



The *Eureka!*

News for Eureka Valley, Upper Market,
Castro, Duboce & Twin Peaks. Published by the
Eureka Valley Promotion Association

a neighborhood group serving the residents and businesses of the Castro and Upper Market since 1881

volume 127, Issue 04 May-June 2008

www.evpa.org

www.PinkTrianglePark.org

The Pre-Summer rush is here with a flood of informational meetings for the residents and businesses of Eureka Valley!!

THREE MAJOR PLANNING EFFORTS TO COME BACK TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD

SF MUNI TEP

May 10, 2008

Saturday | 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

@ Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy
4235 19th St. (at Collingwood St.)

Help Transform Your Muni System. The Transit Effectiveness Project (TEP) will share preliminary proposals for Muni service changes and reliability improvements to nearby routes F, K, L, M, 24, 33, 35, 37. The TEP's preliminary proposals aim to transform Muni into a first-rate transit system, reducing congestion, decreasing pollution and getting people where they want to go efficiently and safely. Changes have been proposed for most Muni routes ranging from increased frequency on our busiest lines to route eliminations which have the fewest customers. With your help, a revitalized Muni system will not only benefit current transit customers, but will improve mobility for everyone who lives, works in or visits San Francisco. There will be a Fast Pass raffle at the meeting. For more information, visit www.sftep.com, email info@sftep.com, or call 311.

UPPER MARKET COMMUNITY DESIGN PLAN OPEN HOUSE

MAY 12, 2008

Monday | 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

@ Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy
4235 19th St. (at Collingwood St.)

In conjunction with Supervisor Dufty & MIG Consultants, the Planning Department announced that the draft of the Upper Market Community Design Plan has finally been created. The plan created with major input from the community will be unveiled at this Open House. Come see the recommendations within the plan and learn the next steps needed for implementation of the plan. Copies of the draft plan document are available on the project's website: <http://uppermarket.sfplanning.org>.

BETTER STREETS SAN FRANCISCO

Late June, 2008

There will be an announcement made to all online *EUREKA!* Subscribers when the meeting is scheduled.

JET Bar Proposes Expansion

EVPA Member Greg Bronstein, owner of the Flavors you Crave and Lime restaurant will be presenting his proposal to expand the JET Bar into the space formerly occupied by the Reaves Gallery at 2344 Market Street.



Rendering of the proposed Jet Bar Expansion

Greg has already begun working with the EVPA Planning Committee to ensure the proposed "Conditions of Use" will be beneficial to all parties concerned.

Greg will be asking for EVPA support for obtaining the required "Conditional Uses" for this expansion. If you have any questions you want to ensure are answered at our membership meeting, please send them to planning@evpa.org by May 7th.

PROPOSED LEVI'S "BOUTIQUE" STORE

Levi Strauss and Company is proposing to open a "boutique" Levi's Store at 525 Castro Street that was previously occupied by Castro Video, between the Sausage Factory and the long-time shuttered Patio Café. See full story on back page.

NEXT EVPA MEETING: THURSDAY, 15 MAY
7:30 PM, Eureka Valley Rec Center
100 Collingwood St (Behind Delano's)

A few Words from the EVPA President:

“Get to know your neighbors.” – I’ve put those words in various places on the EVPA website. We keep seeing instance after instance where things haven’t gone well between neighbors. For exterior changes to houses, the Planning Department actually requires that project sponsors reach out to the neighborhood before submitting plans, but often it is already too late to reach out.



Most recently was the fight over “the views at the Douglass Stairs” when a homeowner proposed to add one floor to an existing structure. It saddens me to think that neighbors will fight neighbors, then want to live next door to them. Perhaps I’m fortunate so far here on 19th street, where my “micro-neighborhood” is quite closely integrated, mostly thanks to the wonders of the internet.

I strongly encourage you to set up your own “block association.” – it’s one of the best ways to meet your neighbors. The EVPA will even assist any block association with getting a website and mailing list setup.

Bottom line, it’s just never a good idea for your neighbors to find out that you have a new plan for the neighborhood when they read about a tree removal permit or a variance hearing from the posting staring at them from across the street. They will fear the unknown, assume the worst. By this time, it is often too late.

PLEASE COME TO THE MAY MEETING! We will have a very, very busy meeting and will need to stick to a very tight schedule. I ask that if you have questions for any of the presenters, that you please send them to whomever is referenced in the article at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting. This will enable us to get your questions to the presenters so that your question can be answered as part of their presentation.

Make a difference in your neighborhood – *get involved!*

2008 EVPA President Steve Clark Hall is a San Francisco native and since 1984 has been the homeowner of the Victorian built in 1885 by Frederick and Frank “Queen” Thomas on Butte Street (aka 19th)

Castro Theatre Marquee Interim Solution

In the April *Eureka!* we reported that the newly restored CASTRO Theatre marquee has been hit not once, but twice since the recent restoration to its classic 70's appearance as part of the filming of the movie MILK. One of the collisions broke some of the newly installed neon lighting tubes. The Castro Theater is designated San Francisco Landmark No. 100.

We are happy to report that an *interim* solution has been agreed upon by the merchants, the city and the Theatre. Two large trees in big containers will be placed out in the street, one on each end of the Marquee. Because the street sweeping machines will not be able to sweep between the containers, the theatre will be responsible for cleaning the street between them. A long term solution will be a welcome part of a Castro Street capital improvement plan.

The Eureka!

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SUBMISSIONS

The deadline for articles is the Wednesday before the third Thursday of even months

June 18, 2008 - August 20, 2008
October 15, 2008 - December 17, 2008
Please don't make us miss our press deadline!

THE 2008 EVPA BOARD AND CONTACTS

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Point / Counter Point

Here are two sides of the Walgreen's discussion from our 20 April "Special" EVPA meeting . . .

Why I Support Walgreen's Expansion Plans

by Gustavo Serina

The American economy is in a recession. California faces a \$10 billion budget gap. San Francisco's projected budget shortfall is approximately \$350 million. That our neighborhood isn't exempt from financial problems is attested to by many empty storefronts, including four on Castro Street between Market and 19th Streets. On 18th Street between Castro and Collingwood Street a former laundromat is empty. Across from it, the space housing De La Sole will soon be vacant, as the shoe store relocates. When they move, three spaces on that block will be empty.

Empty storefronts attract vagrants, litter, and crime. Thanks to San Francisco District 8 Supervisor Bevan Dufty, during the 2007-08 fiscal year, the Mayor's Office of Economic Development awarded the LGBT Center a \$25,000 Business Attraction Grant. The Castro/Upper Market Community Benefits District (CBD) added \$15,000 and the Merchants of Upper Market and Castro (MUMC) contributed \$10,000 to fund the program. Thanks to Ken Stram, the Center's Director of Economic Development, much has been done to attract new businesses to the neighborhood and dispel misperceptions that the Castro is anti-commercial enterprise. The process is slow and hence, thanks to Dufty, the City will renew its grant for the 2008-09 fiscal year. The CBD will again contribute \$15,000. MUMC, however, which operated at a deficit last year, won't contribute. Dufty will ask local businesses to make up that shortfall.

Walgreen's wants to expand into the long vacant former laundromat on 18th Street to accommodate new health services that offer a holistic approach to physical well being, including nutrition counseling. Walgreen's won't duplicate services or products they currently offer at their store on Castro and 18th Street. The new space will also have a meeting room that will be made available at no cost to community groups.

Is Walgreen's a good corporate citizen? They recently donated \$5,000 to a Eureka Valley school and replaced the worn out carpeting at the Community Meeting Room above the Bank of America Branch on Castro Street. They are strong supporters of the CBD. They're working with Supervisor Dufty to design more attractive window displays at their main pharmacy.

Some people prefer to wait indefinitely for another tenant, although no one else has shown interest in this

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Why Walgreen's Continued Expansion is not good for the Neighborhood

by Gary Weiss and Alan Beach-Nelson

In 2007, Walgreen Co. had net income of \$2.04 Billion. With 6,271 Walgreen's stores nationwide, the average after-tax profit is \$325,306 per store. That's their "take-home-pay." Per Walgreen's own spokesperson, Todd Horton, with 54 stores in San Francisco, Walgreen's only donated \$100,000 to local charitable causes in 2007 (about \$1,850 per store), a mere 0.57% of their approximate San Francisco net-profit of \$17.5 Million. Industry standard for corporate giving is 2.0% to 5.0%. The recent \$5,000 contribution to Harvey Milk is nice, but far from being a good neighborhood business and community partner.

If Walgreen's were to expand the specialty pharmacy into the space at 4127 18th Street, the total Walgreen's footprint in the Castro Neighborhood Commercial District (NCD) would reach 14,000 square feet (slightly larger than 1/4 the size of the giant Safeway on Market).

For over 4 years, Supervisor Bevan Dufty has been pleading with Walgreen's to improve the look of the front of their Castro store. They haven't. The loiterers and dated window displays remain. The paint has not been refreshed in a generation.

The memberships of several of our neighborhood groups have gone on record opposing the expansion. Our goal for Castro Village is to keep it vital and diverse. A conversion of yet another neighborhood-serving business into a generic corporate giant will accomplish neither of these goals.

The space into which Walgreen's hopes to expand had been a thriving laundromat for several decades. Per the SF Tax Collector, the laundromat ceased operations in November 2006. The laundromat operator declined to give reasons for the closure. In only three months (over the holiday season), Walgreen's developed a corporate plan for the space and in February 2007 signed a 20 year lease. Spokesperson Todd Horton would not reveal how the rent Walgreen's is paying compares to that of the laundromat, saying it was proprietary.

For the past 15 months the former laundromat space has remained unoccupied as Walgreen's pays the rent. A primary argument for allowing Walgreen's and other unattractive chains into Castro Village is that empty storefronts are bad for business. This is undisputed. But if Walgreen's had any sense of community, it would have offered the space for use as a gallery or by a

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PROP 98 IS BAD FOR CALIFORNIA AND BAD FOR SAN FRANCISCO

by Scott Wiener, EVPA Secretary

In 2006, California voters wisely rejected Proposition 90, a stealth measure that would have dramatically reduced government's ability to protect the environment, enact zoning laws, and engage in many other regulatory activities that enhance Californians' quality of life. Having lost on Prop 90, the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association has come back with a supposedly scaled back version, Prop 98.

Prop 98, however, is every bit as overbroad and dangerous as Prop 90, and even more deceptive. If it passes, it will repeal rent control. It also may cripple California's ability to deal with the significant natural resource and infrastructure challenges facing the state, as well as undermining government's ability to enact effective zoning measures and to protect the environment.

First, some history. In 2005, the Supreme Court, held that a city could use eminent domain, consistent with the U.S. Constitution, to forcibly purchase a private home to encourage private redevelopment. The decision sparked an outcry across the political spectrum, and broad support formed for banning government from taking private homes for private development projects.

It would be straightforward to accomplish that goal by simply banning government from transferring private homes to private developers. But, unfortunately, certain conservative anti-government groups took advantage of the situation by submitting ballot measures across the country that, in name, were limited to the taking of private homes for private use, but in effect, contained buried text that exploded the definition of eminent domain to include most regulation, including environmental and zoning laws. Prop 90 was one of those stealth measures.

After the defeat of Prop 90, Democrats in the California Legislature introduced a constitutional amendment (Assembly Constitutional Amendment 8) to reform eminent domain by prohibiting use of eminent domain to acquire an owner-occupied home or a small business for transfer to another private party. ACA 8 had the strong support of the League of California Cities and the League of Conservation Voters, but Republicans in the Legislature killed it, because they wanted a broader Prop-90-style measure. (The League of California Cities then collected signatures to place the measure on the ballot as Prop 99, which is a good, common-sense eminent domain reform without a hidden agenda.)

That measure is Prop 98. Its statements of findings and purpose seem innocuous enough and appear to limit the measure to reforming eminent domain. However, when one examines the text, and particularly the definition section, its broader impacts becomes clear:

→→ Prop 98 explicitly repeals rent control statewide. It

leaves local jurisdictions with no ability to control escalation

of rents. Whatever one's views on rent control, this is a draconian measure that would eliminate local control of this very local issue.

→ After banning the taking of private property for private use, the measure defines "private use" to include the taking by a public agency of private property "for the consumption of natural resources." The measure therefore would prohibit government agencies from using eminent domain, for example, to acquire property for public water projects to increase California's capacity to store, transport, and deliver water. The language also likely bars use of eminent domain for preservation of open space.

→ Prop 98 further defines prohibited "private use" as regulation of private property in order to "transfer the economic benefit" to another person. This language could have devastating effects on land use planning and environmental regulation by barring government from engaging in regulation that reduces the market value of property. Examples of prohibited activities could include historic preservation laws and height limitations. All zoning decisions arguably transfer economic benefits among property owners, as courts have held, and this measure therefore would reduce the ability of government to engage in traditional land use regulation – regulation that is especially important in dense urban environments.

→ The "transfer economic benefit" prohibition also would create problems for new development. Any land use or zoning decision designed to facilitate new construction could be tied up in court on the ground that it transfers an "economic benefit" from current property owners to new ones, such as reduction of a view or changes in traffic patterns – changes that could reduce property values.

→ Prop 98's "transfer economic benefit" language also could seriously limit government's ability to require developers to provide public benefits in connection with development, such as making street improvements, contributing to park enhancements, or other expenditures traditionally required of developers in order to provide adequate public infrastructure to support the increased population that development spurs.

→ Prop 98 also fails to provide an exception for health and safety regulations and is arguably retroactive to existing regulations. This makes Prop 98 more extreme than Prop 90, which contained a health and safety exception and was not retroactive.

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Prop 98 is BAD . . .
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→ Given how vaguely Prop 98 is drafted, it will create immediate and significant litigation. Any decision by government in California that arguably affects the value of property or arguably transfers an economic benefit from one property owner to another will result in a court challenge seeking compensation and injunctive relief. Even if courts eventually interpret the measure narrowly, taxpayers will spend huge sums of money litigating its scope. In San Francisco, the funding for this litigation will typically come directly from the General Fund – i.e., the fund that pays for

parks, street repairs, police, and other services on which we all depend.

California, and the Bay Area, are growing rapidly and will continue to do so for decades. We have seen the results of poor planning in California – clogged roads, pollution, suburban sprawl that covers up open space, inferior public transit, and a looming water crisis because of inadequate storage capacity. We need our government to be able to plan effectively for growth. Prop 98 is exactly the opposite of what we need and will take California in the wrong direction.

Minutes for EVPA “Special” Meeting - April 17, 2008

by EVPA Secretary Scott Wiener

The president called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

The president made the following announcements:

- A Better Streets plan will be coming out in June
- An Upper Market Workshop will be coming up soon
- Muni’s Transit Effectiveness Project will be making a presentation on Saturday May 10, 10:30-12:30, Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy
- The Eureka deadline has passed, but we need additional content

A representative from Walgreen’s presented on Walgreen’s planned expansion of its 18th Street location. Among the features of the planned expansion:

- A specialty pharmacy of 3,600 square feet
 - Pharmacist will have a more active role
 - The set-up will allow for more complicated prescriptions to be filled
 - An immunization center and a compounding center
 - Over-the-counter drugs, herbal and organic products, etc.
 - Private consultation spaces
 - A dietician on staff to meet with patients receiving prescriptions
 - There will be a community room, seating 15-25 people, for use primarily for health-related seminars but also at times by neighborhood groups
 - Hours will continue to be 9 a.m. until 9 p.m.
- The membership asked numerous questions and commented on the proposal. Some members were in favor of the project, arguing that we need to fill storefronts, that Walgreen’s will attract foot traffic, and that the expansion will meet community needs. Those opposed stressed that the expansion will give Walgreen’s almost 14,000 square feet in the Castro, will undermine small business in the neighborhood, and will reward Walgreen’s for being a bad neighbor.
- A motion was made and seconded to discuss and decide EVPA’s position on Walgreen’s. The motion passed unanimously.
 - A motion was made and seconded to oppose the Walgreen’s expansion. The motion to oppose passed on a vote of 11 in favor and 8 against, with one abstention. Thus, EVPA is opposed to the Walgreen’s expansion.

Supervisor Bevan Dufty then spoke about several issues in the neighborhood, including:

- Levi’s is moving forward with plans to open a store on Castro between 18th and 19th. Various meetings with merchants have occurred, and Supervisor Dufty is optimistic.
- Various stores have moved locations in the Castro.
- It still looks like we’ll have an Office of Special Events to coordinate Halloween
- Friend’s School is leaving Diamond Street to move to the Mission. Several pre-schools have expressed interest in the space, including the JCC.

➤ On motion and second, the bylaws discussion/vote was tabled to the May 15, 2008, meeting.

➤ On motion, second, and unanimous vote, the meeting was then adjourned.

PROJECT OPEN HAND IN EUREKA VALLEY AT THE CASTRO SENIOR CENTER

by Joe Caruso

The Castro Senior Center is located right at the heart of the Castro, nestled in the parish hall of Most Holy Redeemer Church at 100 Diamond - a fixture in the neighborhood since 1900. Seniors gather for the usual conversation over coffee. Often longtime Project Open Hand (POH) Senior Advisory Board member, John Anderson entertains at the piano. On a recent morning, there was an exercise class and a team of nurses from UCSF gave blood pressure screenings just before lunch.

POH site coordinator, Scott Schoverling and his devoted group of volunteers served up a baked herb salmon lunch that was prepared with love at POH's kitchen and brought to the site piping hot.

The lunch program at the Castro Senior Center attracts an average of 55 seniors each day. However, special events and parties - such as their Pride Party and the Holiday Party - bring in a much larger crowd.

Last year over 12,000 meals were served at the center!

In addition to lunch, activities such as movies, tai chi, bingo, walking groups, Polynesian dance classes, computer classes, yoga, current events discussion groups, and special events for LGBT seniors are all part of the fun. These activities are scheduled by Golden Gate Senior Services (GGSC) - the host agency at the site and are coordinated by Patrick Larkin, the site director.

GGSC also sponsors Project Integration, a program that coordinates resources and services for seniors and adults with disabilities. The center is committed to develop programs and activities which reflect the interests of LGBT seniors and provide support to this under served community. The Castro Senior Center is open Monday through Friday, 8:30am - 4:30pm. Lunch is served at 11:45am (ending at 12:30pm). Anyone interested in coming to the site for services or just to gather information can **call 415-863-3507 - or just drop by!**

Why I Support Walgreen's Expansion Plans

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space. Others claim that Walgreen's is offering new services to make a profit. But profit is the engine of American capitalism. Still others doubt the viability of the new programs, despite their success in other locations.

Opposing Walgreen's expansion and its willingness to make a long-term investment in our neighborhood without offering a viable alternative sends a negative message. It says that despite the financial contributions of the city and neighborhood groups aimed at bringing thriving enterprises to the area, the EVPA prefers a dingy, empty storefront to a dynamic, viable business

Gustavo Serina is a past President and two time Secretary of EVPA. He is Vice-President of the Castro/Upper Market Street Community Benefits District and President of the San Francisco Commission on Aging and Adult Services. He and his life partner Bob Melbourne have lived on Douglass Street for thirty years.

Read the official EVPA Walgreen's letter to San Francisco Planning Department online at evpa.org

Not good for the Neighborhood

(continued from page 3)

non-profit while waiting for permits. At least it would not have been left vacant. Walgreen's supporters fail to mention that certain property owners and leaseholders in the Castro apparently don't need nor care to lease or occupy their properties. The owner of the largest restaurant space in the neighborhood, who also owns a bar on 18th Street, seems content to leave them vacant in perpetuity. Others are asking obscene rents.

What many of us have been working hard to achieve is a neighborhood commercial district that attracts local residents, but also encourages people to come and shop because we offer something that other neighborhoods do not. We have several other Walgreen's within walking distance (one just three blocks away at Market & Sanchez). Having yet another will not bring us more business or vitality. There is only one Cliff's Hardware, only one Buffalo Foods, only one De La Sole shoes. These are businesses that add to the fabric of our village. Please don't sell us out.

Gary Weiss is the President of the Corbett Heights Neighbors and the owner of IXIA - 25 years in the Castro Alan Beach-Nelson is (acting) Treasurer, EVPA 15 Year resident of the Castro

LEVI'S "BOUTIQUE" STORE PROPOSED FOR CASTRO STREET LOCATION

Levi Strauss and Company is proposing to open a "boutique" Levi's Store at 525 Castro Street in the space that was previously occupied by Castro Video, between the Sausage Factory and the long-time shuttered Patio Café. View a *draft rendering* of the store at <http://evpa.org/docs/080505leviplan.pdf>

EVPA has previously taken a position for a Formula Retail Use ban in the Castro Neighborhood Commercial District (NCD), but this ban has many hurdles to jump before it would ever go into effect. About 200 of Levi's 1000 corporate employees based here in San Francisco are members of our community. And unlike Walgreen's Company (the only Formula Use retail institution that the EVPA has ever opposed on the grounds of Formula Use), Levi Strauss has a *very long and consistent record of being a very good supporter of our community.*

Levi's representatives will be at our membership meeting on May 15th to explain their proposal and to request our support for the Conditional Use required to open a Formula Use Retail store in the Castro NCD. Our May 15 meeting has a very busy agenda, so if you have questions you want to ensure are answered during the presentation, please send them to planning@evpa.org by May 7th.



Site of the proposed Levi Strauss & Co Boutique Store

READ THE *EUREKA!* THE DAY IT IS PUBLISHED and get other late-breaking announcements about Eureka Valley events by subscribing to the EVPA announcement list, it's free - it's easy - it's secure and your e-mail address is never shared!

www.evpa.org/subscribe



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The Agenda for the 15 May 2008 Membership Meeting

1. Introductions
2. Announcements
3. Reading and Approval of the Minutes
4. Reports of Officers, Boards and Standing Committees
5. Reports of Special Committees
6. Business
 - Pink Saturday Plans (info item)
 - Levi's Boutique at 525 Castro (action item)
 - Jet Bar Expansion at (action Item)
 - Ratification of EVPA Treasurer
 - Bylaws Revisions for 2008 (action item)
 - "Straw Poll" - Propositions 98/99
7. New Business/Announcements
8. Adjournment

EVPA Membership Cards will be distributed to dues paying members, at this meeting, too!

The Online *Eureka!* "Special Space"
(where the mailing label and stamp use up precious area).

VICTORY GARDENS 2008+

Victory Gardens 2008+ is a pilot project funded by the City of San Francisco to support the transition of backyard, front yard, window boxes, rooftops, and unused land into organic food production areas. In 2008 15 households that represent the diversity of San Francisco will be chosen to participate in the program. You can participate regardless of your income, ethnicity, available space, neighborhood, gardening experience, or lifestyle.

As a participant, you will work with the Victory Gardens team to install a garden in your outdoor space. Although you will be the primary caretaker of the garden, the Victory Garden team will provide ongoing support. Sound exciting? Visit <http://evpa.org/docs/080505victory.pdf> for a PDF application or visit www.sfvictorygardens.org and get ready to plant!

for more information:

The Victory Garden Project
c/o The Garden for the Environment
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