

Central city housing frenzy

3,500 new units are in works

TNDC's plans to build 653 new living units and renovate another 293 are part of perhaps the biggest building boom in the central city since it was leveled in 1906. Besides TNDC's developments, another 2,845 new units — affordable and market rate — are just completed or in the pipeline, plus sparkling new places to play, work and get social services.

The Salvation Army in July opened its Kroc Recreation Center and Railton Place's 110 apartments next door. By next year, a new YMCA center should be under way at Golden Gate and Larkin, a site it will share with Hastings' 430-car garage, already going up fast. When the Y moves from 220 Golden Gate to a temporary location, AF Evans and TNDC will begin renovating the old Y into 174 studios for the homeless.

St. Anthony Foundation opened its new admin offices at 150 Golden Gate in May and now is charging forward with plans to demolish 121 Golden Gate and construct a 10-story building to house its dining room, respite units for hospital discharges, a community room and six floors of senior housing — 90 studios and one-bedrooms. Unless it hits a snag, the building will be up by 2011.

Glide Housing started taking applications in June for its new apartment building at 125 Mason. The moderate rentals, at 60% AMI, start at \$1,056. By August, Glide had begun whittling down the 1,300 applicants for the 81 one-, two-, three- and four-bedroom apartments. First priority goes to tenants who work and live in the city. They'll move in around Oct. 1.

Mercy Housing has two big projects afoot: Its

10th and Mission development, expected to open next year, has 136 one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments for low-income families with 44 units targeted for homeless families. There'll be on-site case management, plus a 5,400-square-foot rec center for residents of all ages and neighborhood youth.

A second Mercy project, scheduled to open in two years, is at Ninth and Jessie — 107 studios and one-bedroom apartments for very low-income seniors with 27 units targeted for homeless seniors. The building will include a city-operated health clinic for residents and on-site case management.

At the other end of the housing scale, a private developer is constructing 31 market-rate condos, 17 studios and 14 one-bedrooms, at 168 Hyde. Across from Fox Plaza, 1 Polk soars 200 glassy feet, its 179 luxury condos set to open this fall.

Deeper in the Tenderloin, construction is planned to start next year on an eight-story apartment building at Turk and Jones. The 37 mostly market-rate one- and two-bedroom apartments at 180 Jones will replace a surface parking lot.

The big daddy of market-rate developments is Trinity Place, Angelo Sangiacomo's six interconnected buildings, three of them residential with 1,900 studios and apartments, on the half-block bounded by Eighth Street, Mission and Market. Market Street Association says it's the city's largest residential project in 50 years. The first residential building, under construction at 1188 Mission, has 440 units, including 360 studios meant to replace the much-fought-over rent-controlled studios of Trinity Plaza. ■

—MARJORIE BEGGS



PHOTO BY TERRANCE ALAN

Tomiquia Moss (front row, 2nd from left) with other community representatives at Red Hook in Brooklyn on a community justice center field trip in 2006.

TNDC's top organizer named Community Justice Center director

BY MARJORIE BEGGS

A MONTH after the Board of Supervisors gave the green light on funding for a Community Justice Center, Tomiquia Moss announced that she has been named the center's first director.

Come October, Moss will be at the helm of a multimillion-dollar program that will bring people who've committed nonviolent felonies and misdemeanors in the Tenderloin, South of Market and parts of Union Square to a special courtroom at 555 Polk St. A Superior Court judge will hear their cases, and social service providers will be on site to offer these minor offenders help so they can stay out of the criminal justice system.

Moss came to San Francisco four years ago from Denver, where she was a domestic violence counselor. She went to work for TNDC as the West Hotel's social worker, then moved up to community organizer and further up to TNDC community organizing manager. In August 2006, she and nine others traveled to Brooklyn to visit the Red Hook Community Justice Center, a field trip to help the mayor evaluate it as a model for a similar center in San Francisco.

"The mayor's office was looking for variety in who it sent, and I was chosen as a housing rep for the Tenderloin," Moss said.

In fact, she brought much more to the trip. She has a social work degree, 13 years of social work field experience and a master's in public administration from Golden Gate University.

"As a domestic violence counselor, I worked with the courts a lot, so there was definitely an overlap with the criminal justice system," she said.

After the Red Hook excursion, she joined an ad hoc steering committee that still meets monthly, and does outreach and promotion for the planned center. Superior Court judicial officers and admin staff recently interviewed her for the center director's position and made the appointment official last week.

"I think I'm going to bring a fresh perspective to this job," Moss said. "Having been part of the community that will be served by the center is worth gold — I don't work for the system. I'll be a community member advocate. I've also spent my entire career building bridges. At the center, I think I can do that between community folks, offenders, judges, the justice system."

Moss doesn't kid herself. She admits to being a little anxious going into the job.

"The biggest challenge will be being an advocate in a system notorious for not having a collaborative relationship with the community," she said. "I'll be swimming upstream in a system that has a narrow view of offenders — what I want to say is, 'Let's think about offenders in a different way.'"

When Moss returned from Brooklyn, she and others wrote about their hopes for San Francisco's nascent justice center, based on what they saw at Red Hook.

"People there felt it filled a [neighborhood] need," she wrote. "The judge that presides over the court has frequent contact with the community . . . [and] the prosecutor and public defender assigned to the court have consistent communication with the police department, probation and others in an effort to streamline services."

The bridges are waiting to be built. ■



PHOTO BY JESAL BHUTA

Tenderloin police Sgt. Gaetano Caltagirone talks with 7-year-old Fairy Dang about how learning to read well can help keep her safe on the street.

Getting booked by Sgt. C

Cops teach reading to help kids become street-smart

BY PETE VERRAL

TENDERLOIN police Sgt. Gaetano Caltagirone looked quizzically at a group of kindergarten to fifth-graders and asked, "What do you do when you see a stop sign?"

Several kids waved their arms and shouted, "You have to stop."

"That's right," replied Caltagirone, who told the kids to call him Sarge or Sgt. C when they see him on the street. "Learning to read helps you understand street signs and be safe on the street."

The exchange was part of a book read-along and street-safety event at Glide Foundation's After-School Program, which has 600 books donated by Hoopoe Books' Share Literacy Program in Los Altos.

Cops and firefighters visited the children at the Janice Mirikitani Family, Youth and Childcare Center Aug. 15 to reinforce the message that good reading and thinking skills help keep them safe on the street.

When one kid asked to see Sgt. C's gun, Sarge pulled a cartridge from his belt clip and adroitly turned the question into an example of good thinking.

"If you see a bullet on the street, it could be dangerous to pick it up," he said. "You should tell an adult right away."

During the read-along, the children heard "The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water," by Afghan author Idries Shah.

The Share Literacy Program, funded by the Kaiser Permanente Community Grants Program and Wells Fargo Foundation, uses "teaching stories" from Afghanistan, Central Asia and the Middle East. The stories were selected to entertain children, help them see things in new ways, and foster their perception, intuition and self-confidence.

After the read-along, Tenderloin Engine Company 3 firefighters showed the kids around a fire engine and its working parts. ■

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