

Boeddeker Park makeover — the first look at architects' idea

BY TOM CARTER

Is Boeddeker Park ready for an extreme makeover? One may be coming. Kicking off the idea is a design by a collaboration of pro bono architects from three firms that would put a big lawn in the middle and a promenade around it. Usually fierce competitors, they warmed to improving a park that looks like a fortress.

Among the features unveiled at the Friends of Boeddeker Park meeting June 14 are a large circular lawn, a tiny revenue-generating cafe with one wall doubling as an outdoor movie screen, a long basketball and athletic court, a ramp leading up toward a garden and a new, second community building.

It's fantasy at this point and has no price tag.

"We're the first to see this initial plan," Friends Chairwoman Betty Traynor said before the PowerPoint

presentation in the Police Community Room. "Maybe we can come up with some more ideas, but we need plans for any funding process and this helps us move forward. There's a whole community process we have to go through."

"It all has an amazing potential impact."

Elaine Zamora
CBD DIRECTOR

The architects got involved through Jacob Gilchrist, a Trust for Public Land project manager who, on the lookout for a community project, started attending Friends' meetings eight months ago. Ideas came and went, among them one for a golf green that actually lingered in the mix for a couple of months. In November, Gilchrist mentioned redesigning Boeddeker Park as a possible project to the trust's advisory board — the Bay Area Business Council — which has several architectural firms as members. Three jumped on board. And for the 13 designers who came forward, Boeddeker's sketchy Tenderloin reputation suddenly worked in its favor.

"They got excited," said Jennifer Worth, a trust project manager who helped with the presentation. "It was

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Putting in pro bono overtime on the park plan at architectural firm SMWM are Megan Walker, Tomer Mayon, Michelle Dubin, Eleanor Pries, Lisa Fisher, Steve Hanson.

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PHOTO BY LENNY LIMJOCO

Frank Massis' Right Way market on O'Farrell Street has an attractive produce variety that he has increased over two years. He is on a smoke break outside his Econo Market across the street.

Where to get it fresh

24 stores stock Tenderloin's most fruit, vegetables

BY TOM CARTER

SMART people put the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables high on any health chart. A fresh food diet can ward off serious disease, save big money and lead to happier lives by helping people dodge preventable miseries and untimely death.

Fresh fruits and vegetables have long been a concern in the Tenderloin. They are in short supply. With a population of 30,000, the Tenderloin, San Francisco's lowest-income neighborhood, has no supermarket.

The neighborhood's most popular spot to find fresh produce has for 26 years been the bustling Heart of the City Farmers Market in U.N. Plaza. Open every Wednesday and Sunday, its fine and affordable commodities have been a godsend for the central city.

The Extra last year surveyed all Tenderloin stores that carried fresh fruits and vegetables and then updated the list in June. We found a few surprises, including a man who never leaves the TL to shop for perishables and happily gets 90% of them from one store less than a block from where he lives. We also found people who think nothing of hopping on Muni to shop better deals outside the hood.

But our main revelation was actual num-

bers. In canvassing 50 blocks, we found 24 stores that every day carry more than a dozen fruits and vegetables. (See map on P. 4.) About the same number of stores carry fewer fresh items, generally only potatoes, onions, apples and bananas.

Are these enough precious perishables for the Tenderloin's residents? And, more profoundly, could more availability and accessibility — with nudging — inch the neighborhood into better health? The first question is a concern of TNDC, the neighborhood's biggest low-income landlord, which is contemplating opening a grocery store in a future building at Eddy and Taylor. The second question concerns fresh food advocates, S.F. Public Health and the state Legislature.

Nothing matches the farmers' market for volume, obviously, but a few ethnic Asian stores have a surprisingly profuse variety. The store owned by the New Chiu Fong Co. at 724 Ellis St. offers at least a dozen fruits and more than 65 different vegetables (from beets and eggplant to many forms of squash and, seldom seen in these parts, jicama and chayote).

Two stores with the most fruit and veggies are in Little Saigon, one at 724 Larkin — the Hiep Thanh Food Market Corp. — and the New Chiu Fong Co. around the corner.

On a sunny afternoon in June, Sai Ung is at the cash register at Hiep Thanh checking out customers, most of whom are Asian. Stacks of produce in boxes and packaged goods occupy the front of the store and extend out the door. An old man buys two plastic cups filled with rice wine at \$1.50 each. Then two women push a red plastic basket containing a dozen items onto the

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