

SOUTH OF MARKET PROJECT AREA NEWSLETTER

Volume III Issue 1
February 2002

SOMPAC Approves Redevelopment Plan Amendment

by William Carney/Sr. Project Manager & Michelle Ponce/Project Associate SFRA

Since the last South of Market Project Area Committee (PAC) newsletter in October, the Redevelopment Agency has continued to work with the PAC to revise the SOM Redevelopment Plan. The proposed Redevelopment Plan Amendment would increase the ability of the Redevelopment Agency to implement a comprehensive program to alleviate the intransient conditions of blight in the South of Market Project Area.

- At the advice of the PAC, Agency staff has revised the Plan Amendment several times over the last few months. These changes include:
 - Identifying the number of Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units that were lost in the 1989 Lorna Prieta earthquake and the number of SRO units that were present in the Project Area immediately preceding the Earthquake.
 - Limiting the allocation of blocks of rooms for specific population groups, which may be detrimental to neighborhood safety.
 - Eliminating first consideration to neighborhood-based non-profit development corporations in the sale or lease of properties acquired by the Agency.Limiting the types of property that the Agency may require to be rehabilitated, renovated or redeveloped to the following:

Properties Anywhere In The Project Area That Are:

1. Single-room occupancy hotels that do not comply with standards adopted pursuant to this Plan.
2. Unreinforced masonry buildings that have not been seismically retrofitted.
3. Uses that have led to recurrent problems of public safety and welfare.
4. A building in which it is unsafe or unhealthy for persons

to live or work as determined by the Department of Building Inspection and/or the Department of Public Health (provided that in the event of owner-occupied single unit buildings made unsafe or unhealthy as the re-sult of an earthquake occurring subsequent to this Plan Amendment, owner participation will not be required).

Properties Fronting Sixth Street That Are:

5. Vacant or significantly under utilized properties or portions thereof.
6. Surface parking lots.
7. Properties exhibiting one or more conditions of blight as defined by the Community Redevelopment Law.

On December 17, 2001, the PAC approved the Redevelopment Plan Amendment with an amendment to encourage a storefront police station. The Agency has included this language in the Plan Amendment, which is under final review by the Agency's legal staff. The Agency is also completing several supporting documents related to the Plan Amendment, which will also be reviewed by the PAC.

Agency staff will then present the Plan Amendment to the Redevelopment Commission and the Planning Commission. If the Redevelopment and Planning Commissions approve the Plan Amendment, then the Plan Amendment will be presented to the Board of Supervisors for their approval. The Plan Amendment will go into effect following its approval by the Board of Supervisors.

A Policeman's Notebook
by Lt. Mark Swendsen, Southern Station

When I was transferred to Southern Station a few months ago, I was shocked to see how bad conditions were on 6th Street. They seemed much worse than I had remembered from years ago, and indeed, when I checked the crime figures, they were much worse. With the support of Capt. Tony Parra, we've made strenuous efforts to attack crime. We've done quite a bit with people from the community who are likewise mad as hell, and aren't going to take it any-more. We've put more cops on the sidewalk-not on the street in cars, but on foot, on the sidewalk. Arrests have almost doubled. Crime, for the first time in a long time, is down. Want an example? There were eight rapes in December of 2000, and that's down to one in December of 2001. That's still one too many, but it's an enormous improvement. A lot of cops worked very hard to make that happen, and I'm proud of them.

What I said about Tony Parra is not just lip service. Most of you like what you see on the street: more cops on the beat, zero tolerance, knuckleheads going to jail. That wouldn't have happened if Tony Parra weren't supporting this initiative.

I've taken a pretty unorthodox approach to crime fighting. I've really advocated a lot of things that are "thinking outside the box." And I haven't been too quiet about the things I've been trying to do here. If you want to change a community, you have to let people know about it, so the whole community can get on the bandwagon. People who have more traditional ideas about police work would never have done things that way. But Tony has supported me. If you like what we've been doing, next time you see Tony, thank him. The next time you feel like writing the Mayor, tell him, too. If you don't like what I've been doing, if there is something I should improve, let me know.

The kind support we've received from the community is very gratifying. People don't call the police when things are going right, just when things are sour. You never hear, "The sun is shining, the birds are singing, and I feel great. Let's call the cops." When we get called to something, we know it's bad. So it's especially gratifying when we get positive feedback and support from the citizens. The West SoMa Merchants Association just gave me their MVP award; I was thrilled. Thank you!

Hardly anyone in the SOMA does not consider crime to be a fearful problem. Its evil twin, poverty, is joined with it at the hip: poverty causes crime, and crime causes poverty, because it keeps customers and investors out of the area.

The question is, how do we solve these problems? They seem overwhelming, but they aren't. We can stop crime, and we can eliminate poverty. But that's only if it's "we," not "somebody else." You have to take up your pen and write the Mayor, and help out the community crime fighters, or call me at **553-9273**. I mean it: call me. Get in-involved. Write letters. Call in the crime you see. Demand that the government focus all of its social services on this area to eliminate the problems: mental health, poverty, parole, and housing. If you get involved, you will be rewarded with a decent place to live, a good place to work, and a business that is profitable.

SOMPAC NEWSLETTER
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Sixth Street Sidewalk Improvement Update
by William Carney/Michelle Ponce

Over the last four years, the Redevelopment Agency has been working with the Department of Public Works (DPW) to develop a plan to build new sidewalks on Sixth Street between Market and Harrison streets. Through the South of Market Foundation, the Agency has established a grant and loan program with Sixth Street property owners to either abandon or reinforce their sub-sidewalk base-ments, in order to support the new sidewalks. This month DPW began construction on Phase One of Sixth Street between Harrison and Howard streets. DPW will widen some portions of the sidewalks and install new paving, historic light poles, street trees and bulb-outs. The bulb-outs will make it safer for pe-destrians to cross the street. This summer DPW is scheduled to start construc-tion on Phase Two of Sixth Street between Howard and Market streets. These public improvements will increase pedestrian safety and enhance the image of Sixth Street.

Artist in Residence by Wilma Parker

During the months of October through March SOMP AC will be hosting the works of artist Wilma Parker. Wilma Parker's artworks are available for purchase or rent. She features works in the following categories: Oil on Canvas, Oil on Canvas-Marine, Oil on Paper, Oil on Paper-Grisaille and Collage Large Works. She has been exhibited nationally and internationally, and has had over twenty-five solo shows. Her work is represented in twelve museums as well as numerous corporate collections. Ms. Parker's current show was created from salvaged material found in the vicinity of her loft; a square block bounded by Fifth and sixth, and Harrison and Folsom Streets. The artist acknowledges a debt to Kurt Schwitters who pioneered Mertzart/Schmutz Art in Berlin in the 1930's, a time and place of clash-ing emotions, turmoil not unlike to the feeling of SOMA today.

The artist offers the following from her unpublished SOMA Sunday Morning:

"It's been quite an evening. As usual I savored it from the lone vantage point," all said and done. The realities of my situation, no, the simple facts of my life, how I got where I was going and how I come to be going home alone makes me as strange as any of the unaccountable creatures along the way. Walking home, home, what a utopianism, walking down that dirty, dark deserted stretch, Filth Street, gray with fog, foggy hells of lost souls sleeping in the door-ways that is my street, and there he was. At the inter-section of Fifth and Howard, corner of the M & M bar, Chronicle and Examiner Bar, an old man with a plastic glass. A taxi pulls up and starts honking. "Get the hell out of that seat, you turkey!" Young glandu-lar machos in a big-wheeled truck, now it would be a SUV, start to run the Fifth Street light. "Put your . god-damned lights on, we can't see you!" They ignore him and turn into the intersection. Then, the old guy spies me. "Go home, it's too late for you to be out!" He crosses Fifth Street and dives into a deserted doorway to finish whatever is in his cup, the streetlights shining down on his neatly combed white hair. God bless him. I'm in limbo, walking alone the distances of the night.

Wilma Parker

SRO Hotel Visitor Policies by Antoinetta Stadlman

In the middle of December the Board of Supervisors passed a set of guidelines governing the handling of visitors to SRO hotels. The most noticeable aspect of this is that the daytime visiting hours have been standardized as being from 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM, and the fees for after-hours and overnight visitors, usually \$10.00, have been abolished.

Nonetheless, everyone should be advised that this does not mean that everyone can have all the visitors at any time they want. Realizing that late-night visitors are involved in an entirely disproportionate amount of the drug and general behavior issues in each hotel, the City's SRO Hotel Task-Force spent several months wrestling with creating an overall visitor policy that attempts to balance the interest of residents to have legitimate visitors while at the same time empowering hotel management to keep out those whose purpose in visiting the SRO hotels is to deal or use drugs, or engage in other disruptive activity.

The new policy allows hotels to limit overnight or late night visitors to eight per month, and to require residents to inform the hotel management some hours in advance of both their intent to have an overnight visitor, as well as the identity of said visitor. Hotel Management is authorized to enforce house rules, and to banish visitors involved in drug dealing, public drug use, or who continually loiter around in a hotel's public areas partying or carrying on, or whose misbehavior disturbs the quiet enjoyment that most residents expect when they rent a room in a hotel. In addition, hotels retain the right to exclude visitors on check days, and to demand that visitors sign in and leave a legitimate ID with the Management.

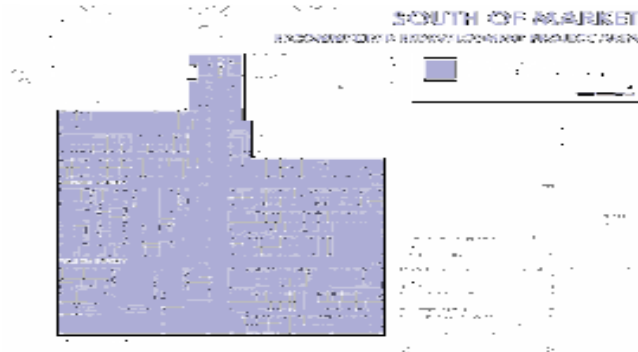
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*SOMPAC Minutes & Agendas
Available online via
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**Residential Owner/Occupant/
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David Wilbur**

**6th Street Merchant/Retail/
Vacant**

**Non-SRO Residential Tenant/
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**SRO Residential Tenant/
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MARCH 2002

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2
4 Housing 6:00 PM	5 SFRA City Hall RM 416 4:00 PM	6 Crime & Safety 6:00 PM	7 Economics 12:00 Noon	8 Human Services 12:00 Noon	9
11 Executive 8:30 AM	12 SFRA City Hall RM 416 4:00 PM	13	14	15	16
18	19 SFRA City Hall RM 416 4:00 PM	20	21	22	23
25	26 SFRA City Hall RM 416 4:00 PM				