Affordable Housing Bonus Program Clears Planning Commission, But Will Supervisors Pass It?
By Hoodline

The San Francisco Planning Commission voted Thursday night to affirm several amendments to the Affordable Housing Bonus Plan (AHBP), a bundle of proposed zoning changes that would give developers the ability to build taller, denser buildings in exchange for creating permanently affordable housing.

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Workshop Plots Bike Share Stations For District 8, Coming This Fall
By Paolo Cosulich-Schwartz, Outreach and Communications Manager, Bay Area Bike Share

It's been a long time coming since it was first announced in 2013, but Bay Area Bike Share (BABS) is finally expanding to the Castro, as well as many other city neighborhoods.

On January 12th, the organization held the first in a series of workshops discussing where bike share stations should be placed in each neighborhood. Held at Harvey Milk Center for the Arts, the meeting focused solely on District 8, giving community members the opportunity to share their input.

Bay Area Bike Share comes from parent company Motivate, which operates eight bike shares in the U.S., Canada, and Australia. They include CitiBike in New York/New Jersey, Divvy in Chicago, and Hubway in Boston.

In the Bay Area, the bike share pilot launched in 2013 after numerous delays, with 700 bikes systemwide. The vast majority were located in downtown and SoMa, with none east of Van Ness; a handful of others were centered around Caltrain stops in the South Bay.

Regular users can purchase an annual membership ($88), while visitors can buy one for 24 hours ($9) or three days

See Bike Share continues next page
In May 2015, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) approved the expansion of BABS to 7,000 bikes, spanning Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland, San Francisco and San Jose. The expansion will take place over a series of four phases; District 8’s bikes will be incorporated in Phase 1.

By the end of the project’s expansion in 2018, San Francisco will have 4,500 bikes across the city, funded through a public-private partnership at no cost to taxpayers. Discussions with a major sponsor are underway, and an announcement is planned in the future.

In a similar fashion to the Curb Management Workshop in November, workshop attendees were asked to give their feedback on the provided maps, using red and green stickers to indicate station locations that would be good or bad choices. Some were concerned about stations in congested areas like Duboce and Steiner or Castro and Market, while others encouraged stations at transit hubs like Church and Market.

Draft final station locations will be posted online after we review all the great input we received through the public workshops, likely within the month. All stations will also need to be vetted with local transportation agencies.

After that, we’ll be inviting people to give us feedback on those draft final locations through an online tool. From there, we’ll make any needed changes and move forward with our final station locations. Once everything is set, the bike stations should be installed sometime this fall.

The stations themselves can be placed on the street or the sidewalk, with their size varying by location. A typical station has 19 bike docks, but you can expect slightly smaller stations in residential areas, and average to slightly above-average stations on commercial corridors and at transit hubs, where demand tends to be highest.

District 8 Supervisor Scott Wiener has served on the MTC since 2011 and was a vocal supporter of BABS, whose expansion was unanimously approved by the Board of Supervisors in December. “Through my work both on the Board of Supervisors and on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, I’ve pushed to bring bike share to San Francisco, and to expand it throughout the city,” he said in a press release. “This is great news for our city, our transit system, and our residents. A robust and sustainable bike share network will allow us to reap the benefits of bike share, including reducing traffic, improving public transit, and stimulating the local economy.”

The next Bay Area Bike Share workshop, hosted by Supervisor Jane Kim and centered on SoMa, were scheduled January 20th at Gene Friend Rec Center (270 6th St.) from 6:30-7:30pm & 7:30-8:30pm. The next day, January 21st, Supervisor David Campos held the final workshop, centered on the Mission, at Mission Neighborhood Center (362 Capp St.) from 6-7pm & 8-9pm. If you couldn’t attend the workshops, you can still suggest your favorite location for a BABS station online (suggest.bayareabikeshare.com/page/about).
In November 2014, San Francisco’s voters endorsed Proposition K, which set a goal of 33% of all new housing units to be affordable. However, according to the City’s most recent Housing Balance Report, published by the San Francisco Planning Department, details the City’s “Housing Balance,” defined as the proportion of all new affordable housing units to the total number of all new housing units over a 10-year period. In the most recent (September 2015) report, The City’s average Housing Balance, for the period 2005 to 2015, was 15%. By district, the Housing Balance ranges from -189% in District 4 to +40% in District 5 (negative housing balances result from units withdrawn from protection such as rent control).

The issue of affordable housing percentage has been the focus of discussions at recent meetings of both the EVNA’s Planning and Land Use Committee (PLUC) and the Board of Directors (BOD). Specifically, in determining whether or not to support the proposed housing development at the Sullivan’s Funeral Home site, both the PLUC and the BOD focused much of the discussion on the percentage of below-market-rate (BMR) units included in the planned development. The proposal includes 12% of on-site BMR units, 3 (pre-existing) rent-controlled units and payments for off-site BMR units. Despite having a policy to support a 20% minimum for on-site BMR, and as reported at our January general membership meeting, the EVNA voted to support this project. At their February 11 meeting, the Planning Commission voted to approve this project.

EVNA’s support of this project sparked some debate both within the EVNA and from other neighborhood associations. For those who dissented from EVNA’s position, the 20% minimum was and is an important marker for determining whether or not to support development in the neighborhood. While the EVNA still supports a 20% minimum for on-site BMR, many PLUC and BOD take a long-term view in getting there. Voter approval of 2014’s Proposition K notwithstanding, the San Francisco electorate voted overwhelmingly in 2012 to reduce the requirement for on-site BMR to 12% for most projects (the trade-off for this reduction was developer funding for off-site BMR housing). EVNA’s support of the Sullivan project was driven in large...
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**City Hall Update**
*By Supervisor Scott Wiener*

**Improving Neighborhood Safety**
We have seen a continued uptick in crime in the neighborhood, and I am working closely with our neighborhood captains - Captain Sanford at Park Station and Captain Perea at Mission Station - to increase police patrols and to be more consistent in addressing the terrible and dangerous behaviors we are seeing on our streets. In addition to these immediate steps, I am advocating strongly to continue to increase the staffing in our under-staffed police department. Due to years of not funding police academy classes before I took office, the department’s staffing collapsed from 2,000 officers to under 1,700 officers, just as the city was experiencing unprecedented growth. I have joined with colleagues and with the Mayor to fund police academy classes in order to re-staff the department and thus allow for more police patrols, traffic enforcement, and so forth. Some of my colleagues are hostile to increased police staffing, and as a result, this funding is a political football each year. I anticipate that the same will hold this year. I will continue to hold the line and insist that we prioritize an adequately staffed police department. Our neighborhoods deserve strong safety measures.

**Budget Help for Long-Term HIV Survivors**

The San Francisco Chronicle recently published a powerful expose about our neighbors who survived the HIV/AIDS crisis and are still living with the disease today, too often in silence, depression, and economic hardship. I encourage everyone to read this piece, and I thank the Chronicle for taking the time to write it.

We, as a city, need to support these long-term survivors. A report I commissioned by our Budget and Legislative Analyst found that San Francisco’s population of people living with HIV/AIDS is aging. The percentage of people living with HIV/AIDS who are 50 years or older has increased by 100% since 2004. This is not surprising since people are living longer with the disease, while we are simultaneously reducing new infections. While both of these trends are signs of success, there are challenges that we must address to help this aging HIV-positive population.

One of the major challenges these residents face is that when they transition from private disability insurance to social security at the age of 65, they experience a significant drop in income. This income drop can cause people to lose their housing. With the help of our amazing advocates who are working to protect and serve those living with HIV/AIDS, I will soon be announcing a budget request to help these survivors. It is my hope that the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors will recognize that this population needs our support.

**Affordable Housing**

Our aging population are not the only ones concerned with housing. We need to do more to build both market-rate and affordable housing in the City. I recently authored legislation to help in this process. The legislation streamlines and expedites the approval process for projects where 100% of the units are affordable to low income or middle income residents. Specifically, it removes any conditional use permit requirement for these new developments, which will reduce the approval time by up to a year. Subjecting these critical projects to an unnecessary and expensive process does not help the residents of San Francisco who need these units to stay in the City. The projects will still trigger neighborhood notification, still be subject to design review, and still be subject to discretionary review before the Planning Commission if there is opposition. But, no longer will these projects have to automatically go through a lengthy and expensive process, even if there is no opposition. I’m pleased that the Board of Supervisors supported this legislation. We all want more affordable housing built in the City, and this legislation will help us get there.

Scott Wiener represents District 8, including the Castro/Upper Market neighborhood, on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.
The ambitious housing program has moved one step along the approval process. But it is still far from becoming a reality.

Instead of voting on whether to recommend the entire proposal to the Board of Supervisors, commissioners held up-or-down votes on individual aspects of the program.

Now, it’s up to the Board of Supervisors’ Land Use and Transportation Committee to decide whether to approve these proposals and send them to the full Board for a vote.

Early signs indicate that this latest effort to build more housing quickly will have a hard time getting approved.

As one of the most significant potential updates to San Francisco zoning in years, the AHBP has fueled fierce debate between housing activists, neighborhood associations, tenants groups and citizens who favor more growth and density.

Even in its amended form, opponents claim it will lead to widespread displacement and the “Manhattanization” of Baghdad by the Bay.

Today, we take a look at SF Planning’s amended proposal for creating privately-financed affordable housing, which has changed considerably since our first explainer last November.

As in previous hearings, Room 400 at City Hall was packed with opponents who decried a perceived lack of community planning and a one-size-fits-all approach to zoning many said would lead to widespread displacement and a loss of neighborhood character. Other detractors challenged the program’s inclusion of moderate-income residents, since it would have allowed a single person earning up to 140% of Average Median Income (AMI) ($99,990/year) to qualify for affordable housing.

At the start of the hearing, District 4 Supervisor Katy Tang, who introduced the AHBP ordinance with Mayor Ed Lee last September, thanked opponents for offering feedback and attending approximately 20 community meetings. “Their comments have helped us make it better,” said Tang. “We’ve worked hard to make sure this is something that reflects San Francisco values.”

### Comparing State Law to AHBP Programs

State density bonus mandates, compared to AHBP. (via SF Planning)

Affordable continues next page
What Are Density Bonuses?

“What we’re trying to do is develop a program that creates an incentive to provide 30% affordable housing,” said AHBP Program Manager Kearstin Dischinger during the hearing. Over the next 20 years, “the program is expected to produce about 5,000 new, permanently affordable housing units without a single dollar of [public money] by offering two stories of height to subsidize that housing,” she told commissioners.

“So, it’s a pretty simple goal and a pretty complicated program,” she added, noting that developers would have three different options for developing below-market apartments and condos if AHBP becomes law:

1. an existing state plan that already permits two extra stories and more units in exchange for creating 13-20% affordable on-site units;
2. the City’s plan, which would allow greater density and two more stories if builders create 30% affordable, and;
3. a new City bonus for developers who create 100% affordable buildings: three extra stories above local height limits.

“We designed this to make the 30% affordability program more attractive,” said Dischinger. “We think the outcomes from that program are better for our city.” San Francisco’s density plan offers “more autonomy” than the existing state mandate, she said, noting that Planning can add more restrictions and requirements under AHBP.

Lee and Tang proposed AHBP last year to bring the City into compliance with a 2013 lawsuit that determined local governments must allow developers to add up to 35% more units above local zoning limits if they agree to build permanently affordable housing on-site. The cost of a single housing unit in San Francisco is estimated at $650,000 and 2014’s Proposition K mandates that the City build or rehab 15,000 affordable units by 2020, so it’s easy to see why officials are eager to encourage private developers to build more housing for the 99%.

Parcels with rent-controlled housing are ineligible for AHBP. (via SF Planning)
Castro/Eureka Valley Neighborhood Association

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Neighbors’ Faves!
Neighbors share their favorite places in the ‘hood!

NEIGHBOR’S FAVES
By Mary Edna Harrell, EVNA Board Member

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Weekend brunch
A Prix Fixe dinner menu starting this month

CASTRO VILLAGE WINE CO.
4121 19th St.
A historic Castro District business founded in 1978
Features California wines exclusively
Wine bar open Tuesday through Sunday, selections change weekly

MA MA JI’S Restaurant
4416 18th St.
Owned by long-time residents of the neighborhood
Home-style Chinese food, featuring Dim Sum, dinner and takeout menus
Wide selection of wine and beer

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Report nuisance and non-urgent issues. Always ask for a CAD #.
Mission Station: 558-5400
Captain Dan Perea’s email: daniel.perea@sfgov.org

HOMELESS issues:
Community Awareness & Treatment Service (CATS) non-emergency: 734-4233

PARKING and TRAFFIC Issues:
SFMTA Parking Enforcement: 553-1200
SFMTA Parking Tickets: 701-3000

DISTRICT. 8 SUPERVISOR SCOTT WIENER: 554-6968,
Scott.Wiener@sfgov.org
TWIN PEAKS TUNNEL TRACK REPLACEMENT—PROJECT UPDATE

By Kelley McCoy, Public Relations Officer, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency

Greetings Castro Merchants and Neighbors:

I hope everyone’s new year is off to an enjoyable start! I wanted to provide an update on the Twin Peaks Tunnel Track Replacement Project, which is expected to begin after the current radio system and emergency phone system upgrades are completed.

As a refresher, the Twin Peaks Tunnel Track Replacements will take place between the West Portal and Castro stations and replace the aging tracks and infrastructure and complete seismic improvements. Additional repairs and inspections of the tunnel walls and ceilings will also be conducted. The new tracks will lift the speed restrictions that are currently in place inside the tunnel and improve safety and on-time performance.

There will be two staging areas—one on each side of the tunnel—used to store equipment and materials being used during construction. The Castro staging area is outside of the original tunnel portals on Market Street. The West Portal staging area is on Junipero Serra between Saint Francis Circle and Ocean, along the inbound K Ingleside tracks. Some noise will be audible near the tunnel openings. We are applying to this project the same noise-reducing measures from Sunset Tunnel, which is a project similar to Twin Peaks Tunnel.

This is where the project currently stands:

• The bidding process for the contractor of this project closed in October, and the contract will be awarded this month (January).
• Contractors will be given Notice to Proceed in April. Notice to Proceed is the official go-ahead from SFMTA to the contractors to begin the project.
• Anticipated start of construction is June 2016.
• There’s currently a disagreement between two of the contract bidders—should either of them chose to file a legal action, this will push the schedule out by three months.
• Our transit division continues to work on the bus shuttle service that will run in lieu of the trains when the tunnel is closed.

Construction is still planned for weekend construction. The tunnel would be closed from late Friday night and reopen early Monday morning in time for regular train service. Bus shuttles will substitute for Muni train service between Castro and West Portal. A transit service plan is still being developed and more information will be available as we get closer to construction.

Please contact kelley.mccoy@sfmta.com, 415.701.5428 if you have questions.

Membership Renewals!

As April 15th approaches, that all important day is coming! No, not taxes; it’s time to renew your membership with EVNA! Visit www.EVNA.ORG/Join to renew your membership today!
EVNA Membership Drive: We NEED you!

EVNA is only as strong as our membership. A robust membership helps fulfill our mission to improve the neighborhood and provides much-needed clout with city agencies.

Please join or renew your membership today.
http://evna.org/join

It was definitely made clear that this was going to be a big project, and that they were going to devote whatever resources were deemed necessary to make it stand out. At first it was just me alone doing reporting, but they brought in Erin Brethauer and Tim Hussin as photographers. Both of them have a very strong background and interest in documentaries, and so very quickly, they made the call that this was going to be very multimedia-focused.

Erin and Tim really got absorbed in this project right away. They figured it out pretty early on that they wanted to do a full documentary on this, and I think the paper got behind that right from the get-go.

So that was kind of the first thing that really made me think about it. Then I found that in the course of regular HIV and AIDS reporting, if I had conversations with clinicians and public health people and people with AIDS themselves, it just kept coming up more and more. And so finally, I just said, ‘We should really do something about this.’ That was two or three years ago, but we wanted to wait for the right time, when we had the staff and the resources to do it right.

The project includes your feature story, a multimedia aspect, and also a feature-length documentary. How did you guys decide to make it such a big project?

What can people who have already read your report expect from the screening?

The documentary is a really amazing companion piece to the story that I did. I’m able to dive deep and tell in a lot of detail what these guys are dealing with, what they’ve been through, what needs to be done. Erin and Tim really capture the emotion and intimacy of these stories in a way that’s limited in print.

For me, whenever I see the documentary, it’s hearing these guys speak in their own voices and tell their own stories and watching them move about their daily lives. Seeing Peter Greene sing … you can’t replicate that in a

Hoodies continues next page
You'd gotten to know Peter Greene and his story over the course of your reporting. What was it like to find out about his death as you were in the middle of telling this larger story?

It was really hard. We were basically done with the reporting, and in fact, I had seen Peter when he was in town a week before he died. He’d taken me and a friend out to dinner and we had a really wonderful dinner—there was a lot of laughing. And then he went back to Palm Springs and on Monday morning, when he went into the hospital, he was texting me from the hospital. As the day wore on, it was clear that he was very afraid and very upset to be there, and to not have his friends and the people he knew from San Francisco there with him.

We had made plans for me to call him the next day to touch base with him, and I couldn’t get through to him. So finally on Wednesday, I called the hospital and that’s when I found out that he had died, that morning. So that was pretty awful.

From a health standpoint, is there any explanation for why some of these guys are still alive, when many of their partners and friends didn’t make it?

With everything we now know about HIV and AIDS, it’s not really surprising that there would be survivors. HIV infection can take anywhere from a year to 20+ years to kill, so there are plenty of people who can live with it relatively healthily for years. They’re probably going to have some sort of inflammation impact or early aging, but they’re not going to develop AIDS over that time, necessarily.

During the peak years of the epidemic, you had people who’d probably been infected since the mid-’70s who reached the 10-year point in ’85—and 10 years is what would kill a lot of people. So you had all these people dying left and right, because they were the tip of the iceberg. There was no knowledge then that, in fact, you could live a very long time with HIV. So for someone who got infected in, say, ’84, it wouldn’t be that remarkable for them to live to the 2000s without developing AIDS.

So, it’s remarkable luck, in the sense that they were all guys that were in that category of people who lived with HIV for longer, and the main thing is that they were able to hang on long enough for the ‘drug’ cocktails to come along. It’s probably a matter of the particular strain of the virus they got, or genetics and how their body responds to HIV infection. Some people get sick and die within two years, and some people live for 20 years.

How have the men you profiled reacted to the story?

It’s been really wonderful. It’s been such a collaboration with the guys, in a way which is not necessarily typical for working with sources. I don’t think any of them were surprised at what they read, but that being said, it’s definitely been really overwhelming and really intense for a lot of these guys to see their stories out there in public.

I think some of them are probably still adjusting to that, and haven’t taken it all in. But from what I’ve gathered from them, they’re really proud of their involvement and to see the reaction that it’s getting. They’re happy to be a part of that and hoping that some change comes out of this—some attention, and maybe some policy, to help them and others like them.

Catch Last Men Standing at its Castro Theatre premiere on April 8th.

MEET THE CASTRO VILLAGE WINE CO., A NEIGHBORHOOD STAPLE SINCE 1978

By Aaron Bachmann

Just off the beaten path of 19th and Castro streets lies a little neighborhood gem that many may easily overlook.

The Castro Village Wine Company has been a neighborhood staple since 1978. Founded in the late 1970s by partners Boyd Swartz and Joe Chavez, it was originally part of a project to restore Victorian buildings in what was then termed the “gay ghetto.”

“It was really kind of a slum,” Chavez said of the wine shop’s 1904 building, which was in a dilapidated state. “Little by little, we cleaned it up.” Chavez worked to restore many of the other buildings in the Eureka Valley, and after Swartz retired, he wanted to continue working. Together the couple decided to follow a passion of theirs, and open a wine shop.

At the time, the Eureka Valley Merchant’s Association was not accepting of LGBT-owned businesses. In response, Harvey Milk founded the Castro Village Merchant’s Association, and Swartz and Chavez decided to name their shop for the new nomenclature.

The block of 19th and Castro has seen many businesses come and go over the years, Chavez told us. A travel agency, doctors’ offices, and even a coroner have called the block home. “The only establishment that was originally here was the cleaner’s. The wine shop brought people to the other establishments. It became] a one-stop shop,” remembers Chavez.

Swartz’s vision for the shop was to focus on local California wines and feature smaller artisan wineries, both of which it still does today. The emphasis on proximity and fostering community offered an elegant alternative to the other bars and restaurants the neighborhood had to offer.

Key to cultivating the store’s sense of community was Joseph Estrada, the former wine-tasting bar manager and current wine buyer and store manager. From 2004 to 2011, Estrada built a social framework in which both seasoned wine aficionados and those new to the world of wine could stop by for a glass and feel a sense of camaraderie, without fear of judgment.
part by a belief that San Francisco has an unconscionable housing shortage which drives up the price of housing. With this in mind, our vote was, in part, a vote to move forward with appropriate development. The Sullivan's project had been extensively vetted by city planners and it conforms to zoning rules, including requirements for on-site BMR.

In an effort to better understand City efforts to increase affordable housing in San Francisco, members of EVNA, along with members of the Duboce Triangle Neighborhood Association, recently joined Planning Commissioner Dennis Richards on a tour of the neighborhood to discuss the Affordable Housing Bonus Program (AHBP). This program would provide incentives for developers to build taller, denser buildings in exchange for building at least 30 percent BMR units. Since that tour, the Planning Commission voted to approve aspects of the program. Now, it’s up to the Board of Supervisors’ Land Use and Transportation Committee to decide whether to approve the proposals and send them to the full Board for a vote.

In order to better understand the multitude of issues underlying affordable housing, the EVNA is sponsoring a panel discussion titled “Affordable Housing: What’s the Right Answer?” This panel will be held at our March 23rd general membership meeting, 7pm at the Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy. EVNA BOD member, Zac Townsend will be moderating the panel which will include Tim Colen from the San Francisco Housing Action Coalition, Peter Cohen from the Council of Community Housing Organizations and Dennis Richards from the San Francisco Planning Commission.

As someone who cares about housing affordability in both our neighborhood and San Francisco, I encourage you to attend this panel discussion. EVNA will continue to consider BMR as an important parameter when we review large neighborhood developments. As such, I’m excited about this opportunity to consider various viewpoints that underlie the discussions regarding BMR housing. I look forward to seeing you on March 23rd.

**Become involved in your neighborhood!**

We are always looking to expand our Board of Directors with committed, active members of the community.

If you’d like to learn more, email President@EVNA.org.
70% Of City Off-Limits; Historic, Rent-Controlled Buildings Excluded.

Planning staff recommended that any projects that would demolish residential units or known historical resources be ineligible to receive a density bonus; a prior amendment offered by Supervisor London Breed also excluded buildings that are rent-controlled.

Since the program was announced, opponents claimed a map depicting 30,500 citywide parcels in residential and commercial corridors indicated large swaths of land will be redeveloped.

Because most of those parcels already contain housing, Planning staff recommended making them ineligible for AHBP benefits. “I think it’s fair to say that this map caused a fair amount of concern and confusion,” said staffer Paolo Ikezoe during the hearing presentation. “It unintentionally masked some very important details.”

Currently, the program identifies approximately 240 “soft sites” like parking lots and gas stations where AHBP housing might be built. The program defines soft sites as parcels with existing structures that take up less than 5% of the total zoned capacity.

Most of the 30,500 parcels in the program area aren’t eligible for AHBP. (via SF Planning)

Tighter Design Guidelines Proposed

In another set of proposed changes, Planning advised commissioners to modify AHBP’s design guidelines to “maximize light and air to the sidewalks and frontages” to “ensure that new buildings are context-sensitive.” Staff also moved to limit lot mergers to 50% of a block’s width, about 125 feet in most neighborhoods.

Dischinger said new design guidelines that related street width to building heights would improve the design review process and that the Planning Commission would issue a case report for each approved AHBP project.

Commissioner Kathrin Moore said restrictions on lot mergers were created “to avoid having the city look like Houston” and called for additional neighborhood-specific guidelines to ensure “that we’re not forgetting what the essence of San Francisco architecture is all about.” In general, AHBP design guidelines “need significantly more work and need to be more specific,” said Moore.

A Refined Project Approval Process

Several speakers opposed to the program said the AHBP project approval process would prevent residents from asking the SF Planning Commission to take a second look at approved projects. Many also asserted that because eligible projects wouldn’t require conditional use permits, passage of the density program would hobble Planning’s enforcement authority.
Here are some success stories:

- In the past three months Castro Cares outreach workers and case managers were able to get an elderly, disabled man who had been living on the street for years, was sick, and with serious mental health issues into medical services and ultimately into housing. He is currently in a stabilization room and in a month will move into a new one-bedroom apartment.
- Helped a homeless couple transition from illegally selling their artwork on the street to becoming legal street artist vendors. The couple the officers in their monthly reports now sets up a table in the designated street artist vendor sites such as the Embarcadero, UN Plaza, and Fisherman’s Wharf.
- Recently 2 people living on 16th Street and the library area agreed to go to Pier 80, the new shelter set up by the city.

Some of the work highlighted by the officers in their monthly reports includes:
- Assaults
- Shoplifting
- Aggressive street behavior
- Blocking bikeway
- Homeless encampments
- Trespassing
- Compassionate Services

In the first year of Castro Cares the added law enforcement responded to over 2,340 incidences. These are incidences that would have gone unattended to by law enforcement or would have added to the load on SFPD dispatch.
In late 2010, Swartz and Chavez were ready to retire a second time, and decided to sell the business. Even though they were inundated with offers, the pair were cautious about who they would consider. They feared the wine shop would not retain its community ambiance, or worse, close altogether.

Three loyal customers, determined not to let that happen, decided to come together and purchase the wine shop and keep it in the community. “Boyd would say, we made the right decision,” Chavez says.

In 2011, the Castro Wine Village Co. officially changed ownership, but with the same emphasis on local wines and neighborly character. The shop underwent a facelift. New hardwood floors, updated shelving, and a handmade tasting table were all added, and Estrada was promoted to store manager and wine buyer. He faced the challenge of remaining true to the wine shop’s unpretentious culture, but also keeping up with skyrocketing rents in the Castro and the ever-changing industry.

Estrada decided to keep the focus on California wine, bringing in lesser known wineries and ambitiously seeking out some of the more exclusive heavy hitters. “I really wanted to see the shop stay current, without giving into trends,” he said. Since becoming the wine buyer, Estrada has brought in renowned accounts from Arnot-Roberts Wines, Peay Vineyards (“a winery that doesn’t always sell to retail”), Matthiasson Wines, and Anthill Farms.

Estrada also leveraged his connections in the wine industry to start hosting special events at the shop. In 2012, The Castro Village Wine Co. hosted a wine tasting event with Robert Craig Winery, a pioneer of Napa Valley mountain vineyards. Cathy Corison, the 2011 Chronicle winemaker of the year, has poured her famed Cabernets at the shop, as has another winner of the same award (in 2014), Steve Matthiasson. The shop even hosted a signing event for wine critic Jon Bonné’s book The New California Wine. The wine-tasting bar offers unique weekend flights, often thematic in nature, or wines by the glass. The creative seasonal window displays draw visitors in for a glass of wine and lively conversation with the regulars.

While Castro business retail landscape has changed dramatically in recent years, The Castro Village Wine Co. remains a constant in the neighborhood. Some of the faces have changed over the years, but the communal atmosphere and focus on showcasing California wines persists.

The shop’s next wine event is Wednesday, April 13th, 2016, and will feature Jasmine Hirsch, general manager and social media marketer for Hirsch Vineyards.

‘FLAVORS OF ETHIOPIA’ FOOD TRUCK HEADED TO CASTRO & MARKET

By Aaron Bachmann

The Castro will soon be getting a taste of Ethiopian food, thanks to the arrival of Flavors of Ethiopia, an Oakland-based food truck that’ll be posting up daily in the parking lot of the RC gas station at 376 Castro St.

Owner and chef Bethlehem (Beti) Kebede founded Flavors of Ethiopia in May of last year, and is planning mobile stops in San Jose and San Francisco, in addition to service in Contra Costa and Alameda counties. With 15 years of experience in Ethiopian cuisine and catering, Kebede says she’s enthusiastic to bring her food to the Castro. She says she’s always “had a dream to open an Ethiopian restaurant in San Francisco,” but that the impetus behind her new venture is the lack of authentic Ethiopian dining options in the city. (There are currently no Ethiopian food options in the Castro.)

Kebede formerly owned Addis Ethiopian Restaurant on Telegraph Blvd., and Mimosa Ethiopian Restaurant & Cafe on Santa Clara Ave., both in Oakland. Due to family complications, she says that she was forced to sell the latter. Kebede continued her catering business for weddings, conferences, and parties, before founding Flavors of Ethiopia last year.

The food truck will offer traditional Ethiopian cuisine, featuring entrees of beef, chicken, and lamb. It’ll also have several vegetarian and vegan options available, abundant with lentils, split peas, and salad. Injera, a large sourdough flatbread will be served with most dishes, and Kebede says most of her spices are ordered directly from Ethiopia.

The Castro location will debut in the RC parking lot on April 1st; Kebede tells us that she initially saw the lease available at 376 Castro St. in the newspaper, and leased it on the spot. Hours will be Tuesday through Thursday, 2pm to 10pm, and Friday and Saturday, 2pm to 2am.
EUREKA!
Published six times a year by Castro/EVNA
2016 EVNA Public Meetings
Fourth Wednesday of odd numbered months, from 7 - 8:30PM, Harvey Milk School:
Jan. 27, Mar. 23, May 25, Jul. 27, Sep. 28, Nov. 16
2016 Board
Email the entire board: board@evna.org
President
Crispin Hollings, Collingwood St.
Crispin.Hollings@evna.org
Secretary
Scott Johnson, James Moore, 18th St.
Treasurer
Past President
Alan Beach-Nelson, Castro St.
Committee Chairs
Newsletter
Patrick Crogan, Market St.
Planning
Jack Keating (Ex-Officio), 17th St.
Quality of Life
Shelah Barr, 17th St.
James Moore, 18th St.
Directors:
Rob Cox, Hartford St.
Mary Edna Harrell, Castro St.
James Kelm, Castro Village Wine Co.
Loïc Ouchon, 16th St.
Ex-Officio:
Steve Clark Hall, Webmaster, 19th St.
Judith Hoyem, Emeritus, 17th St.

CASTRO/UPPER MARKET CBD:
IN THE FUTURE
By Scott James, CBD Board President
What’s next? The city is constantly in motion, so the Community Benefits District (CBD) will continue to be vigilant each day to make the district a safe, clean and vibrant place to live, work and visit. The vast majority of assessment fees collected for the CBD will continue to be primarily spent on sidewalk cleaning, graffiti removal, beautification and extra security measures.

In the months and years ahead the CBD will also be tackling some of the more difficult challenges in the district: the troublesome Jane Warner Plaza, the blight of retail vacancies, and homelessness. We see these problems every day, and it’s not enough to complain and be frustrated. The CBD is committed to pursuing solutions.

In recent years the CBD has been busy obtaining grants and donations to take on projects not covered by the assessment fees. Castro Cares is one example already under way, dealing with homelessness and quality of life issues on our streets.

Soon you will see a new effort to make Jane Warner Plaza a more productive space, as it was intended when created, and has not fully lived up to its potential. The CBD looked at how other public spaces, in San Francisco and elsewhere, have succeeded and will be bringing those standards to Jane Warner Plaza.

The bottom line: spaces like this need to be constantly managed or they fail. It’s time for that to happen.

Finally, the district has too many retail vacancies, twice the number found in other popular San Francisco neighborhoods. The CBD helped conduct an analysis (funded mostly by donations from local brokers and developers) to determine why and plot a course of action. The findings of The Retail Strategy Report will now move to action, with the CBD pushing for implementation.

Affordable from page 14
commercial use sizes or require commercial use in AHBP projects, if appropriate.

Dischinger recommended that relocation fees be consistent with the Uniform Relocation Act, federal legislation created after Fillmore district residents and merchants failed to receive adequate housing or compensation when urban renewal razed the neighborhood in the 1960s. Dischinger said displaced businesses could receive a capped amount, or relocation costs plus $10,000.

Average Median Income for SF, Marin and San Mateo. (via SF Planning)

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