City plans market takeover

Thousands sign petition to keep fresh food icon

BY TOM CARTER

The city's Real Estate Division is preparing legislation to take over the iconic Heart of the City Farmers Market, created 27 years ago to serve the central city with fresh fruits and vegetables, and already has hit a wave of resistance. Real Estate wants to “streamline” the market and the Thursday-Friday antiques market at U.N. Plaza. The city would check the nonprofit farmers’ market’s seven-member board of directors, consisting of five farmers and two community members.

Takeover legislation will be ready this month, according to John Updike, Real Estate assistant director. “There may be operational changes, but nothing to harm the farmers in any way,” he said.

But shoppers, happy with the status quo, worry that changes could lead to higher food prices and otherwise disturb the successful formula.

“Thousands” have signed a petition to keep the market intact, according to Supervisor Chris Daly’s office.

Rumors circulated through the neighborhood about the possible acquisition after Real Estate representatives showed up at the market board’s March 12 meeting. Soon after, the market began gathering signatures and distributing flyers to the neighborhood about the possible takeover.

Updike, Real Estate assistant director, said the market’s manager of 27 years, Christine Adams, was at the April 9 Tenderloin Futures Collaborative meeting. She confirmed she was asked to apply for her own job.

Heart of the City Farmers’ Market manager was asked to apply for her own job.

Petition to keep fresh food icon

BY TOM CARTER

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Trouble is trying hard to straighten up

BY TOM CARTER

Tenders night in the Tenderloin is party time. Buses roll through the Eddy and Taylor intersection packed with hundreds of rolled-up revelers eager to while away the evening in the pink décor of crowded Suite 181, awash in its hot DJ music and tippling libations.

181 Eddy was an after-hours hot spot for decades, a place you could bring your own bottle and buy setups of glasses and ice to keep the party going when the bars closed. More recently, as Polly Esters Culture Club, now under the Suite 181 sobriquet, the clientele has gotten younger, bused in from out of town.

The club is in the middle of the block on Eddy but the buses that bring the out-of-town partygoers don’t stop there anymore since residents campaigned to reroute the buses, because they were blocking traffic, even to the gritty intersection where a club-hired security guard supervises their crossing.

In minutes, a much larger bus arrives at the Tenderloin and is under ongoing investigation.

Troubled club is trying hard to straighten up

Eddy St. Hot Spot

Suites blues

Troubled club is trying hard to straighten up
Nonprofits make old hotel new home for 84 people

Essex back better than ever

BY TOM CARTER

The Essex Hotel, at 884 Ellis, was a failing tourist and residential hotel more than five years ago when Mercy Housing California eyed it as a candidate for housing the homeless.

April 17, the Essex re-opened as home to 84 people who previously had no home. The seven-story building had only two residents when Mercy teamed up with Community Housing Partnership to buy it and transform it into spiffy, 250-square-foot SRO units, each with a bathroom and kitchenette.

At a time when the city was cash-strapped, the partners secured from city funds for construction and wrap-around services. They ended up with $6 million from the mayor’s office, $7 million from the state, an $11 million loan from Citi Community Capital and other help from Enter- prise Community Partners, plus the Department of Human Services bankrolled supportive services.

The Essex is a big success for CHP, which now owns and operates the building and is developing three other home- less projects.

It took a whole city to get it done,” said CHP Executive Director Jeff Kostisky, whose parents were among the 25 people seated in the downstairs community room where twice that many were standing. “And what we are really celebrating is 84 opportunities (for the res- idents).”

Then Kostisky told an amusing story about his struggle to persuade Mayor Newsom that the city should fund all of the hotel’s daily operations through CHP. He said his moth- er had called the day after that meeting and asked how he was feeling, and he said he was glum because he’d had a tiff with the mayor and had gotten angry when the mayor would- n’t see things his way. There was a long pause on the line, Kostisky said.

“And then she said what a good mayor he is and that I should go right back there the next day and apologize,” Kostisky said. Laughter filled the room. “But of course I didn’t.”

Even so, as a result of Kostisky’s campaign, the Essex became the first SRO that the city alone is fully subsidizing. DSH pays $1 million from the general fund for rents (a sub- sidy that enables residents to pay only $210 a month on aver- age), the ongoing supportive services and the building man- agement. Other such SROs are in the pipeline for the city’s new full-support program.

“There will be things we can’t do if we do this,” Newsom said at the reopening event, referring to having re- directed budgeted funds for the Essex. “It’s not an easy debate, and I appreciate the hard- headedness it took to get here. But this is what we need more of. We’ve begun to turn the page (on homelessness). And, yes, I love bragging about it in other cities.

“It is just 84 units,” said the mayor. “But for the changed lives it is an extraordinary day. We can know how solve homelessness. The lives here, you are changing forever. I know cyn- ics are out there. But bring them to the Essex.”

Then he nodded to Kostisky and struck a repentant note as he recalled the day of the tiff. “And I was wrong that day,” the mayor said.
TL’s top cop says it takes a village to keep the peace

Each week Tenderloin police Capt. Gary Jimenez composes an email newsletter to the community. His personal state-of-the-neighborhood assessment precedes a litany of the week’s busts. On April 18, Jimenez explained the simple facts of trying to keep order in the Tenderloin, and why he is hopeful. It seemed worth repeating.

“Many of the problems that are on our streets do not involve criminal conduct and are allowed to go unattended or ignored by the community in the name of individual rights or sympathy for the human with a condition that they themselves cannot rationally address and there is no mechanism in place to address it. Therefore, the problem continues until some act deems it illegal or criminal, and therefore it becomes now a problem the police should solve.”

The reality is that the resources of your police district are limited and the actions we do take are often extremely ineffective. Our operation mode is based on a traditional response to the problem and our society and the conditions around us have changed so much that the means available to the police are no longer achieving the desired results. Thus the problems and the crime fighting are not only a police concern and duty but also a community responsibility and cause for address.

“The Tenderloin District has many organizations working along with the City to improve the neighborhood and bring more retailers to occupy the vacant storefronts, businesses to fill the abandoned buildings, and housing for families and the homeless. Many groups in the Tenderloin work with the youth in our neighborhood to give them positive direction and assistance to deal with their future. We are so lucky to have so many wonderful people that care, tutor and guide our Tenderloin children.

“More is much to be hopeful about and reason to believe we are headed in the right direction. We need just to stick together and believe in our goal to rightfully be proud of our neighborhood. A big part of that is having a full service neighborhood.”

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**Seniors revitalize Boeddeker for Earth Day**

The Earth Day spirit drew more Presentation Senior Community volunteers than usual next door to a Boeddeker Park cleanup, where a hardy band of green-thumbed seniors typically gathers like elves every month to make order out of chaos.

Usually, a dozen or more in their 60s to 80s turn out to pull weeds, remove trash and plant flowers the third Thursday of every month from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. The six-story Presentation houses Section 8 elderly and overlooks the park’s northeast corner, which has most of the flower beds.

But April 19 — the Saturday before Earth Day, April 22 — more than 20 showed up. They were joined by two Daly City Westmoore High School students, the son and daughter of Paul Lam of the Presentation staff who serves as translator.

At 10:30 a.m. the group was furiously raking a plot and stuffing weeds and trash into garbage bags almost like they were trying to outdo each other.

“Earlier they pulled all the weeds in the sandy playground area,” said Betty Traylor, the Friends of Boeddeker Park chair who leads the monthly cleanup with someone from Rec and Park.

Also left in the group’s wake were three transformed flower beds replenished with new growth, making the park look as good as it ever has.

“My apartment is up there,” said Yoko Takahashi, 75, pointing to Presentation’s fourth floor. She was wearing gloves and a long-sleeve brown T-shirt with the Rec and Park logo, a gift for her persistent volunteering.

“So I see the people down here making a mess,” she said. “We pick up the needles and cigarette butts and trash. I’m just glad poor people can enjoy it. But it looks like a park now, not a trash bin.”

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**Mother’s Day**

entering through the door immediately sense the odor of the blue incense from a room where a Buddha altar sits

Mother must be home

— Wakako Murata

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**CENTRAL CITY DEMOCRATS**

The Chartered Democratic Club for District 6 in San Francisco

**JUNE 3RD PRIMARY ENDORSEMENTS**

Democratic County Central Committee

David Campos  
David Chiu  
Chris Daly  
Michael Goldstein  
Robert Haaland  
Joe Julian  
Rafael Mandelman  
Aaron Peskin  
Debra Walker  
Scott Weiner

**City Ballot Propositions**

- Proposition A School Parcel Tax: Yes
- Proposition B Retiree Health Benefits: No Endorsement
- Proposition C Moral Turpitude Benefits Forfeiture: Yes
- Proposition D Boards & Commission Expirations: Yes
- Proposition E BOS Approval of PUC Commissioners: Yes
- Proposition F Affordable Housing for Hunters Point: Yes
- Proposition G Mixed Use for Hunters Point: No Endorsement
- Proposition H City Contractor Contributions Ban: Yes

Paid for by Central City Democrats,
George Dias, President
P.O. Box 420846 San Francisco, CA 94142-0846
(415) 339-VOTE (339-8683)
Building looms in The new Federal Estate Division. by the city's Real tion being prepared board, under legisla- run by a nonprofit would cease to be the background. The Heart of the CENTRAL CITY EXTRA / MAY 2008

“Twelve years ago I had one bus and I was the driver out in front of 181 Eddy,” he said.

“And there were never any problems.”

“I am trying to teach them how to keep peace in the neighborhood,” he said. “And I will teach them. My only issue is quiet. And one thing I’ve learned in life is that anything can be fixed.”

The community’s March 27 meeting set up by Safety Network and TNDC demonstrated the progress wrought from the wheel that began squeaking a year ago. Nearly 60 showed up, including TL police Capt. Gary Jimenez, code officer Mike Torres, a representative from the Mayor’s Office on Criminal Justice and Entertainment Commission Executive Director Bob Davis. Sitting on folding chairs, the crowd listened to co-owner Drew Adelman first introduce his entire staff. Davis introduced Adelman. He had already been responding to objections to the noise — he said in the last six months he spent $120,000 on sound-proofing, careful to meet city standards, “not like the old days when you could do it any way you wanted.”

The club was surprised a few years ago when several bus companies added the venue to their weekend routines — “money for us and we loved it,” Adelman said. But many buses rolled up without making arrangements in advance, compromising traffic. And Adelman said many didn’t screen their clients like Marchasin does to see if they’ll follow basic decorum. Now, security guards won’t let any bus stop in front.

“But this is a nighttime — they’re not leaving church,” Adelman said. “We do remind them to be quiet and behave themselves.”

The community sensitivity. He was the only bus owner to attend the March 27 meeting. He told the crowd of 60 of the changes were being made.

“Now the only way you’re going to hear it outside is when somebody opens the door,” he said.

There were other complaints, too, from screeching cars peeling out of the parking lot to muggings there and from noise on the sidewalk to cigarette smoke wafting up from the outside patio in back to bother residents above.

“I learned a lot at the commission meet- ing,” Adelman said. “It opened my eyes. I’ve been here 10 years and want to be here another 10 years. I’d like to have an open dialog with the community. And that’s why we invited you to meet here.”

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“SoMa hot spots, led to Mayor Newsom’s leg- islative package that month to control the issue has been boisterous after-hours noise.

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“Now the only way you’re going to hear it outside is when somebody opens the door,” he said.
The Real Estate office determined a need for new salaries then, which were put in the 2007-08 budget last year, Updike said.

Now the hiring procedure for staffs at both farmers’ markets has yielded a good list of prospects but it was seen as “heavy-handed,” Updike said.

The takeover plan came after a review of the Alemany market operations revealed a need for changes in the city administrative code. City Administrator Ed Lee suggested examining the U.N. Plaza operation as well. The Real Estate office is still being held and “one or the other or both” the farmers and antiques markets will be taken over by his office, but that cost saving isn’t the main point.

“Some of the damage to the plaza results from allowing vendors to drive vehicles onto the brick plaza and park there during the market, a practice that should not be permitted,” the memo said.

It went on to say that the market’s 90 stalls rented ‘at $25 per day results in gross revenues of $14,500 per week and $234,000 per year.’

Adams, sitting in her truck at the market the following Sunday, was startled to see the memo’s claims.

“I’ve always paid the $150,” she said. “I don’t know why they say that, I pay it in $500 checks twice a year. I just sent one in last week.

“It’s amazing. They have never asked me one question,” Adams said. “And I have never gotten one phone call from them.”

The $234,000 gross was way out of line, too, Adams said.

Back in the 1980s, the plaza had a capacity for 85 or 90 stalls, but about 10 years ago new plaza street lights were installed, reducing the stall space between them. Now, Adams said, 67 is the maximum number of stalls she can accommodate. Later, from her office, Adams reported the market grossed $187,000 last year.

Real Estate’s Updike said that discussions are still being held and ‘one or the other or both’ the farmers and antiques markets will be taken over by his office, but that cost saving isn’t the main point.

There will be no financial impact on the farmers and vendors,” he said. ‘Any money (from efficiencies) would go back into the market.”

Another community meeting with the club will be held May 22 at 6:30 p.m. at the Tenderloin Safety Network’s Dina Hilliard announced at the Tenderloin Police Community meeting at the end of the April.
Mirkarimi may soften anti-newspaper stance

BY PAUL KOZAKIEVICZ
EDITOR, RICHMOND REVIEW AND SUNSET BEACON

I n an effort to limit litter, Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi has introduced legislation that would hit newspaper publishers with stiff fines if they deliver to people who do not want the paper.

The ordinance calls for all publishers to maintain a “do not deliver” list. If a paper is delivered to someone on that list, they can ask the director of the Department of Public Works to determine guilt or innocence. A publisher found guilty could be fined $100 for the first offense, $200 for the second and $500 for the third. Mirkarimi said the fines are not set in stone and he is reconsidering the punitive aspects of the legislation.

The “do not deliver” legislation also would apply to handbills, including restaurant menus. Organizations that use volunteers to distribute flyers would also be affected.

Several neighborhood publishers see the legislation as impractical and an infringement on First Amendment rights. Many publishers use delivery services to distribute their newspapers and handbills. Under the legislation, the publishers would be responsible for the actions of the delivery service, even though they have no connection to the people who are delivering the paper.

Mirkarimi said political flyers that are distributed door-to-door are exempt from the legislation.

Mirkarimi said he is willing to work with newspaper publishers to find other solutions to the litter problem. He said he is considering switching to a voluntary plan.

Jeff Deaton and Daisy Yepiz moved into the Community Housing Partnership hotel within six days of each other in February, among the first of Department of Human Services homeless referrals. In late March, they died in their rooms a day apart. Both had been happy in their new community where help and new friends were at their fingertips.

The staff recalled in the April 2 rooms memorial that were teary-eyed to receive housing. Mr. Deaton wore a huge smile. Ms. Yepiz, whose time had been running out in a shelter, was ecstatic.

“She lived with us,” Mr. Ibangi said at the memorial. “She chose her company carefully,” said a social worker who had helped Ms. Yepiz find the Essex. “She was cheerful and had an amazing smile, and she was humble and kind, spiritual, too. It made her so likeable. They were both very grateful to have been given a home and support, the horror of dying in the street is something they didn’t have to experience.”

“They were incredible people,” said an Essex staff member. “They had an aura of dignity about them.”

“She always said something (good) would happen,” said a social worker who had helped Ms. Yepiz find the Essex. “She was cheerful and had an amazing smile, and she was humble and kind, spiritual, too. It made her so likeable. They were both very grateful to have been given a home and support, the horror of dying in the street is something they didn’t have to experience.”

Mr. Deaton was the first of 84 residents to move into the Essex after its $23.2 million, yearlong renovation. He had postponed an operation on his trauma to the Essex after its $23.2 million, yearlong renovation.

Mr. Deaton reveled in his new stability and his future. In one six-page handwritten letter to the staff, he wrote in part:

“I never dreamed a few months ago I’d ever live, or have a place to live, have dignity, comfort and a chance to attain the things that I believe I need in order to live an enjoyable life — or have the physical wellness to do so.

His Colorado relatives sent a large bouquet of purple and yellow flowers that were next to a bouquet for Ms. Yepiz on a table in front.

Mr. Deaton and Daisy Yepiz moved into the renovated Essex Hotel, which reopened in March 25. She was 61.

Mr. Deaton and Ms. Yepiz were both very grateful to have been given a home and support, the horror of dying in the street is something they didn’t have to experience. They were both very grateful to have been given a home and support, the horror of dying in the street is something they didn’t have to experience.

Ms. Yepiz was born in Zimbabwe and left her family to work in America and send money home. Zimbabwe, one of the world’s poorest countries, has an unemployment rate of 80%.

“Mr. Deaton, from Nigeria with two children, brought her to the Bay Area as a nanny for his two children and to help his wife, a family friend said. “She lived with us,” Mr. Ibangi said at the memorial.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

She was a true mother at heart and a non-nonsense person.’

At some point she left the Ibangi family and moved to Oakland. It wasn’t known when she married a Chinese man and changed her name, but she took a job waitressing in Sukhi’s Indian restaurant for several years. She became good friends with the woman owner who often gave her Indian clothes. Her daughter died years ago. Her estate of deceased indigents and others who have no relatives here. In handling Ms. Yepiz’s case, it located her son Kelvin Shekede in the town of Gweru to send him the death certificate. Her daughter died years ago.

The public administrator planned to ship Ms. Yepiz’s remains home but Lufthansa, the only airline flying to Zimbabwe, wanted $4,000. With the casket, fees and other costs, the total would be $11,000. But estate investigator Andres Garcia talked to the son and he gave permission to cremate the body, instead and send on the ashes. That $2,260 cost is paid from Ms. Yepiz’ small estate, Garcia said. Anything left goes to her son.

Ms. Yepiz was lucky to have friends who cared about her,” Garcia said. ‘They called us with information. It’s nice to see that bonding, and it helps put a face on the people we deal with. I got to talk to the son. “I’m glad this worked out. So many times we go into an apartment in the Tenderloin of someone young or old and there are no leads to find relatives."

VOTE JUNE 3rd

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BALANCED EXPERIENCE

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• Assistant District Attorney - San Francisco
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Mary Mallen stands alone in the race for Seat 12 as having seen justice from both sides of the courtroom. She has prosecuted criminals and defended the indigent - she is uniquely qualified to serve all San Franciscans.

Party Affiliation & “Decline-to-State” Voters

The June 3, 2008 election is a “modified” closed primary. If you registered to vote with a qualified political party, you can only vote for candidates from that party. If you declined to state a political party when you registered, you can vote for candidates from any of the following two parties:

• The Democratic Party
• The Republican Party

Decline-to-state voters will not be able to vote in party county central committee contests. All registered voters may vote on ballot measures.

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The Department of Elections is looking for pollworkers to help on Election Day. Pollworkers can earn up to $170! To sign up, visit www.sfgov.org/elections or call (415) 554-4355.

obaTurries

GREGORY DAVID HIGGS
SOMPAC member

Gregory David Higgs, a security guard who served on the South of Market Project Area Committee, died March 8 of heart disease in his Park Hotel room on Folsom Street, a family member said.

Mr. Higgs was on SOMPAC’s Crime & Safety Committee from August 1999 to September 2001 when he had to quit for health reasons.

A native of Long Island, Mr. Higgs spent most of his adult life in the Bay Area. He is survived by a sister, Dr. Maggie Higgs Blackburn of Tallahassee, her husband, Doug Blackburn, and their son, Max Blackburn. The family asks that any contributions in Greg’s name be made to SF Connect (www.projecthomeless.org) or Glide Foundation (www.glide.org).

DOUG BLACKBURN

MAY 2008 / CENTRAL CITY EXTRA 7
Help Us Transform Your Muni System

TEP preliminary proposals aim to transform Muni into a first-rate transit system to reduce congestion, decrease pollution and get people where they want to go efficiently, safely. Proposals range from more service on the streets to reduced stops to deporting routes with the fewest impacts. You can help shape these proposals to improve Muni – come to a community meeting and share your feedback.

Sat., April 19th at 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
West Portal Elementary, 5 Lenex Way at Taraval St. Wheelchair accessible through Claremont St. school yard. Nearby Muni routes: 17, 48, K, L & M to West Portal Station Thursday, April 24th at 6 p.m.-8 p.m.
Jewish Community Center, 2200 California St. at Presidio Ave. Nearby Muni routes: 1, 16X, 2, 3, 4 & 43
Sat., April 26th at 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Dianne Feinstein Elementary, 2550 25th Ave. at Vicente St. Nearby Muni routes: L, 28 & 66
Monday, April 28th at 6 p.m.-8 p.m.
Southeast Community Facility, 1800 Oakland Ave. at Peralta St. Nearby Muni routes: T, 22, 24, 44 & 54
Wed., April 30th at 6 p.m.-8 p.m.
City College Mission Campus, 1125 Valencia St. at 22nd St. Nearby Muni routes: 14, 26, 48, 49 & D7
Sat., May 3 at 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Jean Parker Elementary, 840 Broadway St. at Powell St. Nearby Muni routes: 9K, 12, 30, 45, Powell & Mission Cable Car

Monday, May 5 at 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
Visitacion Valley Elementary, 55 Schwinn St. at Visitacion Ave. Nearby Muni routes: 9K, 9X, B & G
Sat., May 10 at 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy, 4225 19th St. at Diamond St. Nearby Muni routes: F, K, L, M, 24, 33 & 35
Monday, May 12 at 6 p.m.-8 p.m.
West Bay Conference Center, 1290 Fillmore St. at Eddy St. Nearby Muni routes: 5, 22, 31 & 38
Wed., May 14 at 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
Bessie Carmichael Elementary, 375 Seventh St. at Harrison St. Nearby Muni routes: 9K, 12, 14X & 10 X
Sat., May 17th at 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Mission YMCA, 4495 Mission Street at Bayview St. Nearby Muni routes: 14, 23 & 49

For more information, go online at www.sthp.com or call 311