Improving the Neighborhood:  
The Castro CBD At Work

The Castro/Upper Market Community Benefit District (CBD) is working hard to keep the streets in the neighborhood clean, free of blight and graffiti, pedestrian friendly and economically vital.

Cleaning and Maintenance
The CBD’s cleaning crews are on the streets seven days a week sweeping, picking up litter, addressing maintenance issues, getting large items removed from the sidewalk and generally being a constant set of eyes and ears on the neighborhood.

Security and Public Safety
Security and public safety issues are tied to cleaning and maintenance, general blight prevention and economic vitality. To better address public safety issues in the district, the CBD has just begun talking with key stakeholders in the neighborhood in an effort to make our neighborhood more pedestrian friendly and safe. Visit the CBD’s website at www.castrocbd.org to learn more about this effort.

Farmers Market coming to the Upper Market/Castro
It looks like it is going to happen. The negotiations are almost complete, the contracts to be signed soon. The Pacific Coast Farmers Market Association (http://www.pcfma.com) is organizing a farmers market for Noe Street from Market to Beaver in front of Café Flore. They will soon apply to DPT for street closure permission. The plan is for Wednesdays, from 4pm to 8pm. The intent is to have 25 to 30 booths, ranging from produce to bakery items, flowers, specialty foods and possibly even fresh sorbet [made from seasonal fruits] and meats. The market will include a community booth that will be for local non-profit and neighborhood groups and a booth for local merchants. We will present any further information as it becomes available. Enormous thanks to J.D. Petras for being the point person in helping make this happen and the Upper Market Alliance (an informational alliance of community groups in the Upper Market) for supporting this effort. We all look forward to this local farmers market.

Economic Vitality
One of the cornerstones of a healthy community is a strong business corridor featuring a diversity of businesses. To ensure the Castro’s future as a thriving neighborhood, the CBD, the Merchants of Upper Market & Castro and the San Francisco LGBT Community Center (The Center) are leading a sophisticated Business Attraction Campaign focused on attracting new business while also working to keep the Castro’s unique spirit.

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A lot is going on at your neighborhood association, the Eureka Valley Promotion Association. It's just a month into the year, and we have several great projects moving forward.

First, at our March 19 meeting (7:30 p.m. - 9 p.m. at 501 Castro St.), we will be holding a discussion about economic development in the Castro, with a focus on how to fill the various commercial vacancies in the neighborhood. Ken Stram of the LGBT Center, Steve Adams of the Merchants of Upper Market and Castro, and others will be participating in the discussion of this important issue. I hope to see you there.

Second, we are implementing our decision to focus on creating and improving public spaces in the neighborhood. We are already working closely with the Castro/Upper Market Community Benefits District on various projects, including changes to the sidewalk in front of the Castro Theater and plans to use Earth Day as an opportunity to perform various clean-up projects in the Castro, working with various neighborhood organizations and the Department of Public Works' Clean Team. We are also going to be working with the Neighborhood Parks Council on a parks planning process for the area.

Third, we are moving forward with our plans to help neighbors organize block parties. Thank you to Rob Cox of Hartford Street for spearheading this effort. We very much look forward to neighbors getting to know their neighbors through this great process.

Fourth, we are expanding and improving our newsletter. We will be distributing significantly more copies in an effort to keep the neighborhood up to date about what we are doing and what is happening in the Castro.

Finally, we will be wading into the difficult issue of homelessness in the Castro. While recognizing that a single neighborhood organization cannot effectively address the root causes of this problem, we believe that as an organization we can help people understand why it exists, what we can do to ameliorate the situation, and how we can make the Castro a more livable place for residents, businesses, and everyone else with a stake in this amazing place.

Please join us – and please join EVPA!
A Brief History of Eureka Valley

The following is from an article written by Sean Timberlake for SF City Guides (www.sfcityguides.org), edited by Judith Hoyem.

One Neighborhood, Many Names

Among San Francisco’s rich tapestry of neighborhoods, one particularly colorful patch stands out. Today many refer to it as The Castro, but over the years this chameleon of a community has had many monikers.

For centuries, the gentle slopes leading up to Twin Peaks proved a fertile foraging ground for indigenous Ohlone Indians based in the diminutive village of Chutchui on the shores of a lagoon. Life changed for them in 1776 when the de Anza expedition arrived and established the Mission de San Francisco de Asis, or Mission Dolores, as well as the Presidio. The Mission Trail, which connected the two encampments, intersected existing Ohlone hunting trails at what is now Castro and Market Streets.

The recorded history of Eureka Valley began in 1846 when Jose de Jesus Noe, the last Mexican Alcalde of San Francisco, received as a land grant from the Mexican government the sprawling Rancho San Miguel, encompassing more than 4,000 acres from the slopes of Twin Peaks all the way to Daly City. Its eastern border ran from a point at approximately what is now Cole and Parnassus Streets south to Valencia, crossing the intersection of what is now Castro, Market and Seventeenth Streets. Were Noe’s home standing today, it would be near the corner of Eureka and 22nd Streets.

In 1848 with the end of the Mexican War, California passed into American hands, gaining statehood two years later. In 1854, an ambitious Mormon, John Meirs Horner, arrived from New Jersey and purchased a broad swath of the Rancho San Miguel. Bounded by Valencia Street on the east, 18th Street on the north, 30th Street on the south, and Castro Street on the west, the parcel became known as Horner’s Addition and retains that name today in the city assessor’s office. Horner laid out the grid of streets and named many of them after significant Spanish figures and former landowners: Jose Castro, Jose Antonio Sanchez and, of course, Noe himself.

The fertile valley remained rural for the next 25 years attracting farmers and ranchers. Housing development was slow. The Eureka Valley Promotion Association, the oldest neighborhood association in San Francisco, was founded in 1881, probably to promote settlement in the area. By the 1880s, the city had begun to encroach on the dairy farms that covered the slopes of Twin Peaks. Irish, Scandinavian and German families had begun to buy up the land and build homes, and when the Castro Street segment of the Market Street Cable Railway opened in 1887, Eureka Valley’s presence as a true urban neighborhood had been secured. (The valley allegedly gets its name from the north peak of Twin Peaks; the other is named Noe, hence Noe Valley to the south.)

In the first decades of the 20th century, Eureka Valley’s nickname was “Little Scandinavia” because of the prevalence of Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish immigrants. The Swedish-American Hall on Market Street dates from that era. By the time the Twin Peaks tunnel opened in 1918 connecting to the western half of the city, the burgeoning scene on Castro Street had become known as “Little Downtown.”

Throughout the majority of the 20th century, Eureka Valley remained a quiet, working-class area. But more often than not, locals referred to their location by parish, so you’d more likely hear that they lived in Most Holy Redeemer Parish. In the ‘60s and ‘70s, as blue collar families fled the cities to the suburbs, many gays and lesbians filtered in, buying up property at relatively low prices. The complexion of the neighborhood changed rapidly, and
CBD, continued from page 1
Some of the newer businesses the CBD recently helped to locate:
• Outfit – 4079 18th Street
• Mom’s Pharmacy – 4071 18th Street

Streetscape Improvements
With input from the community, the CBD has finished its streetscape planning process and with leadership and support provided by Supervisor Bevan Dufty, implementation of the recommendations will become realized. The plan is complete with diagrams of the proposed improvements and pictures of some of the best practices in streetscape design. The CBD’s entire “Neighborhood Beautification and Safety Plan” is available on its website at www.castrocbd.org

What You Can Do to Help
FIRST AND FOREMOST, KEEP YOUR EYES AND EARS OPEN. If you notice any nasty spills, city trash cans overflowing, graffiti, a safety issue or maintenance problem in the public realm:
• CALL THE CBD’S DISPATCH: 415-559-8492.

VOLUNTEER ON APRIL 18TH to clean/green the neighborhood. Details to be announced.

SHOP THE CASTRO for gifts, for yourself, for household items. Keep our economy vibrant!

JOIN THE CBD’S Email list. Go to www.castrocbd.org

All Castro/Upper Market CBD meetings are open to the public. Monthly board meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of the month 6:00-7:30 p.m., 501 Castro St., 2nd floor. Meeting agendas are posted on the CBD’s website 72 hours before the meeting.

EVPA recognizes that there are many geographically focused neighborhood associations in Eureka Valley. We welcome active involvement in EVPA by members of these groups. Share your groups’ news with EVPA membership in a future issue of the Eureka! by emailing Alan.Beach@evpa.org.

Getting to Know Eureka Valley: Pink Triangle Park and Memorial
By Jack Keating

Eureka Valley has so many interesting points to explore, and one of them is the Pink Triangle Park and Memorial (PTPM) at the intersection of Castro/Market/17th Streets.

In 2000, a number of neighbors “took over” what had become a blighted triangle of public space. They planted roses, cleaned up the area, and embarked on a mission to create a lasting memorial to the homosexual victims of the Nazi regime, an estimated 15,000 of which were lost in concentration camps. These oppressed people were required to wear the Nazi’s symbol of gay shame - the pink triangle.

Through a partnership of the EVPA, the Mayor’s Neighborhood Beautification Fund, and the San Francisco Department of Public Works, the PTPM became the beautiful space it is today. Robert Bruce and Susan Martin designed the sculpture in the park. The landscape design by Jason Rowe includes the lawn, path, and trees we can all enjoy year round.

PTPM, just steps from Castro, provides a beautiful place to reflect and honor the memories of gays lost to the Holocaust.

To make a gift to support PTPM, mail your tax-deductible donation payable to EVPA Foundation to: PO Box 14137, San Francisco, CA 94114

Since its dedication by Willie Brown in 2001, the park has been maintained regularly by several neighbors and EVPA members. This effort includes care of the 50+ roses, trees, plantings and lawn, as well as cleaning up garbage, graffiti and other improvements. Neighbors are always welcome to join in the maintenance of the park or simply to stop by and enjoy its beauty. Winter time is when the park rejuvenates itself for spring. Roses will be pruned, fertilized, and other annual maintenance tasks carried out.

In 2008, PTPM became a 501(c)(3) non-profit, so donations are tax deductible. If you are interested in organizing fundraising efforts or public relations for the park, please come forward! The park is currently supported by donations from patrons as well as from funds from EVPA. A long-term goal is to make the park a self-supporting entity.

The PTPM is a unique memorial in the United States and one of the largest memorials to the gay/lesbian/transgender community in the world. It is truly a place to remember that the battle for human rights is an ever-evolving struggle, and one that requires awareness, regardless of one’s gender, ethnicity or walk of life.
Minutes of January 15, 2009 Membership meeting

- The President called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. Meeting turnout was good, with 28 in attendance.
- The November 20, 2008 minutes were approved on motion and second.
- Treasurer’s report: Operating balance is $9,000+. Operating costs are $3,500, and membership dues contribute $1,300 annually.
- Neighborhood Updates
  - Castro Theatre Marquee: Plans are evolving. Propose bulb-out with green space to prevent damage to marquee.
  - The new owners of The Bar on Castro presented their new format for the bar to be called “Q.” Owners will work to minimize noise and patron impact. Willing to be a part of Castro After Dark neighborhood patrol as well as installing a limiter on their sound system.
  - AT&T boxes. Motion to support an appeal to the Board of Supervisors to oppose the installation of AT&T boxes above ground.
- The President presented EVPA’s list of priorities for 2009:
  - Block Parties: Called for volunteers to serve on a Block Party Committee. Block Parties help form lasting neighborhood bonds and create a sense of connectedness. Rob Cox of Hartford Street has agreed to serve.
  - Public Spaces: Focus on an analysis of open spaces and effective uses. Emphasized a collaborative approach. A revamp of Harvey Milk Plaza – perhaps raising the plaza to street level to make more user friendly. Closure of 17th between Castro and Hartford discussed – issue of effective use needs to be addressed. Membership was supportive of this effort and these ideas.
  - Neighborhood Safety: The CBD has suspended Patrol Specials program. Currently working to determine what various businesses and organizations are spending on patrol activities to evaluate effective resource allocation.
  - Homelessness: A lengthy discussion of homeless issues. Neighbors from Landers discussed on-going issue at 15th and Church. Motion that EVPA make homelessness a priority. Seconded and passed. It was agreed that a committee should be formed. Police tations now have permanently assigned Homeless Coordinators. Need to contact Park and Mission Stations to have a presentation. EVPA and DTNA should partner to compile the resources available for publication in EVPA/DTN news and websites.
  - Membership: Membership drive encouraging every member to attend AND bring a friend who is not a member to March 19 meeting.
- The Planning Committee presented its report, including a brief discussion of the 15th and Dolores project, the historic resource project, an update on the Planning Department’s discretionary review reform project, the possibility of having a universal planning notice, and Walgreen’s proposed expansion. They go before the Planning Commission on February 5 [Update: the Commission denied expansion].
- Announcements: There is a fundraising drive to furnish the library. Commemorative opportunities are available.
- Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9 p.m.

![Eureka! March-April 2009 Page 5](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

**Type of Membership:**
- Individual: $20.00
- Household (2 people): $30.00
- Business: $40.00

Please make check payable to EVPA and mail with this application to: PO Box 14137, San Francisco, CA 94114

**Name:** _____________________________ 2nd Name: _____________________________ (households)

**Organization/Business:** ____________________________

**Address**: (EVPA does not share your information without your express permission. See website for full privacy policy):

**Street:** __________________________ City: ___________ **St:** ___________ **Zip:** ___________

**Day Phone:** ___________________________ **Eve Phone:** ___________________________

**email:** ___________________________ 2nd email: ___________________________ (households)

- I want to be listed in the online roster when available
- I want to be listed in a print roster when available
- I want to be mailed a hard copy of the Eureka! Newsletter (Save money for EVPA-read the newsletter on-line)

**I am interested in:**
- City Planning
- Transportation
- Utilities
- Advertising in the Eureka!
- Newsletter Writing/Production
- Other ________

**My concerns for my neighborhood include:** ___________________________________________

Eureka! is a California non-profit public benefit corporation.

[Office use details]

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**YES! I want be more involved in my neighborhood by joining the EVPA! Membership is open to all persons who live, work or own property within Eureka Valley, geographically defined as the Castro and Upper Market areas from Dolores to Twin Peaks and from Duboce to 22nd Street. Dues are payable annually April 15 to April 15.**

The fastest & easiest way to join EVPA is online at [http://evpa.org/join](http://evpa.org/join)
the strip of businesses along Castro became known as Castro Village -- establishing itself as a counterpart to New York’s Greenwich Village -- and eventually just The Castro.

An area this broad and rich of course has more than one identity. Duboce Triangle, Mission Dolores, Dolores Heights, and Corbett Heights all either overlap or lie within the historic boundaries of the district. Old-timers, though, still refer to the valley and slopes of Upper Market and Castro as Eureka Valley.

Present-day Eureka Valley is a thriving multi-faceted community with many diverse neighborhoods, most notably the Castro - the Gay Capital of the world.