Castro/Eureka Valley
Neighborhood Association Newsletter
EUREKA!

The neighborhood association for the Castro, Upper Market and all of Eureka Valley since 1878

Volume 138, Issue 1 January - February 2013

EVNA! Your Neighborhood Organization

Next Public Meeting

January 30th, 2013

7-8:30 PM

301 Castro Street Community Room (Above the B of A)

Just One Tree
by Isabel Wade

A healthy New Year’s resolution….

Grow lemons! That’s the idea behind JustOneTree (JOT), a program of the San Francisco-based nonprofit Urban Resource Systems. With a goal of fostering community food resilience, JOT is partnering with neighborhood associations, nonprofits and City agencies to achieve sustainability in lemon production. Lemon trees comprise a key ingredient in the diet of many cultures and can produce up to 200 pounds of fruit throughout the year. Dwarf and semi-dwarf varieties are just the right size for most San Francisco back yards and they can take some shade. Myer lemons can also be grown indoors in a sunny window, allowing everyone to participate in the sustainability effort for San Francisco.

Only 12,000 lemon trees are needed to achieve the JOT goal. According to Dr. Isabel Wade, founder of the project, the Department of Public Works estimates that there are already 2-4,000 lemon trees in city back yards: “Combined with planting lemons at a few public land sites, we can show that sustainability goals can be realized even in the second most dense city in America.” Continued on page 4

ON THE AGENDA THIS MEETING

John Rahaim, Planning Director at City and County of San Francisco Planning Department Upper Market Planning Vision

Nick Perry, Urban Designer, City Design Group Castro Street Sidewalk Widening Project

Isabel Wade, Just One Tree Lemon Tree Program

EVNA Board of Director’s Election

Castro Street to Receive a Makeover

City prepares plan for pedestrian-friendly upgrade to Castro Street

One of San Francisco’s well-known and iconic streets, Castro Street will be redesigned to help accommodate the thousands of residents and visitors who use the street daily. “We’re excited to launch this effort and design a new Castro Street with the community,” said John Rahaim, Planning Director. “As one of the busiest streets in the city, Castro Street will be redesigned to accommodate pedestrians and all modes of transportation.”

The Castro Street Design Project is a collaborative effort of the San Francisco Planning Department, Municipal Transportation Agency, Department of Public Works, and Supervisor Scott Wiener and builds on previous planning efforts lead by the Castro/Upper Market Community Benefit District and local merchants.

“Making our streets and sidewalks safer is a key part of creating a transit-first and pedestrian-friendly city,” said Supervisor Scott Wiener, who was instrumental in obtaining the funding for the project. continued on page 5
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The Café is committed to ensuring that the Castro has a vibrant and active nightlife and a peaceful neighborhood.

All who live, work and play in our neighborhood deserve a positive and healthy community.

We are proud to help set the tone for working in partnership with fellow businesses, neighborhood leaders and residents.

It’s about respect.
It’s about partnership.
It’s about fun.
One Tree from page one

More than 500 trees are registered to date. Mapping allows JOT to target specific neighborhoods for additional planting. Volunteers conduct neighborhood outreach but funding is being sought for a planting campaign. Funding is also needed to help subsidize trees

for lower income neighborhoods, One schools, community gardens and food forests on public land.

Register your lemon tree or plant one!

Visit: www.justonetree.org for registration and more information how to help.

Contact: Isabel Wade, Just One Tree  415-601-6992

Market Street Development Updates
by Gary Weiss, Planning Committee member

376 Castro (was ARCO Station, now RC Gas): The bulk of it will be 65’ high - 72’ at the corner. There will be 19 2-bedroom units and 5 1-bedroom. There will be onsite affordable housing and the project sponsor has included many streetscape improvements including installing a green area, benches and wayfinders to help our forlorn and lost tourists. In addition, they will provide an approximately 450 square foot “community room” which will have tourist information during the day, and provide office space for the Castro CBD (Community Benefits District) and space for local groups to meet in the evening. This will cost the neighborhood groups that use it $1 per year + insurance, utilities and upkeep. The Planning Dept. approved the project in September. There will need to be environmental cleanup after the gas tanks are removed. Completion is estimated to be in 2016.

2299 Market (Church Pit)@Noe & 16th: Construction is under way on this 50’ tall (5 stories) building. There will be 8 1-bedroom units, 9 2-bedroom and 1 3-bedroom. Affordable housing will be offsite. Bank of the West will be the anchor tenant, taking up 3279 square feet of space. They will lease out 3 tiny stores on the Noe Street side. The total square foot age of these stores, including the 2 restrooms (shared by all) and the hallway leading to the restrooms will be under 1500 square feet.

2278 Market between Noe and Sanchez (Tower Record site): Stalled - CVS Pharmacy was negotiating for the site but they seem to have withdrawn. This is a 10,000 square foot space with Radio Shack occupying part of it. Most of the space has been vacant for a long time.

Continued on page 9

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION.
ADVERTISE IN CASTRO/EVNA’SNEWSLETTER!
Eureka! is distributed to 3,000 addresses in Castro/Eureka Valley; generally, Sanchez to the East, Liberty/20th to the South, Eureka to the West and 16th to the North and to civic, planning and community leaders across the city.

2012 ADVERTISING RATES:

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Contact Alan.Beach@EVNA.org if you’d like to advertise.
Neighbors share some of their favorite things and places in the Castro/Eureka Valley. To submit your Fave, e-mail evna.org.

This month

**Daniel Risman-Jones** shares some of his Faves

**Veo Optics**

The workers at Veo are fabulous. They were so helpful when I needed to get repairs made for my glasses. They were really responsive and had a quick turnaround. Look forward to using them in the future.

**Blackbird**

A great hangout spot. They not only have a wonderful atmosphere but also serve up some of the most creative and tasty cocktails in the neighborhood with a constantly updated menu. For a bar in the Castro, I find their inclusive groups of patrons refreshing.

**Jeffrey’s Natural Pet Foods**

These people know their pets. Very knowledgeable and have a great selection of pet toys, foods and pet products. I also receive wonderful customer service and they remember my little pup whenever I go in.

**Castro Street from page one**

“These long-desired improvements will make the Castro even more beautiful, safe and welcoming to neighborhood residents and visitors from all over the world.”

The project focuses on the busiest part of Castro Street, the two blocks between Market and 19th Streets, which is also a major transit hub for the Castro muni metro subway station, the F-Line historic streetcar turnaround, in addition to a number of transit lines.

As part of the project, the City will look at widening sidewalks, improving intersection safety, adding street trees, landscaping, lighting, and other streetscape amenities. Funding for the planning and construction of this project will be allocated from the 2011 Road Repaving and Streets Safety Bond.

The City, along with the Castro/Upper Market Community Benefits District, Merchants of Upper Market and Castro, and the Castro/Eureka Valley Neighborhood Association held a public workshop at the Eureka Valley Recreation Center on January 23, 2012 where the city presented preliminary plans and asked for feedback from the community. City staff representatives will offer a brief update on the project and will be available to answer questions at the Castro/Eureka Valley Neighborhood Association meeting on January 30.

The second and final workshop will take place in February, and the conceptual design is scheduled to be completed in April.

For information about the Castro Street Design, visit http://castrostreetdesign.sfpplanning.org.

**EVNA Public Meetings**

The Castro/Eureka Valley Neighborhood Association holds Public Meetings on the fourth Wednesday of odd numbered months, (except Jan and Nov.)

7:00 to 8:30PM, 501 Castro Street (above BofA)

Below is the schedule for 2013. Everyone is welcome and we hope to see you at our Public Meetings

**Public Meeting Dates 2013**

Jan. 30, Mar. 27, May 22, July 24, Sep. 25, Nov. 13
The Castro’s Bright and Challenging Future
By Supervisor Scott Wiener

Few neighborhoods in our City – indeed, in our country – approach the Castro’s cultural significance. Particularly for the LGBT community – but for many others as well – this wonderful neighborhood represents so many of our community’s aspirations of equality, acceptance, and forging a life for oneself.

The Castro has seen its fortunes rise and fall over the years, from the highs of the 1970s to the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS in the 1980s to the strengthening of our community with the advent of protease inhibitors in the 1990s. Today, the Castro’s future is bright, yet challenging. The neighborhood’s fundamental strengths remain, and our challenge is to retain those strengths even as inevitable change comes to the neighborhood. Here are a few thoughts on the state of the Castro and its future:

Continued Economic Vibrancy
The Castro’s economy, like the rest of the nation, has had some rough years, but things are looking up. Many in the neighborhood are frustrated with commercial vacancies – and particularly a few long-term notable vacancies – but the numbers tell a positive economic story.

A few Sundays ago, I did perhaps the ultimate nerdy District Supervisor thing and walked the neighborhood – from Diamond to Church and Duboce to 19th – compiling a list of new businesses that have opened in the last two years and of vacancies. The result: 35 businesses have come into the neighborhood in the past two years, 33 of which were new businesses (as opposed to existing businesses changing location) and only one of which was formula retail. In addition, only 15 vacancies persist out of hundreds of ground-floor commercial spaces. Of those 15 vacancies, several likely will be filled in the coming months.

In other words, businesses want to come here, and the new businesses that are coming here are overwhelmingly local. We need to fill the remaining vacancies and ensure that the neighborhood retains its local-business flavor. If the past predicts anything, the future is positive on this front.

New Housing and the Need for Housing Options
Housing is way too expensive in the Castro. Rents are through the roof, which means that young people struggle to come here and long-time residents struggle to stay here. Nearly two thousand units of new housing are slated for the Upper Market area in the next several years. This housing will have retail on the ground floor, and the housing and retail will create significant new foot traffic and urban vibrancy, particularly between Sanchez and Octavia. This change will bring new jobs and life into that stretch of Market Street. We are working hard to ensure that the new housing is diverse and not just high-end condos. Several of the projects are rentals, and we will see quite a few new affordable
units. For example, the 55 Laguna project will add 160 affordable units, 110 of which will be for lower-income LGBT seniors. We need to add different sizes of units, including larger family units and smaller units for the many single people who live here. I’d also like to see housing for transition-age youth built in Upper Market, and I hope that Larkin Street and other youth organizations will consider the neighborhood for that type of housing.

The addition of new housing and retail also means an even greater need to expand Muni’s capacity and improve its reliability. Muni is struggling to meet current neighborhood demand. With a growing population, we must prioritize Muni’s maintenance, reliability, and capacity.

Improving Our Public Realm

While the Castro has wonderful parks at its edges, the neighborhood has remarkably little usable public space. Harvey Milk Plaza is poorly designed and doesn’t honor its namesake with a wonderful and safe public gathering space. Jane Warner Plaza is terrific but small. While the Castro is one of the most pedestrian-focused neighborhoods in the city, Castro Street’s sidewalks are embarrassingly narrow.

Here, too, the future is positive. I’ve secured funding to widen the Castro Street sidewalks from Market to 19th from the current 12 feet to 18 or 19 feet. Many of us are committed to a fundamental redesign of Harvey Milk Plaza. There’s also a strong commitment to upgrading Jane Warner Plaza. We can and will improve the Castro’s public spaces.

Embracing the Castro’s LGBT Cultural Significance

Change brings uncertainty, including for our neighborhood’s LGBT cultural identity. We need to continue the neighborhood’s strong connection to the LGBT community. The LGBT History Museum was an excellent recent addition, and I’ve been proud to support the museum in the budget process and otherwise. I’m excited about the San Francisco AIDS Foundation’s planned HIV health center (at the current Superstar Video space), which will be a larger version of Magnet combined with the Stop AIDS Project and the Stonewall Project. Castro County Club has come back from the brink and is a unique sober space for our community. The LGBT Center is a critical resource for many. LYRIC continues to serve LGBT young people, and I hope that at some point it will remain open later to provide a safe evening space for youth. LGBT nightlife in the Castro is flourishing and provides an important connection to the neighborhood for many LGBT people.

Do we have challenges as a neighborhood? Yes. Are we working to meet them? Absolutely, and our neighborhood’s future is a bright one.

Scott Wiener represents District 8, which includes the Castro, on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.
Changing the Rules for CEQA
by Judith Hoyem, Chair, Planning Committee

CEQA (see-kwa), the California Environmental Quality Act, was enacted in 1970 as a statewide policy of environmental protection, including protection for historic properties. The rules under which it is implemented are left to state and local agencies, which are required to follow certain protocols of analysis and public disclosure of environmental impacts of proposed land use projects and to mitigate them.

The need to update some of the procedures and rules of CEQA that San Francisco follows is a widely shared opinion among land use professionals, some of whom are developers, their attorneys, and organizations promoting growth; others of whom are preservationists, environmentalists, their attorneys and organizations; and others who are neutral observers, advisers and specialists.

Supervisor Scott Wiener unilaterally introduced legislation in October changing some of the procedures of CEQA for San Francisco without consultation with stakeholders, land use professionals, or members of his District 8 constituency. There was an almost immediate outcry from those who saw the changes as exclusively favoring efficiency in development over the ability of the public to appeal when the environment or historic properties seem in jeopardy. There was general consternation over the difficulty in comprehending the legislation and its vagueness in certain areas. Among the organizations that submitted penetrating analyses of the legislation were the Sierra Club, SF Architectural Heritage, and San Francisco Tomorrow. After hearing over two hours of public comment on the intricacy of the proposed changes at the Planning Commission hearing on November 29, 2012, the Commissioners, who were troubled themselves by various aspects of the legislation, unanimously requested that Supervisor Wiener delay the scheduled Board of Supervisors hearing and meet with the many well-informed members of the public to address their concerns, to listen to their suggested changes, and work with them on revising the legislation, and then bring the revised legislation back to the Commission in the new year. No timeframe was set. The Historic Preservation Commission, which met the following week, concurred with the Planning Commission. It must be noted that Supervisor Wiener is not obligated to follow the Commissioners’ suggestions but it is likely that he will do so.

Board Election

At our January Public Meeting we will accept nominations from members for EVNA’s Board of Directors for a two-year term. Nominees must have been a member of EVNA for six months and live, work or volunteer in the neighborhood. If you are interested in serving on the Board of EVNA, please contact me for more information, Alan.Beach@EVNA.org or 415.431.5152.

Current nominees

Mary Edna Harrell, returning Board Member, has enjoyed living in the Eureka Valley/Castro Neighborhood since 1986. The diversity and quality of life here are important to her. As a member of the EVNA Board she would endeavor to maintain and enhance this quality for both commercial and residential constituents.

Mark D McHale has lived and worked in San Francisco since 1990, and enjoys a successful real estate practice with Herth Real Estate. He is a member of MUMC and has dedicated many volunteer hours in service to the community. Mark is looking forward to joining the team on the EVNA Board, and is committed to making our neighborhood safe, vibrant and enjoyable for all who live and visit here.

Dan Risman Jones, returning Board Member, is excited to serve for another term on the EVNA Board. Over the past year he has been active in both the newsletter and planning committees. He has lived in the neighborhood and currently works in the neighborhood. He is also an active volunteer as a Castro City Guide Tour Leader.
2200 Market@15th (Leticia’s/Thai House/Happy Boy): This project is finally happening. It will be 55’ high and have 22 units and, of course, ground floor retail. 12 parking spaces including one car-share.

2175 Market Street (76 Station) @15th: This project is moving forward, awaiting approval from the Planning Commission. There will be 80 - 85 units (100% rental!) Onsite affordable housing. There will be 18,500 square feet at ground floor. The building will be 65’ high on the Market Street side, lower on 15th Street. Entrance will be next to Walgreen’s - parking entrance on 15th St. Final details are being worked out with neighbors and Planning.

NEW! 2198 Market @Sanchez (Christmas tree lot): Just proposed, 87 units. 7 stories. 81 feet at the corner, stepping down to 40 feet on Sanchez. 35 parking spaces, including 2 car share, 87 bicycle spaces. Will be submitted to Planning Department this month.

2001 Market @Dolores: This project - on the site of the old S&C Ford building - is moving ahead rapidly. It will be 85’ tall (8 stories) and have 82 units - half 2 bedroom, half 3 bedroom. 64 retail parking spaces, 43 residential, 2 car-share. Whole Foods will be the anchor tenant. Completion in 2013.

1960 Market@Buchanan (76 Station): Up and running - 118 units (condos), 85’ tall. 8150 square feet ground floor retail. 2014 completion.

1844 Market: 113 units, 85’ tall. 5600 square feet ground floor retail. Project well underway.

55 Laguna@Market (UC Extension): 350 units - 110 senior housing. 50 onsite affordable housing. Near approval. Some historic structures will be adapted for re-use.
**President’s Column, Alan Beach-Nelson**

Join us at Castro/EVNA’s bimonthly PUBLIC meeting on January 30th, 7-8:30 featuring presentations from:

**John Rahaim**, Planning Director at City and County of San Francisco, who will share with us the Planning Department’s vision for Upper Market given the more than 40,000 square feet of ground floor retail and 800 housing units to be created over the next few years. How do we avoid a proliferation of formula retail, and Upper Market looking like anywhere USA?

**Nick Perry**, Urban Designer, City Design Group, Castro Street Sidewalk Widening Project will update us on this important project to begin this year.

**Isabel Wade**, Just One Tree, Lemon Tree Program, will talk about this innovative and creative idea for street trees.

**EVNA Board of Director’s Election**, three candidates have been nominated. We will accept nominations from the floor. If you are interested in joining the Board, please email Alan.Beach@evna.org.

**HOT TOPICS**

**COMMUNITY MEETING ON PUBLIC SAFETY IN THE CASTRO**
- Monday, January 28, 6:00-7:00pm, Eureka Valley Recreation Center-EVRC (100 Collingwood). In response to a recent uptick in crime in our area, Supervisor Wiener, representatives from S.F.P.D. Mission, Park and Northern Stations, will participate in presentations and Q&A with all attending, to discuss this important topic of concern to all.

**CASTRO AMBASSADOR RECRUITMENT**: Are you looking for a volunteer opportunity which is fun, helps the neighborhood, gets you outside meeting people? Castro Ambassadors is recruiting for the 2013 season. Castro Ambassadors direct visitors and tourists to places of interest in the Castro. Contact Andrea Aiello, Executive Director, Castro CBD at execdirector@castrocbd.org or 415-500-1181.

**WELCOME TO THE HALL OF JUSTICE: PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION SERVICES FOR THE 18-25 YEAR OLD POPULATION**, Friday, February 22, 2013 at the Hall of Justice, 850 Bryant Street, 6th Floor Auditorium from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Hosted by San Francisco District Attorney’s Office with other agencies. As leaders in the criminal justice community, they will share the various criminal justice services and resources offered within the City government for Transitional Age Youth (18-25 year olds) entering and exiting the adult criminal justice system. To attend, RSVP to Jasmine Dawson, Violence PreventionSenior Analyst, Office of Mayor Edwin M. Lee at jasmine.dawson@sfgov.org or call 415-554-4793