Tu Lan down— not out—in permit loss

‘We worked things out’ with the city

by Jonathan Newman

For Tu Lan, Sixth Street’s venerable go-to for quick, hearty and cheap Vietnamese fare, the temporary closure order issued July 27 by the Department of Public Health was anything but weathering new—it weathered temporary closures for food safety violations five times in the past three years. What followed was a shock.

On Aug. 8, at the close of a 15-minute hearing, Population Health and Prevention Director Dr. Tomas Aragon issued his two-word judgment: “License revoked.”

Ordinarily, temporary closure orders are resolved at informal hearings, often within 24 hours of the order’s issuance at which the health inspectors report their findings of violations, the restaurant operators promise to improve, and the restaurant is back up and running. And so it had gone for Tu Lan since November 2009—the beginning of a spate of low health inspection scores. But this time Environmental Health Senior Inspector Mohamed Malhi recounted the particulars of Tu Lan’s food service practices and evidence of three years of unresolved food handling problems at which the health inspectors found more than a third of the 38 restaurants scored a perfect 100 in the Department of Public Health’s latest round of inspections: the decorous Old Siam Thai on Ellis, little specialty sandwich shop Le Petit’s Kitchen on Golden Gate and the franchise burger joint Carl’s Jr. on Market. Some places we picked for our survey are well-known citywide, others are local favorites, all do steady business. Unannounced inspectors drop in during restaurants’ working hours to evaluate how closely followed the city’s health code is and to derive a score based on the violations they find. A perfect score of 100 keeps the inspectors away for a year. A low score with several high-risk dings makes the inspector a familiar face. DPH says a score of 90 or more is good, 86.89 is adequate, 71.49 ‘needs improvement’ and 70 and below is poor.

Three 90s or above in a row brings a boomerang: the Symbol of Excellence, a sign to be posted like a badge of honor. And the Extra found that more than a third of the 38 restaurants we checked have them. Besides the three perfect 100s, others that are spic and span include all Stars Donuts, Burger King, L.A. Cafe and a pair of El Castillo Mexican restaurants, 14 in all (see sidebar). Some longtime restaurants, like Little Henry’s Italian Food on Larkin Street, barely miss an Excellence award by a point here or two points there. Or Celtic Coffee near Hasting’s with a three-point spread in the high-80s. Once ratings plunge, however, comebacks are uncommon. Few stage a dramatic turnaround, as Tu Lan envisions.

But it happens, and the most recent example in the Tenderloin occurred in Little Saigon. Saigon Sandwich at 560 Larkin St. is climbing out of a hole deeper than Tu Lan’s. Saigon Sandwich was first in San Francisco to serve banh mi, opening in the early Seventies about the same time as its Skid Row counter-part that premiered in 1973.

Indeed, the Larkin Street shop in February 2011 had racked up an alarming 13 violations, from lousy storage and old and dirty walls and ceiling to temperature and food cleanliness problems. Moreover, the inspector found no one in charge. The result was an unheard of 46. Since then, Saigon Sandwich has regrouped and twice scored 96, well on the way to its own Symbol of Excellence. It’s one of our success stories,” says DPH’s Food Safety Director Richard Lee. “We helped guide their renovation and they moved their food preparation next door” on Eddy Street.

And it has gotten its own culinary kudo, maybe not the praise that Tu Lan got from a generous Julia Child, but an admirable showing in the media’s constant search for the best sandwich in Food Nation. USA Today listed Saigon as San Francisco’s top spot for “Sandwiches to make you drool.” The humble little nook that only offers eight kinds of sandwiches was named with the sandwich leaders in 16 other cities, as recommended by Zagat, the guidebook publisher.
The CPMC deal on the table — what’s in it for the Tenderloin

BY MARJORIE BEGGY

ESTED WITHIN California Pacific Medical Center’s troubled $2.5 billion hospital projects are modest perks for the Tenderloin — $200,000 to construct a permanent Safe Passage sidewalk, $35 million for traffic calming and safety improvements on Eddy and Ellis streets and an unallocated portion of a $20 million fund for some Tenderloin clinics.

In 2010, a development agreement also promised that, over 10 years, 400 permanent workers will be hired from six neighborhood, including the Tenderloin, to fill new entry-level, full-time, jobs, but none in construction.

There’s also $150,000 to help launch the Polk Community Business District in the area, plus $1 million for public improvements.

While part of all the evoking agreement that for sure would benefit the Tenderloin. Less certain are promises of affordable housing here, but perhaps here, and $15 million to add to the pot for transit improvements.

Lee introduced the development agreement he’d negotiated with CPMC to the Board of Supervisors April 3 Roy projections for a quick approval were dashed after the California Nurses Association, Cathedral Hill Neighborhood Association and four other organizations appealed the Planning Commission’s mid-April certification of the project’s final EIR.

The supervisors reversed Planning’s approval and began Land Use Committee hearings June 15, then stunned the city when they abruptly shut down when an anonymous whistle-blower leaked internal CPMC documents supposed to give the project’s promises on jobs, charity care and especially, its commitment to maintaining St. Luke’s in the heart of the Tenderloin for 20 years. July 17 the supervisors voted to delay any decision on the final EIR until at least Nov. 20 and CPMC, parent company Sutter Health agreed to work with a mediator to settle its differences with the city.

When it’s settled, here’s what’s in store for the Tenderloin, according to the April 26 version of CPMC’s development agreement.

SAFE PASSAGE

An 11-block route for neighborhood children to walk safely to and from Tenderloin schools has been in place since 2006. The route’s partially painted sidewalks stretch along Golden Gate Avenue, Turk, Eddy and Ellis streets between Leavenworth and Jones streets, with an additional extension on Ellis extending to Hyde. Police-trained volunteers along the route watch out for the kids, with officers present at some intersections.

The program is 6 years old but still considered a pilot, says Dina Hilliard, manager of the Tenderloin Community Benefit District. The CBD, Tenderloin Boys & Girls Club, Chinatown Community Development Center at 201 Turk, and La Voiz Latina, a Tenderloin Housing Clinic project that helps Latino immigrants develop leadership skills, comprise an informal committee that directs Safe Passage.

‘We’d hoped for $500,000 from the CPMC agreement so we could hire a coordinator,’ says Hilliard. ‘I’m not sure how the $200,000 figure was decided on, but I know that Randy Shaw (THC executive director) and Supervisor Kim felt it was important to include.’

Some of the 11 blocks currently are painted with colorful designs marking the route, but the paint might not last long to be burned up to become permanent, work that would be funded by a $200,000 grant from CPMC.

The Safe Passage sidewalk redesign needs to be burned in to become permanent, work that would be funded by a $200,000 grant from CPMC.
DEATH IN THE TENDERLOIN

A Slice of Life
From the Heart of San Francisco

99 stories of residents who died
4 essays on death in the 'hood
140 pages, including neighborhood map, index of deceased
70 full-color pages
7” x 10” format for easy reading
64 stories by Tom Carter
24 stories by Marjorie Beggs
11 stories by others: Mark Hedin, Leah Garchik, Heidi Swillinger, Ed Bowers, Brian Rinker, Karen Datangel
3 photos by Mark Ellinger

$29.95 for full-color edition
$17.95 for black-only edition

“Obituaries published in the Tenderloin newspaper, Central City Extra, are astonishing, unvarnished revelations, sometimes stark, sometimes wondrous. These posthumous stories, now in book form, become deeply revelatory about the people and the neighborhood. Death in the Tenderloin is a miracle of sensitive, yet matter-of-fact reportage, the tales simply, factually told, but poignant in their declarative simplicity.”

— Jim Mildon, Writer and Editor

TO ORDER: Email Leonor@studycenter.org
Saigon Sandwich named best little bite in S.F.

A cubbyhole with a blue-and-white sign and fresh, yellow paint inside. A minicounter and two chairs for in-house dining at the street window leave just enough room for maybe six customers to claim for the best-sellers, $5 for pork and chicken sandwiches, packed with fresh veggies on tasty buns. However the score at Morry’s Delicatessen at 280 Golden Gate Ave., a longtime favorite of Hastings law students, is also deserving of the Symbol of Excellence. It got a 96 in July after averaging 94 since November ’09.

Even the modest All Stars Donuts & Burgers on the corner of Golden Gate and Larkin is a winner. It got a 96 this year and averaged 98 plus in five other inspections over almost three years, getting dinged for only two violations in that period.

Le Petit, with four little tables and smaller counter, is the lower end of business volume among DPH’s superclean eateries. Farfan says she sells more than 100 sandwiches a day.

At the higher end is Burger King at Market and Grove streets across from the Main Library. After scoring six 100s dating back to August ’09, the fast-food franchise got a 96 in June. Asked how many sandwiches the restaurant sells each day, Manager Ding Mercado broke from his busy counter routine, "3,200 yesterday" (Aug. 15), then added, "that’s just hamburgers."

"But I haven’t been inspected in a year and I had refrigeration problems," he said. "I know it’s public information, but don’t put that score in, and don’t use my name.

Ironically, Morry’s is surrounded by excellence. Le Petit’s Kitchen, a sandwich shop across the street at 265 Golden Gate Ave., has a stellar record — perfect in the eyes of the DPH with five 100s dating from February back to November 2009. It’s a hole in the wall, but it has a fine variety of 29 moderately priced sandwiches and worth the wait in line at lunchtime.

Her string of sensational scores delights seven-year manager Gloria Farfan who does a better job of keeping the street dirt out than stopping the street people who lift potato chip bags and walk out. ‘We don’t argue,’ she says. ‘I can do nothing about the apartment construction next door that started in June and will go to mid-December, reducing her business by 40%, she says.

Across the street, El Castilloño rated a 92 in June from a 94 average over previous four inspections back to November 2009. Its sister Mexican restaurant a block away at 570 Golden Gate, nearer the old Federal Building, is also deserving of the Symbol of Excellence. It got a 96 in July after averaging 94 since November ’09.

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Even so, the franchise is ‘surviving’ on heavy European tourist foot traffic. ‘Without them we’d be gone,’ Mercado said. ‘They’re keeping us alive. It’s the economy.’

Lafayette Coffee Shop at 250 Hyde St. is a bare-bones diner that’s a favorite of many residents. Its prices won’t eat a big hole in a purse or wallet. It’s open 24/7 in March 2011. Manor House, three blocks away at 210 Jones St., may have the Tenderloin’s heaviest volume of low-income customers. Even-tempered Mimi Yee has run the cheap-food oasis for 16 years. In December, Manor House got an 88, a commendable jump from 81
**Tu Lan to remodel, take on partner**

Tu Lan’s importance to Sixth Street and the central city is not to be sneezed at. I have frequently basked in the establishment since March 1974, when it was already a year old Tu Lan, along with Saigon Sandwich in the Tenderloin, were arguably first with Vietnamese fare in the city and certainly firsts in the neighborhood.

Excellent food, a lot of it; at a fair price you can expect from a restaurant and a reasonable service; a warm environment and community-center atmosphere — plus a landmark-worthy history — and the place becomes a significant resource that you keep it that way.

If Saigon Sandwich can pull itself out of a health code hole (see main story), so can Tu Lan.

On behalf of all Tu Lan’s many fans and friends, Central City Extra trusts that soon we’ll again be able to belly up to the counter and order our favorites No. 1, lucky Nos. 7, 29 and, can’t forget that best vegetarian dish around.

— **Geo L. Link, Editor & Publisher**

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**New survey snafu at Central Market CBD**

The committee guiding the Central Market CBD’s permit renewal with pos-
sibly expanded boundaries met Aug. 21 expecting results from a survey sup-
posedly mailed to 1,300 SoMa property owners, but there was zilch.

Isn’t there somebody in the office who knows about the survey?” asked nonplussed Bill Thacher, chair of the CBD steering committee, as conster-
nation spread in the Whitcomb Hotel mezzanine meeting room.

There wasn’t. CBD Executive Di-
rector Daniel Hurtado was vacation-
ing Indonesia, to return Aug. 29.

“I’ve gotten two postcards telling me to be on the lookout for the survey — but no survey,” said one woman on the committee’s consultation and Steering committee owner. “Where’s the survey? My neigh-
bors are asking. Where’s the survey?”

The CBD’s customer survey is on the CBD Website, but can’t be downloaded, said Rob Edwards, an employee of MJM Management, who facilitated the survey’s rela-

tion. He said the surveys were sent “10 days ago” using addresses from the city assessor’s tax rolls.

The CBD, mostly from Fifth to Ninth streets on Market, then

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**6-piece blues band at Fringe**

**BY MARIANNE BEGGS**

The 21ST San Francisco Fringe Fes-
tival streaks into the Tenderloin Sept. 5, this year featuring 41 different shows in five venues. Solo performer, writer and musi-
cian Wayne Harris played the Fringe back in 2004 and returns Sept. 6, 7, 8, 12 and 14 in his new play, “Tyroone Shortleg’ Johnson and Some White Boys,” directed by Mark Kenward.

“Wayne is a legendary but slight-
ly inebriated blues singer is let loose on a sound stage backed by a bunch of hip-
pies while doing a 60s-era, second-ran
teen dance show.”

“We’re trying to use the sound

score never rose above 68 in that

Since January 2010, DPH has re-

ceived four complaints of food-

borne illnesses allegedly includ-
ed after dining at Tu Lan. We aren’t

able to conduct laboratory tests to con-

firm the presence of Tu Lan in the

source of the illness, but at each com-

plaint we renewed our efforts to do so.

Yee says. “It’s not easy to keep every-

thing clean, especially in the

Tenderloin.”

Four or five low- and moderate-risk vi-

olets seem to put a score in the mid-80s.

Farmer Brown, the soul food eatery where Tuk and Mason start at Market Street, got an 86 in January with five violations; a slip from good scores of 88, 90 and 88 since November 2009.

Up Mason Street, old doesn’t mean a hand-

ful of violations. Old Saam Thai restaurant at 210 1st St. earned 100 in April after scores of three straight 90s and a 94 — yet another neighborhood Symbol of Excellence.
What TL gets out of deal with CPMC

➤ Continued from page 1

City and County of San Francisco
September 2012 Monthly

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• Be a resident in San Francisco, have an open child support case.
• be able to make child support payments, be willing to do what it takes.

GET MORE INFO Call us at (415) 356-2942
Email us at tscs-transitions@sfgov.org

Online at www.sfhp.org/dica or www.facebook.com/sfdboch

Transitions SF is collaboration between the San Francisco Department of Child Support Services, the San Francisco Mayor’s Office of Economic and Workforce Development and Child Support Services. The CDPWS and the San Francisco Department of Child Support Services is a grant awarded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Healthier and Better Future and Community Grants, a program of Workforce Investment Act states. The Grants and services are provided by the San Francisco Arts Commission and Grants for the Arts/Hotel Tax Fund.

2012 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Regularly Scheduled Board Meetings

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC — Come see your San Francisco government in action. TUESDAYS, 2:00pm, City Hall Chamber, Room 200. September 4, 11, 18, 25 October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 November 6, 13, 20, 27 December 4, 11

INFORMATION ABOUT BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COMMITTEES
All meetings are held at City Hall in the Chamber (Room 250) or Room 263. Please check the websites for information about these forums, including agendas and minutes.


The City and County of San Francisco encourage public attendance. Articles are translated into several languages and made available in accessible format. The City and County of San Francisco encourage public attendance. Articles are translated into several languages and made available in accessible format. This newspaper makes every effort to translate the articles of general interest commonly. No liability is assumed by the City and County of San Francisco for the information for errors and omissions.

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OBITUARIES

LARRY MAES
He died alone and unknown

A memorial was held at the Ritz Ho- tel for Larry Maes, a resident who died July 5 at the age of 62.

A trio of Mexican religious candles — leaden — surrounding a vase of red roses and yel- low bird of para- dise flickered on the formica table of the third-floor common room. The vacuum cleaner of TND- anors working in the hallway hummed in the background and the whine of a truck on Eddy Street came through the open window as Rev. Glenda Hoppe began reading the 25th Psalm.

One person was present, and he knew very little about Mr. Maes, who was born Jan. 5, 1950, and died at UCSF After 10 years as a resident of the Astor Hotel on Leavenworth Street, Mr. Maes moved to the Ritz Hotel less than two years ago.

A friend, Lee Landry, said, “From what I knew he was a nice guy. He loaned me his TV. I loaned him my DVD player. He was a generous guy, bought people sodas.”

He knew the green prices and still waters of the 25th Psalm may seem foreign to urban lives, but the biblical story of wanderers in the desert finding solace and relief is the story of the journey of all lives.

Staff at the SRO remembered Mr. Maes as quiet, courteous and hampered by vision problems. He loved to play pool, but had to bring his tickets to them for review; he couldn’t see well enough to verify winning num- bers.

— Jonathan Newman
Ray Clary, who wrote a two-volume history of Golden Gate Park, shows his historical photos of the park at his Richmond District home in 1978. On first seeing the park in 1941, he said, “Iu wierit it was a fantasy land to someone from the East.”

CAEN ON CLARY
Herb Caen wrote a short introduction to Clary’s second book: “What San Francisco needs. No. 2789: More people like Raymond H. Clary, historian, godly good guy, wizeguy and my kinda guy. In short, a curmudgeon, a sourpuss with a heart of gold, a man who knows and loves San Francisco — especially Golden Gate Park. We need the Ray Clarys. They make us look, they make us think, they rattle the Establishment’s cage. … Long may he rave, say I.”

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The historian of Golden Gate Park

This is the sixth of a series of photos and excerpts, edited by Marjorie Beggs, from the Neighborhood Oral History Project interviews that Study Center conducted in 1977-’78 under a federal CEEA contract.
The Knox and Bayanihan House SRGs provided by the Tenants and Owners Development Corporation (TODCO) has an open wait list for low-income affordable housing. If you are looking for a safe and comfortable place to come HOME surrounded by compassionate residents and a caring staff, The Knox and Bayanihan House are designed with you in mind.

All of our rooms have a two-burner stove, refrigerator, sink or full sized bed with a closet, along with outstanding amenities in each building. The income limits for these affordable properties are as follows:

| Maximum/Minimum Income Limit | Knox: | 1 person - $34,610 per year (maximum income) | $854 per month (minimum income) | Rent: $315.00 | Deposit $545.00 |
| | 2 person - $59,540 per year (maximum income) | $854 per month (minimum income) |  |
| | 2 person - $59,540 per year (maximum income) | $854 per month (minimum income) | Rent: $450.00 | Deposit $650.00 |

For more information or to pick up an application for The Knox and Bayanihan House, please stop by the lobby of the TODCO Marketing Office located at 241 - 69 Street in San Francisco.

If you have a disability that prevents you from fully participating in this process please call (415) 997-8297.

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**San Francisco Public Library**

The San Francisco Public Library invites the community to visit a neighborhood library this fall and give us input about library operating hours. This will be an opportunity to give us your ideas on library services and priorities.

For more information, check sfpl.org or call (415) 557-4277

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**ARTS EVENTS**

“Whose on Stage?” Tuesdays 7-9 p.m., 110 Main Library, 3rd Level. Free admission. Performances and discussions of San Francisco and global arts. Call: 866-746-5460

**COMMUNITY: REGULAR SCHEDULED HOUSING**

Tenant Associations Collaborate of San Francisco (TACSF) meets the 1st Wednesday of the month, noon, 201 Turk St., Community Room. Contact: Michael Nulty, 229-6257. Resident only, leadership training.

**HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH**

**District Supervisor**

Janine Kim, Chair of Rules Committee, member of Budget & Finance Committee and Transportation Authority.

Legislative Aide: April Vanderzanden, Sunny Arguello and Matthias Morimoto. JanineKim@sf.lnk.gov. 554-7970