Hartford Street Neighborhood Association
By Rob Cox

HSNA met on August 30th to discuss block activities.

We have noticed an increase in homeless activity recently. It seems that we have people sleeping on the corners and in doorways more often than in the past couple of years. Some neighbors indeed have had problems with people using their driveways for bathrooms and other illicit activities.

We always encourage neighbors to call the SFPD non-emergency number and register the complaints by getting a CAD number. The CAD number allows tracking for SFPD and the City so they can monitor the activity and any increases in occurrences.

There has also been an increase in occurrences of trash being dumped at the corner of 17th and Hartford. Mattresses, chairs, bookshelves and that sort of thing. Please call 311 to report this when it happens and be sure to get a case number in case we need to follow up.

Assessing San Francisco
By Assessor-Recorder, Phil Ting

San Francisco is one of only 20 counties in California that reported a growth in our 2009 property assessment roll. Our 2009 assessment roll was $151.96 billion, which represents a 7.1 percent increase from last year, the largest increase statewide. The significant reductions in property values and the rise in foreclosures statewide have created dire situations for cities and counties across California. Yet, despite some areas of the city experiencing declining home values, San Francisco’s property tax base remains relatively strong, especially compared to other counties.

Our dedicated staff works hard to make sure every property is valued fairly while continuing to ensure the city generates revenue to help fund many needed city services. For the first time since the mid-1990s our office has proactively issued widespread reductions to homeowners in San Francisco, which is allowed under state law if the current market value is lower than the assessed value.

A total of 14,708 homes were reviewed by the Assessor’s office, 989 of which were based on taxpayer requests. After review a total of 9,997 homes in San Francisco received a temporary reduction in their assessed value. The neighborhoods with the most reductions were Mission Bay, South Beach, and South of Market.

In July our office sent out Notifications of Assessed Value to inform San Francisco property owners of their assessed value. If you believe your property value has declined, meaning that you have reason to believe that the assessed value is currently higher than the market value of your property, and you have market comparables to support your belief, we encourage you to visit our website and submit an informal review.

The Informal Review Process is straightforward: fill out a simple, one-page form that is available on our website (www.sfgov.org/assessor) or in our office. Please note that the deadline for requesting an informal review for
EVPA President’s Column
By Scott Wiener, EVPA President

As we wind down from the summer, it’s time to take stock of where we are as a neighborhood. A number of interesting and exciting things have been happening, including:

- We saw a successful and safe Pink Saturday run effectively by the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. We owe the Sisters a big thanks for keeping the event vibrant, interesting, and safe for the neighborhood. At our July meeting, Supervisor Bevan Dufty discussed Pink Saturday, as well as planning for Halloween, with our members. The plan for Halloween is going to be very similar to last year’s plan, which went smoothly for the neighborhood.

- The 17th Street Plaza continues to receive accolades, not just in the neighborhood but citywide. The Planning Department is now considering ways to make the plaza more attractive and comfortable. If you have any ideas about how to improve the plaza, please let me know.

- Property values are an ongoing topic of discussion in the neighborhood, given the economic realities we are facing. Assessor/Recorder Phil Ting will join us to talk about that issue as well as Proposition 13 reform relating to commercial properties.

- The development process along Market Street continues to be a bit of a wildcard. Almost ten projects – either conceptual or actual – are in various stages of pre-development. However, the economy continues to slow down and stall some of the projects. We hope that sensible development can move forward to create much-needed housing and economic vibrancy.

- The City recently enacted a mandatory composting ordinance. A lot of people have questions about it, and we will have someone at the September 17 meeting to talk to us about composting.

- As I discussed in my July column, at the September meeting we will talk about a new name (Castro/Eureka Valley Neighborhood Association) and new, more compact informal boundaries. We welcome input from you on this.

- At our November meeting, we will elect a new board and new officers. If you are interested in participating in EVPA at that level, please let me know.

I look forward to seeing you at our September 17 meeting.

Corbett Heights Neighbors - News, by Gary Weiss, President, Corbett Heights Neighborhood Association

In Corbett Heights we’ve been working with MTA for the last two years on a traffic calming plan for the 17th Street corridor. Being one of the steepest -- if not the steepest -- major arterials, it has been the scene of countless accidents and a few near-death experiences. The median island that is slated to be installed just down from Temple Street, above the Corbin Stairs, has been temporarily stalled due to budget constraints. We’re still expecting it to happen during 2010. We have been guaranteed a speed radar sign which will be installed at or near 4355 17th Street, most likely before the end of the year.

There are 9 “pocket parks” in Corbett Heights. This is both a blessing and a curse. They add much appreciated greenery to the neighborhood and are a main reason for our abundance of bird life. They are also magnets for trash, weeds and homeless. Recently we’ve been cleaning up one park at a time, planting, trimming, weeding and spreading mulch. Lots of dedicated neighbors have lent a hand and the effect is remarkable. We’ll be tackling Merritt Park, on Market and Danvers, on Saturday, September 26th - 10AM. Please come and join us.

The Miller-Joost house, at 3224 Market Street, also know as the “Pink House” is believed to be the oldest house on Twin Peaks - built in the 1860’s. It has the designation City Historic Landmark #79. Many people have wondered about the reason for its being pink. Here’s a bit of history as reported by its current owner:

The owner’s relative, Polly Mosby, lived in the house for over 50 years until her death at age 99 ½. Polly as a young girl had a real talent and passion for fashion design and the fine arts – but was directed to a more “sensible” career in education (Principal at Lincoln High for many, many years, graduate of Cal Class of 1922 in a class of very few women). In the 1940’s, Polly and her husband, Dave, traveled on vacation to Greece, where she saw many hill towns whose architecture had been painted a most radiant and warm color of pink. It wasn’t long after their return that she informed a non-compliant Mr. Mosby that the house on Market Street was to become her new favorite color. The pink you see today is evidence of her strong constitution.
We also are still having problems with the parking lot off of Castro Street. In addition to vagrants during the day, at night when the bars close down revelers use the parking lot to continue their partying. Loud car stereos and screaming and yelling are common and happen on any given night – often at 2:00 a.m. We are trying to work with CCOP (Castro Community on Patrol) and SFPD to monitor the parking lot. We are also hopeful that the bar owners are making some progress with the idea of night patrols by the auxiliary police.

The first block of Hartford is applying for Neighborhood Watch signs; we hope to get them up by the end of the year.

Neighbors continue to monitor the effects from the new plaza on 17th street. The plaza seems to be in constant daytime use, mostly by visitors to the neighborhood. Late night activity is harder to monitor. Most of us are sleeping! There have been a number of times early in the morning, 6:00 a.m. or so, that there are homeless stretched out on the sidewalk of 17th street by the plaza.

The block is planning a sidewalk party for the neighbors for October. Please watch the website for updates http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HartfordStreetNeighborhoodAssoc/

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In an environment of continuing home price depreciation, economic distress and mortgage defaults San Francisco is beginning to see signs of recovery in the residential real estate market. The median sale price of a single-family home rose 3.3 percent between May and June of 2009. Median single-family home prices have risen 28.6% between January and June 2009 according to the San Francisco Association of Realtors. Overall the real estate market for San Francisco is doing well considering the state of the economy and high unemployment.

Finally, I look forward to joining your September 17th meeting where we will discuss the real estate market in San Francisco as well as my efforts to reform our broken property tax system.

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We Want You!
Rob Cox is recruiting volunteers for the entry gate at the Castro Street Fair on Sunday, October 4th to benefit EVPA. Volunteers will be asked to donate 3 hours on the day of the fair to help collect entry donations at fair entry points. This is the largest single source of income for EVPA, helping keep membership fees low. There will be a short training session a week or so prior to the event. If you are interested please contact Rob @ 415/621.1867 or e-mail robert.cox2@comcast.net

EVPA
PO Box 14137
San Francisco, CA 94114
address service requested
www.evpa.org

Agenda
Eureka Valley Promotion Association
General Membership Meeting
September 17, 2009, 7:30 to 9 PM
Castro Community Room (above BofA)

1. Approval of the minutes
2. Officer reports
3. Committee reports
4. Assessor/Recorder Phil Ting speaking
5. Presentation on composting
6. Discussion of informal changes to our name and boundaries
7. Creation of the Nominating Committee
8. Castro Street Fair Volunteers needed
9. New business
10. Announcements & updates

Aerial view of Upper Market St at Castro
during construction of Twin Peaks Tunnel,
taken by Police Helicopter Unit, Ray Skow,
1974 Sept. 5. Photo courtesy San Francisco
Public Library.