INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Agency Commissioners

FROM: Fred Blackwell, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Media Clippings from 04.12.11 to 04.27.11

Enclosed is a collection of supportive and positive newspaper/media clippings that refer to the Redevelopment Agency or an Agency-related project or program.

(Originated by Gia Casteel-Brown, Executive Assistant)

Fred Blackwell
Executive Director

MISSION BAY / SOMA / HUNTERS POINT SHIPYARD:


Attachment 2: SFGate.com: “John King on ‘San Francisco and Its Buildings’”, April 19, 2011


Attachment 4: SFGate.com: “Mission Bay, a new neighborhood that stands alone,” April 24, 2011

Attachment 5: The Examiner/sfexaminer.com: “Proposed SoMa park would be ‘destination’ for food trucks,” April 24, 2011

Attachment 6: The Examiner/sfexaminer.com: “There is hope with city public housing,” April 13, 2011

Attachment 7: The Examiner/sfexaminer.com: “San Francisco public housing shouldn’t be left hopeless,” April 13, 2011

Attachment 8: The Examiner/sfexaminer.com: San Francisco youth leaders celebrated,” April 13, 2011


Attachment 12: SFGate.com: “As districts alter, so do their politics,” April 17, 2011

Attachment 13: SFGate.com/City Insider: “Bayview branch library goers won’t be without service,” April 25, 2011

REDEVELOPMENT:


Attachment 16: Local 21 Express: Local 21 members meet with State Senator Mark Leno

Attachment 17: Letter to Agency from public citizen receiving Agency housing
Suddenly a lot of money is riding on the success of rental housing in Mission Bay.

The San Francisco Business Times reported today that BRE bought two parcels of land near Fourth Street in the neighborhood for $41.4 million. Phase one will be 170 units with 17,000 square feet of retail while a second phase will add an additional 190 units. The price BRE paid -- $115,000 per buildable unit -- is some 35 percent higher than the $75,000 a door that Urban Housing Group and UDR paid for land there less than six months ago. Combine the three land deals and apartment builders have shelled out $76 million on Mission Bay land that is approved for about 800 apartments.

In a statement, BRE Executive Vice President Stephen Dominiak said "we are excited about developing two of the last remaining market-rate apartment parcels in the Mission Bay master plan."

"The lack of available land, strong anticipated revenue growth, limited supply, and proximity to local employers and mass transit will create an ideal environment to support BRE's future growth in the San Francisco marketplace," he said.

The first of this next wave of developments to come out of the group will likely be UDR's 315-unit project, which they are tentatively calling the (extremely original) "Mission Bay." UDR Senior Vice President of Development Mark Culwell said they are looking to start construction this spring and the project will take 22 to 24 months, finishing in the middle of 2013. Nibbi Brothers has been selected to build the project.
“We like San Francisco in general. We like urban infill and Mission Bay creates a unique opportunity to snuggle up close to the financial district. We are seeing promising signs of jobs growth for the city.”

The project will have a “Las Vegas-style” rooftop pool, 4,000 square foot fitness center, and “some of the nicer finishes in the market,” he added.

So where are all these renters going to come from? The obvious answer is from Mission Bay workers. Of course, there is Salesforce’s 2 million square foot campus, phase one of which will likely be completed in 2013. And then you have biotech companies like Bayer Healthcare Pharmaceuticals, FibroGen, Nektar Therapeutics: all are up and running in the area. Even the Gap is adding to its Mission Bay workforce. The Gap’s Old Navy group was the first major employer to commit to Mission Bay South back in 2005, leasing all of 550 Terry Francois. While the Old Navy employees justifiably despised being exiled from the buzzing Hills Plaza to the desolate backwater of Mission Bay, the Gap did not capitulate to whining. In fact, as we write this, the Gap gearing up to build out the top floor of the Terry Francois, which has never been occupied; 300 workers from San Bruno will move into the space.

Email J.K. Dineen at jkdineen@bizjournals.com
In architectural San Francisco, the new jostles the old, the tall frames the short and the best buildings share an urban sensibility more than a specific design style. That's the premise of "Cityscapes: San Francisco and Its Buildings," a survey of 50 structural gems. Drawn from John King's Cityscape columns in the Sunday Chronicle (Heyday; $14.95), this excerpt focuses on three very different examples of the treasures around us.

Lakeside medical center

Icons don't need to dominate a vista or pull out the stops; it's enough sometimes to strike a fond, familiar chord. Lakeside is a prim and manicured neighborhood in the city's distant west with a commercial center barely a block long, but it stands out by virtue of this streamlined exclamation point, a cross between a tower and a marquee that pops from a two-story medical office otherwise cloaked in colonial garb. Add that the tower marks the narrow end of a triangular block with a light rail stop across the way, and we have the architectural equivalent of a map's You Are Here marker - a simple but memorable landmark, retro and relevant all at once. Harold Stoner, 2 stories, 1941

140 maiden lane

San Francisco's had mixed luck with buildings by architectural Big Names, but an unquestioned triumph resides on narrow Maiden Lane. Not only is it the city's one structure by the biggest Big Name of all, Frank Lloyd Wright, this former V.C. Morris Gift Shop combines the intricate craft of Wright's early work with the kinetic spark of his later years. The passer-by sees a tan cliff with brickwork distinctive enough to make it intriguing rather than inert, and then the deep scoop of a portal pulls you into a ramped retail space that predates the better-known Guggenheim by a decade. Wright's design walls off the street, an urban sin. But for great architects on a roll, the rules don't apply. Frank Lloyd Wright, 2 stories, 1949

Kayak house

Infrastructure takes all forms in the twenty-first century, including such once-exotic tasks as keeping kayaks safe and dry, and this storage hut near the west end of Mission Creek is the most lyrical shed you'll ever see. Imagine a graceful tent open at both ends, the long sides arcing up and in until the ribs slide past each other, tepee-like, one side cloaked in translucent blue plastic and the other in stained wooden slats. Nestled beneath the thrumming sweep of Interstate 280 near a mundane chunk of master-planned Mission Bay, blissfully dismissive of the drear and noise, there's
no big message here save one: Whatever is worth doing is worth doing well. *MKThink, 28 feet tall, 2008*

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http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2011/04/19/DDGO1IUFLU.DTL
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Talk of the town

Gap as early adopter of Mission Bay

San Francisco Business Times - by James Gardner

Date: Thursday, April 21, 2011, 10:23am PDT

- James Gardner
- Managing editor
- Email: jgardner@bizjournals.com

Everyone knows that Mission Bay doesn’t lack brainpower. Freshly minted Ph.D.s from places like UCSF and Stanford toil away nights in labs at QB3, the Gladstone Institutes, Merck, Bayer and FibroGen.

Sometimes lost in the buzz about the innovation wave is the neighborhood’s first and largest tenant. That’s Gap Inc., which was very much ahead of the curve when it signed its 282,000-square-foot lease at 550 Terry Francois in 2000.

At the time Gap was simply responding to market pressure: The rest of the city was full with dot-coms and the apparel retailer had no where to expand. Gap employees didn’t move there until August 2005, leaving the building vacant for five years. But today, Gap is showing it has not forgotten about Mission Bay: BCCI is building out the top floor of the office midrise, preparing the never-occupied space for a Gap group moving from San Bruno. That will add another 300 workers to Mission Bay’s workforce.
Mission Bay, a new neighborhood that stands alone
Carl Nolte
Sunday, April 24, 2011

There is a new world of wonders, just south of the ballpark: Mission Creek, one of the best old and new things in the city, and Mission Bay, one of the most baffling.

A promenade has been built along the quiet shores of Mission Creek. It's more than five blocks long on each side of the water. It has been there awhile, but this spring, the promenade seems to have burst into life, like a tree sprouting foliage after the winter.

Mission Creek is a tidal estuary, part fresh water, part salt. The Ohlones used to live along its shores; a few words in their language are embedded in the sidewalk along King Street.

As San Francisco grew up, the creek was tamed - diked and forced into a long, narrow channel lined with docks. For many years it was the home port of wooden scow schooners, small sailing vessels that ran up and down the bay like freight trucks, carrying lumber, potatoes, hay for horses.

But the creek was also an open sewer; newspaper policy prohibits reporting what the sailors called it, but the first letter was "s."

The old sailors wouldn't believe what has happened. Houseboats on the south bank, apartments on the north side. Beautiful paths along both sides.

Lots of people, dogs and kids walk along the creek most every day and marvel in its beauty. They say they've seen everything from small bay sharks, dozens of seals and hundreds of birds.

Mission Creek seems to be the edge of the future of San Francisco, so I headed south, along Third Street, past acres of vacant lots, toward Mission Bay, the city's newest neighborhood.

But the future hasn't arrived yet. I wondered if I hadn't walked three blocks too far, or gone there three years too soon.

Mission Bay is a grand, sprawling place, 303 acres of boxy buildings around a new UCSF campus. The new neighborhood - especially east of Third Street - invites walking or sitting in the sun.

It has dozens and dozens of wooden park benches, lawns, broad streets. It has everything but people. It's so empty, it's spooky.
One plaza, surrounded by office buildings, had 51 chairs grouped around tables. No one was there one recent weekday afternoon. One person was there two days later at lunchtime, sitting by herself, talking on her cell phone.

There is an amazing sight at 450 South St.: a brand new, spotless, seven-story parking garage, almost totally empty. There were three cars parked on the fourth floor one day last week and none on the fifth, sixth and seventh floors. Mission Bay must be the only San Francisco neighborhood without a parking problem.

The garage must have been built with the future in mind, for there are also empty office complexes; one building, brand new and faced with brick, has walls of glass - a building you can see right through.

I headed across Third Street to the showpiece of Mission Bay: the new UCSF campus, which has come to life only in the last couple of years.

The heart of the campus, along Gene Friend Way, seems to be another open plaza, with tables and benches occupied mostly by UCSF students. On either end, like bookmarks, are two tall metal sculptures, each resembling the monolith from the movie "2001: A Space Odyssey."

On the ground floor of student residence buildings are four small takeout restaurants, and on a sunny afternoon, the plaza was about a third full, a marked contrast to the futuristic ghost town on the bay side of Third Street.

This is the new UCSF campus, a series of boxes: tan boxes, silvery boxes, white boxes, facing a tall gray wall. John King, The Chronicle's urban design critic, calls the overall effect "suburban lab modern."

The buildings have a soulless look to them. They could be anywhere - Fresno, Texas or nowhere.

Mission Bay may be San Francisco's new neighborhood, but one thing is clear: It sure doesn't feel like San Francisco.

Carl Nolte's Native Son column appears every Sunday. E-mail him at cnolte@sfchronicle.com.

http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2011/04/24/MNTOJ5HJ5.DTL
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Proposed SoMa park would be ‘destination’ for food trucks

Would cheap Korean beef tacos still smell as sweet if you didn’t have to hunt to find them?

Trendy street-food vendors could park at a triangular parking lot at 11th and Harrison streets near Costco seven days a week under a new proposal. Instead of relying on Twitter for seller updates or weekly Off the Grid fixes, the SoMa Street Food Park would be a permanent, cheap chow stop.

“So far, we’re just thinking we’ll be there for the lunch and dinner crowd,” said Carlos Muela, who is organizing the food park with his parents. But further down the line, they want to open during late-night hours and apply for a wine and beer permit, too, he said.

Muela’s family owns two tapas restaurants in the Mission: Picaro Tapas and Esperpento Tapas.

The family wants to build a restroom and seating area to “serve as a platform for community interaction,” Muela said. They have already passed out descriptions to the neighbors with a picture of 12 trucks parked around the perimeter, 16 food carts planted inside and tables congregated in the middle.

The food park would for the first time create competition for Matthew Cohen, who could be considered The City’s street-food messiah.

Cohen latched on to the trend in July and started his weekly Off the Grid event at Fort Mason, which draws more than a dozen vendors and thousands of hungry patrons every time. Since then, his operation has evolved into five additional events throughout The City and he is planning another half-dozen all over the Bay Area.

“It’s unrealistic for us to expect to be the only ones doing this forever,” Cohen said. However, he pointed out that the area proposed for the street-food park does not get much foot traffic, the vendors’ bread and butter.

“It would be a destination spot,” he said.
Muela said if all goes according to plan and his family gets the permits from the Planning, Health and Fire departments, then the food park could open as early as August.

"I already have a list of vendors who are really excited about it," he said.

I was dismayed to see the April 10 San Francisco Examiner story, “Hope on hold,” paint such a pessimistic view of Hope SF, rather than celebrating that the developers and public agency partners have successfully attracted hundreds of millions of dollars in new public and private money for rebuilding both Hunters View and Alice Griffith. Instead of a story about how San Francisco will rebuild more than 500 public housing apartments within mixed-income communities of over 2,000 homes, the reporter focuses on the funding still needed for completing work at other Hope SF sites.

In regard to Hunters View, we provided The Examiner with information on the incredible success that the developer and public agencies have had in attracting more than $100 million in public and private funding to rebuilding effort. This includes $29 million in private equity, $9.8 million from the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, $8.1 from the San Francisco Housing Authority and $40 million in Proposition 1C funds from the state.

As importantly, the reporter inaccurately claims that there will be no market-rate housing in the first three phases of the Hunters View project. As I’m sure you realize, there is currently almost no market-rate housing being built in the southeastern part of The City, so it should not be surprising that for-sale housing is not part of Phase I. However, it is everyone’s intention to include market-rate housing in the next phases, which is why sites have been set aside for this purpose.

In regard to Alice Griffith, the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard-Candlestick Point redevelopment plan provides for $100 million in private and public funding to create a mixed-income community. As we told the reporter, the governor did not propose to eliminate funding for projects like the Shipyard — a fact that would have been important to mention. Clearly, more funding will be needed for infrastructure at Sunnydale and Potrero, but the real story is how much progress has been made.

Doug Shoemaker, Director, Mayor’s Office of Housing, San Francisco

Too much beer

The sad and savage beating of Bryan Stow at Dodgers Stadium is a wake-up call to Major League Baseball. Encouraging the free-flowing consumption of alcohol before, during and after games is inviting trouble. Both the vending of beer during the games and the consumption of
It was 2007 when then-Mayor Gavin Newsom launched the ambitious Hope SF initiative, making a promise to the residents in eight of San Francisco's most-dilapidated public housing projects that help was arriving. The unlivable conditions arising from years of underfunding and deferred maintenance would be addressed with the old buildings being torn down and new mixed-economy community would be built.

But after all the grand fanfare, with impressive deals made in anticipation of city funding contributions and millions of dollars raised for design and preliminary development, the harsh reality of the national housing meltdown brought the dream crashing to a halt. Public housing residents who have been repeatedly disappointed are back in limbo, living day-to-day in homes that — in many cases — are vermin-infested, lack heat, have broken walls, ceilings or windows, and are consistently rated as dangerous and life-threatening.

In U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development inspections, a score of at least 60 out of 100 is considered passing. Scores at the eight public housing projects supposed to be upgraded by Hope SF range from 51 to 65 — and HUD found "life-threatening conditions present" at all of them.

For decades, running well into the early '90s, the rundown condition of San Francisco's public housing was a disgrace to The City. Executive managers were ousted and angry federal reports blasted the projects' inadequate upkeep. Then between 1994 and 2006, money from the federal Hope VI program successfully revitalized public housing in the Mission, North Beach, Western Addition, Hayes Valley and Bernal Heights.

But the money from Washington eventually disappeared. Newsom tried to continue the work by assembling one of his bolder programs. Hope SF was a complex package partnering with private or nonprofit developers who would make money by building market-rate condos in the area. However, with the housing market and real estate financing limping along in the Bay Area, four years after Hope SF began, only two of its sites — in Hunters Point and the Bayview — actually have the public funds to move ahead.

Funding has run dry for six other developments, including the 769-unit Sunnydale housing project, sites atop Potrero Hill and in the Western Addition. The dismal news arrived in
The City’s March report outlining San Francisco’s next decade of development: City Hall needs $127 million for infrastructure upgrades such as utilities, street paving and drainage before money becomes available to finish the public housing rebuild.

The fact remains that Hope SF made a four-year-old unfulfilled promise to San Franciscans whose needs have been shoved back to the end of the line for a disgracefully long time.

There can be no arguing about how difficult today’s municipal spending constraints are. But simply giving up and leaving Hope SF on the back burner will only worsen the problems plaguing these low-income communities. This is a time to try moving beyond the bureaucratic envelope. Some ways should be found to sweeten the developer deals so they become more attractive to private funding. It would seem that a task force of creative business people ought to be able to find some way to move Hope SF forward.
San Francisco youth leaders celebrated

What is happening on the day? It's an annual event that is celebrating local youth leaders for serving the community. We will be working on a project to revitalize and restore the Adam Rogers Park with weeding, planting and digging involved. There will also be youth performances and workshops, and experiments by local high school students.

Why are you encouraging people to take part? We are focusing on revitalizing the community garden because the Bayview-Hunters Point area has a history of environmental injustice. We are making the community aware and promoting the fact that they can eat healthy and grow their own produce.

How do people sign up? They can sign up on the day at the registration table or can do so beforehand at tinyurl.com/GYSDSF.

Source URL: http://www.sfexaminer.com/local/3-minute-interview/2011/04/san-francisco-youth-leaders-celebrated
Discussions to settle Hunters Point lawsuit falter

A judge will likely have to decide the fate of an environmental impact report on major redevelopment plans for a former U.S. Navy base at Hunters Point, after discussions between activist groups and the developer, Lennar, bore no agreement.

Both parties filed letters in San Francisco Superior Court this week telling Judge Ernest H. Goldsmith that attorneys for the two groups found no accord in a meeting on Tuesday. The activist group, People Organized to Win Employment Rights, want developers to provide more details about the health impacts of buried toxic chemicals before moving forward with the 20-year project that calls for new neighborhoods and commercial districts.

A letter from POWER attorneys said the group is willing to “allow significant portions of the project to go forward,” including development of Candlestick Point and the rebuilding of the Alice Griffith housing project, “in exchange for further evaluation and analysis,” of the potential health risks.

The former base was the site of a mysterious month-long underground chemical fire in 2000, and in 2006, initial ground grading activities on one of the parcels kicked up naturally occurring asbestos that caused headaches and nosebleeds, according to some of the nearby Bayview residents.

Lennar attorneys offered to give up the ability of a pre-cleanup “early transfer” of the property from the Navy, to The City and then to Lennar, after POWER raised concerns about whether the cleanup could properly occur under that scenario.

The case will return to court Monday, after Goldsmith heard a full day of testimony in a packed courtroom March 24. A decision is not expected until May or June, according to POWER leader Jaron Brown.

The lawsuit is the last remaining piece of litigation holding up development of the site. If Goldsmith rules that Lennar needs to do more work on the environmental report, developers would have to resubmit it. If the judge upholds the document as legitimate under the California Environmental Quality Act, the project would move forward but still need final City agency approvals.
Gov. Jerry Brown assures redevelopment funds for Hunters Point are safe

One of the concerns we pointed out in a story on Sunday about a city effort to rebuild eight of San Francisco's most decrepit public housing developments was that one of the sites, Alice Griffith, depended on $40 million in matching redevelopment funds.

Gov. Jerry Brown's plan to cut redevelopment funds, however, led to some major concerns over major projects that have been years in the making -- such as the development of the old naval shipyard at Hunters Point.

But Brown's office has come forward to assure Mayor Ed Lee and Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom that The City's plans for Bayview-Hunters Point can still count on the Redevelopment Agency for funding.

"As you know, our newest governor has decided or has a proposal out to eliminate redevelopment agencies," said Karen Finn, a manager in Brown's Department of Finance, in a statement. "But I think you've also heard [Governor Brown] say that his intention was never to undo or disrupt any significant projects that were under contract, under way. So, I'm here also to add our support of the project and acknowledge that this is exactly what the redevelopment has been used for and is a good project."

Lee said the news should put to rest any concern over redevelopment funding for Hunters Point while Newsom called it a "tremendous boost for the Bayview-Hunters Point community."

QUOTE: Gov. Brown, no fan of redevelopment, supports Hunters Point project

“This clearly affirms all of the hard work and efforts by the city, its redevelopment agency and the Bayview-Hunters Point community. This should put to rest any concerns about the use of tax increment and the tool of redevelopment funding for this project.”

-- Mayor Ed Lee, after Gov. Jerry Brown's office announced its support for the Hunter's Point redevelopment project at the State Lands Commission Wednesday.

After Brown proposed cuts to redevelopment earlier this year, some worried the project, approved in 2010, could stall.

"This project is what Redevelopment Should do... Lennar's Hunters Point Project will provide Housing, Shopping, and Live/Work Space for resident of SF."

This in no way, shape, or form like the way the City of Santa Clara is going to use their RDA money... The City of Santa Clara is giving their Redevelopment money to the 49ers/York Family, which should be illegal.

Lennar has left so many communities holding the bag. For one example in California, The Great Park. What happened with Lennar?! They took the money, broke ground, and then stopped work for many years. The contract is bad... as the language is the same. The City did not write it. Lennar wrote it!

Are the toxics really gone? Really?

What happened to the rail line? Was that taken out only to have to be paid for again at a cost of tens of millions?

SCAM! On the flip side, look at all the money a few people will make off this scheme.
As districts alter, so do their politics
Heather Knight
Sunday, April 17, 2011

Some San Francisco political stereotypes will never change. The Mission and Haight remain liberal even by local standards, whereas St. Francis Wood, Sea Cliff and parts of the Marina and Pacific Heights make up the city's most conservative pockets.

But there are some changes in the political winds. Most notably, the southeast quadrant of the city - including Bayview-Hunters Point, the Outer Mission, Visitacion Valley and the Excelsior - is voting much more conservatively than it did just a few years ago.

These are some of the findings of political consultant David Latterman, who has updated his Progressive Voter Index for the first time since 2008. Begun a decade ago, the index crunches precinct-by-precinct numbers, showing how residents vote on some of the most contentious local ballot measures.

The ban on sitting or lying on sidewalks throughout the city, the failed attempt to allow noncitizens to vote in school board elections, the failed attempt to name a sewage treatment plant after former President George W. Bush, and a variety of tax proposals were among the 20 measures from the previous six elections taken into account in the update.

In plotting the city's precincts, Latterman found the largest changes in the southeast.

While still middle-of-the-road measured against the rest of the city, those neighborhoods, including Bayview-Hunters Point, are voting much more conservatively compared with their own previous voting history.

Latterman believes the change is due to low-income communities rejecting tax hikes during the recession, even though they may have voted for them to improve city services in better economic times. More Chinese families also have bought homes in the area in recent years and they tend to vote more conservatively, he said.

The one characteristic across the city that seemed to correlate most with a political shift to the right is having children, Latterman added. Families with children voted more conservatively than those without - and the southeast is home to many families with kids.

Derrald Etheley, vice president of the local NAACP and a lifelong resident of the Bayview, said he's not surprised by the findings.

http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2011/04/17/BAJC1J02EA.DTL&type=primary
Etheley has seen many of his African American neighbors leave for the East Bay because they can no longer afford the city, and they're being replaced by Chinese and white families who are scooping up homes that are affordable by San Francisco standards, he said.

"You can't say that the majority of people here is black - that's not the case anymore. It hasn't been the case in some time, but nobody really wants to own up to it," Etheley said. "I think it is a pretty conservative section of town."

Supervisor Malia Cohen, who represents the district, said she'd sensed the conservative shift, but was glad to see it quantified.

"Chinese families are moving into District 10, and they tend to be a little bit more conservative," she said. "I'm aware of it, but I really believe that we share the same values."

By the numbers

37 million Lunches served at St. Anthony Dining Room since 1950.

$7 Amount nonresident adults will continue to pay to enter the Botanical Garden after supervisors' 6-5 vote.

$2.6 billion Amount of San Francisco municipal bonds downgraded by Fitch Ratings because of the city's dwindling reserves and reliance on short-term budget fixes.

Quote of the week

"We designed it this way, to have the answers be more substantive rather than theatrical." Mayor Ed Lee, on his first "question time" at the Board of Supervisors, which left everybody feeling as though they'd been hit by a tranquilizer dart

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http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2011/04/17/BAJC1J02EA.DTL

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Bayview branch library goers won't be without service

Patrons at the Bayview/Anna E. Waden branch library saw the facility close for demolition and reconstruction early this month, but they aren't without literary services.

A temporary operation is set up and running about a block away at 1601 Lane St., the Bayview/Hunters Point YMCA.

The large classroom has nearly 100 shelves of books and media, a reading area, a few computers and even story time on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. The small browsing collection is stocked with items deemed popular with the community, and there's a big shelf for people to pick up books they put on reserve.

The Bayview branch is the 23rd project in the Branch Library Improvement Program, the largest capital improvement campaign in the San Francisco Public Library's history.

Some form of temporary services was provided to neighbors in each of the two dozen branches brought up to building and disability-access standards. The Ortega branch is the only other one that has a mini library operating near the construction site.

"The bookmobiles are fantastic but it's still nice to have a place where people can go and spend some significant time in," said the library's spokeswoman Michelle Jeffers.

The $11.8 million Bayview branch project involves demolishing the existing 1969 library and an adjacent building, to construct a new, 9,000-square-foot facility.

The new branch will include separate adult, teen, and children's areas built around a central courtyard, as well as more computers, room for an expanded collection and many environmental green features.

"The community really spoke loudly that they wanted a new building and came out for it," Jeffers said. "So the city library is making it work."

Construction is scheduled to begin this spring and the new branch is expected to open in late 2012 or early 2013.

Here are the temporary branch library hours:

Monday and Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Patrons can go to the YMCA while they await their new facility.

More →

RECENT ENTRIES
Mayor Ed Lee opposed to shark fin soup ban
Mayor Ed Lee predicts pension success
Library, Recreation and Park and Land Use approve North Beach plans
Don't take raises (although I did)
Bayview branch library goers won't be without service
Public health department celebrates 100 years of sex
Cable car shutdown returns
Guess where most S.F. police officers and firefighters live? Hint: Not here.
Muni drivers authorize strike
Bridge slows bike speed limit plan

CATEGORIES
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Being green (85) Board of Supervisors (437)
Budget crisis (201) Campaign finances (17)
City Attorney Dennis Herrera (37) City Icons (50)
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Ranking SF (29) Rec and Parks (127)
Sanctuary city (24) See you in court (76)
SF Zoo (10)
Supes approve payroll tax break for Twitter

A 1.5 payroll tax break for new hires in the Mid-Market area, a proposal designed to keep Twitter in San Francisco, was approved in a second and final vote Tuesday by the Board of Supervisors. The vote was 8-3. Supervisors John Avalos, Ross Mirkarimi and David Campos opposed it.

Avalos, who just announced his run for mayor Monday, said people on the street were coming up to him and thanking him for opposing the tax break proposal. Avalos aid he was “afraid” that the approval “erodes people’s confidence in our business tax in general” and sets a precedent now for “other companies to come forward that want to try and get the same deal that people in central market and twitter are getting.”

Following the vote, Board of Supervisor President David Chiu, who is also running for mayor, sent out a statement: “The Board of Supervisors today strongly demonstrated that we want to bring jobs and economic activity to the Central Market and Tenderloin neighborhoods. Twitter’s commitment to stay in San Francisco shows that we can keep the key companies that are driving our innovation economy here where they belong.”

Twitter wraps up Market Square lease

San Francisco Business Times - by JK Dineen

Date: Friday, April 22, 2011, 2:26pm PDT

- JK Dineen
- Reporter
- Email: jkdineen@bizjournals.com

Twitter has finalized a 200,000-square-foot lease at Market Square, a deal that will keep the company in San Francisco for at least the next six years.

The micro-blogging company will move its headquarters from 795 Folsom St. to 1355 Market St., a 1 million-square-foot art deco former furniture showroom building that Shorenstein Properties recently bought for $110 million. Shorenstein President Glenn Shannon recently told the Business Times that the company would invest another $80 million into the property in base building improvements.

The lease was finalized three days after the San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed a payroll tax exemption for the Mid-Market and Tenderloin districts. The measure will exempt new hires in about 70 commercial buildings from the city’s 1.5 percent payroll tax. The legislation was hammered out after Twitter threatened to move to Brisbane. San Francisco is the only city in California with a payroll tax.

The lease gives Twitter room to grow to about 1,200 employees, but the agreement also gives the company the option to take another 200,000 square feet.

In a blog post, Twitter said “we are proud that Twitter will be among the first companies moving into the Central Market area and will be playing a role in its renewal with the city and with other businesses, arts organizations, and the numerous community organizations that have been doing hard work in the neighborhood for many years.”

In the blog, Twitter thanked Mayor Ed Lee, supervisors Jane Kim and David Chiu; Jennifer Matz and Amy Cohen from the city’s Office of Economic and Workforce Development; and Charlie Malet, who negotiated the deal for Shorenstein Properties. Jones Lang LaSalle represented Twitter.

Twitter said 75 percent of company employees live in San Francisco.
“San Francisco’s unique creativity and inventiveness is a part of Twitter’s DNA, and we feel like we are part of San Francisco,” stated Twitter.

The company said it hopes to move into the building in mid-2012.

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Last week, a delegation of business, labor and community leaders organized by Local 21 members met with State Senator Mark Leno (D-SF), Chair of the Senate Budget Committee, to share concerns about the possible loss of redevelopment funds.

Members of the delegation gave examples of how the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency has been a critical source of funding to build low income housing for homeless families in Hunters Point, provide health care to thousands of San Franciscans in SOMA, and create of the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts that supports the City's $8 billion cultural tourist industry.

Senator Leno committed to protecting redevelopment projects in San Francisco that are already in the pipeline, but emphasized that the state is facing a catastrophic budget situation. Leno has committed to meeting with the group again to iron out problems with implementing the legislation should it pass.

(Photo: San Francisco Redevelopment Agency Local 21 members Cathy Pickering and Pam Sims meet with State Senator Mark Leno and representatives of San Francisco businesses and nonprofits; Photo by Mark Leno's office.)

San Francisco Court Reporters Win Educational Leave Grievance

This month, San Francisco Superior Court Reporters won a remedy in Local 21's grievance regarding Educational Leave.

Through their MOU, Court Reporters receive five leave days per year that members can use for educational purposes. However, in September 2010, the Managing Court Reporters' Office issued an email stating that the Court would no longer grant Educational Leave requests due to budget issues. With this change in policy, many Court Reporters began using vacation days to attend job-related trainings.

Local 21 filed a grievance around this issue and a judge granted a remedy which includes a rescinding of the policy change and reimbursement of vacation time for Court Reporters who used vacation days for educational purposes.

http://www.ifpte21.org/express/
April 7, 2011
P.O. Box 40311
San Francisco, CA 94140

San Francisco Redevelopment Agency
One South Van Ness Ave., Fifth Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear San Francisco Redevelopment:

I do hope things are going well for all of you. I cannot imagine that there is a group of people anywhere as loving and genuine as each of you. You must have been chosen purposely for your jobs. Again thank you so much.

My family and I are all moved in our new home and are enjoying every moment of being here. We are very pleased with it. However, we have not settled in completely. I think of you often and am so thankful for the unselfish compassion each of you showed us during our many unbearable crises. Many times Kerry would call to make sure we were okay and if there were anything more that could be done for us. Every request I made you gave me an answer, or you gave consolation if nothing else could be done. I will remember each of you for your consideration and compassion. If I can ever be of any help, please let me know.

Thank you Michele for putting my mind at ease when I was totally distraught and thought the situation would never end.

I thank you again. May your days ahead or your life be filled with many, many blessings and much love.

Your truly,

Martha Cobbins
(415) 574-6555