zamora. "They also want to be community participants and help with the planting, scheduled for Dec. 9." There's no charge for property owners who want to green their sidewalks with a new tree; the hospital donation pays for the tree, concrete breaking, stakes and netting. FUF will provide the expertise and help organize volunteers. "The owners are ultimately responsible for maintenance and liability of their tree," Zamora said, "but the CBD is debating whether it can help the owners and take on the liability in perpetuity for the trees." There's a tree-planting planning meeting Nov. 8, 5 p.m., at 118 Jones. To sign up for a tree, contact Zamora at 440-7570 x21 or e-mail her, ezamora@sbcglobal.net.

GREEN IS BEAUTIFUL The mayor's Neighborhood Beautification Fund has morphed into the Community Challenge Grant Program, but the aim's the same: Get residents and businesses involved in greening public spaces, such as medians, sidewalks and community gardens, and use the projects to get neighborhoods working together on common issues. Groups can apply for \$10,000 to \$100,000 grants; in return, they have to prepare a five-year maintenance plan and match the grant with volunteer labor and donated materials and supplies. In the May 2006 cycle, the program gave out \$589,000 in grants to 26 groups. A small grant, \$11,000, went to Enterprise for High School Students for a John McLaren Park summer youth employment gardening program. S.F. Clean City Coalition got one of the larger grants, \$39,000, for graffiti and litter abatement South of Market. Resident groups or business owners must apply through an existing nonprofit organization. Program Manager Lanita Henriquez, 554-4830, can help you find a nonprofit. For online guidelines and applications, <http://www.sfccgp.org>. Application deadline is Dec. 18.

KIDS ON BIKES After a three-week break, the Saturday Boeddeker Park children's bike program resumed in October with big improvements — 15 shiny new helmets donated by the S.F. Bike Coalition and a new trailer hitch, donated by San Francisco Parks Trust, that connects to a Rec and Park van. The hitch holds a five-bike rack; the rack and a dozen BMX bikes were purchased in 2003 through a Rotary Club donation. On Saturdays, up to 16 neighborhood kids, some with their own bikes but most without, show up at the park at 9 a.m. for an excursion to the ocean. The group rides in the van to a point in Golden Gate Park where they park, then pedal to the beach and back, stopping for lunch. "Everybody's huffin' and puffin' when we get to the beach," says Boeddeker Park Director Rob McDaniels who runs the children's program, "and oh, that ocean smell. It's great." Before the program got the hitch, McDaniels transported the bikes in his pickup truck and all the kids took Muni to meet him in the park. Now, most of the kids can ride in the van, five bikes go on the hitch and the rest are stacked in the back of the van. Next, McDaniels hopes for a donation so he can buy a trailer to carry a dozen or more bicycles. In other good news, McDaniels received an award from the National Council of Negro Women, Golden Gate section, on Oct. 14 for his work with children.

If you have some good news, send it to marjorie@studycenter.org or tom@studycenter.org.

\$1.4 billion complex evokes 'complete outrage' from neighbors

► CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"Senate Bill 1953 from 1994 and this year's SB 1661 are at the heart of CPMC's plans," Marchese said. The legislation gives acute care hospitals in California until 2013 to make their buildings safe in earthquakes and other natural disasters. "The work to be done is so complex that [to comply], CPMC will have to off-load some services from the other campuses to the new Cathedral Hill campus."

CPMC acquired the option to buy the hotel site in 2003, selecting it, he said, because it's on major transit corridors and is near enough to its other hospital complexes to allow movement of staff and patients between them.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

"We also believe that it can be an economic stimulator to this area," Marchese added. Employees, patients and hospital visitors always need restaurants and sometimes overnight accommodations, plus many other services.

Chaplain Earl Rogers of the San Francisco Rescue Mission asked if CPMC has a timeline.

Marchese estimated 2012 for completion, or four to five years after project approval and all its permit ducks are in a row.

"Will the hospital accept Medi-Cal and Medicare patients?" asked Tenderloin resident Mark Brown.

"We do at all our campuses now and we'll continue at the new campus," Marchese answered.

"Will the hospital have an emergency room?" wondered S.F. Network Ministries Executive Director Glenda Hope.

Three of the four CMPC campuses do and the new hospital may or may not, said Marchese.

TNDC's Jerry Jai asked if CPMC is considering the neighborhood's employment and health care needs in its planning.

CPMC "has to reach out to the community," Marchese said, adding that he expected there to be many opportunities for neighbors to voice concerns. "The EIR will be deeply scrutinized."

REGULATIONS TO HURDLE

After the meeting, The Extra looked at City Planning's July 2006 pre-EIR "notice" — a 34-page document that lays out all CMPC's retrofit and new construction plans — and could see that the Cathedral Hill project will require lots of jiggling of existing regulations before it passes muster.

It will need land use, height and bulk, open space and other amendments because it's within the boundaries of the Western Addition A-2 Redevelopment Project Area; design amendments to the city's General Plan; zoning changes; alterations to the Planning Code's annual office limit; special consideration

of the residential hotel ordinance (one of the buildings to be demolished is a six-unit SRO); and an encroachment permit agreement with Caltrans and Board of Supes approval for the tunnel under Van Ness.

Worse, perhaps, for CPMC, is that it will be the test case for a city-mandated Healthcare Impact Report.

ROOTS OF IMPACT

In 2004, the Board of Supervisors passed an amendment to the city's Administrative Code that requires "larger nongovernment health care providers" that want to "add or replace more than 200 hospital beds" to supply the Department of Public Health with extensive data. DPH then analyzes how the proposal affects "availability" and "accessibility" of services in the neighborhoods slated for the new construction, and prepares an HIR. "Larger" is defined as a hospital or part of a hospital system that provides more than 40% of the city's nongovernmental hospital beds. That's tailor-made for health care giant CMPC.

Health Department Public Information Officer Eileen Shields said the ordinance wasn't even on their radar.

"This isn't on anyone's desk yet," she said. "It may be too early in the legislation's growth mode. The department knows it will be involved, but no one here knows how it will work."

The Extra was told about the ordinance from Geoffrey Nelson, Marchese Co.'s CPMC project manager, though he didn't know details.

"We welcome it," Nelson said. "It's the only rational way to plan."

NEIGHBORHOOD OPPOSITION

CPMC's plan for a Cathedral Hill campus has generated "complete outrage" from the Cathedral Hill Neighbors Association, according to Marlayne

Morgan, the group's vice president.

"A year ago, Ralph Marchese presented the CPMC plan to four homeowner groups. It helped us coordinate our feelings about the proposal and that's when we formed our association," Morgan told The Extra.

She says the group represents 45,000 residents in a 36-square-block area, Polk to Fillmore and Eddy to Sacramento. Morgan has lived in a high-rise on Cathedral Hill for 12 years.

"We started out being surprised by the mass of the proposed buildings, and our goal was to get them more in scale with the city's plans for the Van Ness corridor," she said. "Then, as we got more familiar with health care issues citywide, it seems that CPMC needs a real campus elsewhere — not here in the middle of a residential area and a traffic corridor."

The group's most recent action was to ask the Board of Supervisors to look at acute care planning for the city. "How many beds are really needed in the city and where," she said. "We think the city is overbedded."

Nelson said his team has made plan presentations to high-rise apartment tenants and to every organized neighborhood and merchant group in the Cathedral Hill area.

"We've heard [Cathedral Hill Neighbors Association] concerns loud and clear," he said. "We went, twice, to educate their membership, and we've gotten a bitter response. They say we don't have a finalized project yet."

Told of Nelson's comment, Morgan responded that her group simply "invited them to present at the point that they had something new to show us. I can't imagine where the 'bitter' comment comes from. We've made it clear we intend to keep communicating with them as we go through the process." ■



CENTRAL CITY EXTRA is published monthly by San Francisco Study Center Inc., a private nonprofit serving the community since 1972. The Extra was initiated through grants from the S.F. Hotel Tax Fund and the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund. It is now assisted by the Kosblan Committee of the San Francisco Foundation. The contents are copyrighted by the San Francisco Study Center, 1095 Market Street, Suite 601, San Francisco, CA 94103.

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Central City Extra is a member of the SAN FRANCISCO NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION