INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Agency Commissioners

FROM: Fred Blackwell, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Media Clippings from 11/24/09 to 12/22/09

Enclosed is a collection of newspaper and 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

BAYVIEW HUNTERS POINT & SHIPYARD:


SOMA:

Attachment 3: SF Examiner: “Hugo Hotel’s art display likely to get reprieve,” November 30, 2009

GENERAL:

49ers’ new Candlestick pitch: Your name here, ours somewhere else

Sellers of fixer-uppers will no doubt sympathize with the city and 49ers’ attempt to find somebody, anybody willing to put their name on the front of Candlestick Park.

With San Francisco’s budget in shambles, voters recently gave city officials approval to generate some extra cash by selling naming rights to the windswept stadium. Voters last month overturned a previous prohibition on renaming the city-owned facility, guaranteeing that the city’s parks will get half of any money generated.

But naming rights efforts are getting off to a slow start. After all, the same fiscal catastrophe that blew a hole in the city’s budget also reduces the pool of free-spending corporations who might ride to the rescue.

The city and the 49ers are going to wait until after the holidays to map out a strategy. In the meantime, they are working on lowering expectations.

“I definitely would not want to ballpark” an estimate of how much cash a naming rights deal might produce, said Andy Dolich, 49ers’ chief operating officer. “The economic circumstances have changed significantly since the last time. I surely wouldn’t want to say what the number would be.”

San Francisco first sold the stadium naming rights to Candlestick in 1995. Networking hardware maker 3Com Corp. of Massachusetts bought the rights for $900,000 per year. That deal expired in 2002. Then in 2004 came Monster Cable Products Inc. of Brisbane, which slapped its name on the park for $1.5 million per year in a deal that expired in 2008.

It’s not just the economy that makes it unlikely the third time’s going to be a charm. The 49ers’ dalliance with Santa Clara, and proclaimed determination to vacate Candlestick as soon as humanly possible, isn’t conducive to marketing success either.

Best of luck, guys. You’re probably going to need it.

Kaiser floats

It’s hard to ponder a Kaiser Permanente Rose Parade float without conjuring the image of Chairman, CEO and health reform guru George Halvorson waving from atop a mountain made of flower petals.

OK, that’s not going to happen, but Kaiser is at it once again, working on a float for the 121st Annual
Tournament of Roses Parade, complete with an estimated 27,000 roses, plus carnations, orchids and chrysanthemums. This year’s entry, the Oakland-based health care giant’s fifth consecutive Rose Parade effort, will feature nine young Kaiser patients who are battling life-threatening diseases. They’ll be riding giant animals “on a county fair-like carousel decked with wholesome fruits and vegetables.” Its noble goal is to inspire viewers to “jump on board” for a healthier lifestyle in 2010, a central theme of Kaiser’s highly successful Thrive marketing campaign.

Kaiser’s going whole hog on its farm-themed float. It was designed by Raul R. Rodriguez, who reportedly has won more awards than any other float designer, and built by Fiesta Parade Floats, the fifth consecutive year that Kaiser has used this team. And no wonder: Its floats have won trophies in each of its four previous parades.

Still, as the parade wends it way through downtown Pasadena on Jan. 1, it’s a safe bet that many attendees will be munching on doughnuts, chips, Starbucks’ peppermint mochas and the like — symbolic of that daunting peak that Halvorson and everyone else faces in reforming the health care system.

— Contributors: Eric Young, Chris Rauber

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Longer hearing period for redevelopment plan shot down

By: Katie Worth

12/19/09 11:00 AM PST

Let’s hope Santa gets you a new pair of reading glasses, and a bunch of time off right after the New Year.

The San Francisco Planning Commission decided to extend the public comment period on the mammoth environmental review document for proposed development of the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard to Jan. 12 – the same date that The City’s Redevelopment Agency extended it to earlier this week.

However, they narrowly defeated a motion that would have extended it even further, to allow people more time to review the 4000-page document.

The 4,000-page document was released on Nov. 12 and initially, the public comment period was scheduled to end Dec. 28. This caused community groups to cry foul because they felt the document was being pushed through during the busy holiday season.

The document is being reviewed by both The City’s Redevelopment Agency and the Planning Commission – both of which held public hearings on the document this week.

On Tuesday, the Redevelopment Agency heard testimony and voted to extend the comment period by 15 days, to end on Jan. 12.

On Thursday, the Planning Commission heard hours of testimony from advocates from the southwest corner of The City, which will be transformed by the proposed development, hoped they would extend the comment period even further to provide for more time for analysis. Commissioner Christina Ologue proposed pushing the deadline back to early February, but after five hours of public testimony Thursday night, the proposal was voted down 4 to 3.

The public will have a final chance to attend a hearing on the environmental document on the expected impacts of the 702-acre redevelopment project Jan. 5.
SFUSD may turn a shade greener

But requirements of environmental plan would carry new costs

By Kamala Kelkar
Examiner Staff Writer

Teachers and administrators in the school district may be forced to shrink their carbon footprint if a new resolution is adopted by the Board of Education early next year.

The environmental master plan would impose new requirements on the San Francisco Unified School District, including turning off all lights after work hours and banning plastic water bottles in classrooms.

In addition to the requirements, the plan also would encourage new behaviors such as utilizing reusable containers and incorporating green topics into the curriculum.

SFUSD Director of Sustainability Nikolai Kaestner was hired by The City to develop the environmental master plan for the district and make its operations more efficient. He previously worked as the sustainable coordinator for student housing at Stanford University.

Kaestner said he's aware the plan also would encourage new classes or off-site meetings. School board Commissioner Jill Wynns said the suggestion that the school district purchase organic or local food for students and that environmentally conscious products are used whenever possible.

"Geographically, it would increase labor and food costs to go around to 50 suppliers because a single local farmer couldn't supply all the food," said Wynns, who added that buying in bulk is less expensive.

And with a $1.5 million deficit already facing the student nutrition budget, she said the district cannot afford to shift its focus.

"When we have millions of dollars of deficit, I won't do it if it the sustainability policy requires us to change our priorities," Wynns said.

Kaestner said he's aware the resolution, and the changes, will not come easy.

"Honestly, people are probably going to take some time to adjust," he said. "We have a long way to go."

Sustainable steps

An environmental resolution suggests the school board should make these changes:

1. Turn off all lights after school/work hours.
2. Keep windows and doors closed during cold months.
4. Eliminate non-LED decorative lighting, halogen torchieres and space heaters when possible.
5. Replace individual refrigerators with central ones when possible.
6. Turn off lights, computers, power strips and other nonessential equipment when leaving.
7. Refrain from leaving water running while washing dishes or equipment.
8. Adhere to the following paper policy:
   - Send documents electronically.
   - Fruit double-sided and reformal documents to fit fewer pages.
   - Recycle the back of old documents for presentation materials.
   - Dispose sensitive or double-sided paper in recycling bin.
9. Eliminate the purchase of water bottles, except for field trips or off-site meetings.

Source: SFUSD

Holiday Sale

20% Off All Clothing

1947 UNION STREET

415-345-8900

Hugo Hotel's art display likely to get reprise

Furniture will continue to dangle from the Hugo Hotel in SoMa until the building is demolished, under tentative San Francisco Redevelopment Agency plans.

A court recently ruled that the agency could purchase the bifurcated property at Sth and Howard streets for $4.5 million. It has been boarded up for more than a decade.

Artist Brian Goggin added furniture to the building's exterior walls in the late 1990s. The art piece is called "Deconstruction," a word that refers to the act of throwing something out a window.

On Tuesday, Redevelopment Agency commissioners will consider adopting an agreement with Goggin, which would allow the furniture to remain in place until the agency is ready to demolish the building.

Regency's permit may alter The City's Entertainment Commission is looking into the permits for the Regency Ballroom, two weeks after a shooting outside an event there injured 12 people.

Entertainment commissioners, police, owners and the promoters of the Nov. 14 KEME House of Soul party have already met privately to discuss the shooting, but a hearing Tuesday could lead to some changes with the Regency's entertainment permit.

Officials have been encouraging the owners to install surveillance cameras outside the property. Police have yet to announce an arrest in the case.

Bike program a step closer

In December, the Recreation and Park Department will consider choosing one of three bike concierge managers to expand a rental program in The City's parks.

Right now, the amenity is only at the Marina Green and at Stow Lake in Golden Gate Park. On top of expanding the program, the concessionaire also has been asked to consider a bike-sharing program in Golden Gate Park.

Rec and Park will create a panel next month to consider three management proposals.
Public backlash concerning Obamacare grows

Two dozen Democrats from Republican-leaning districts who voted for the House version of President Barack Obama's increasingly unpopular health care reform bill are beginning to feel a growing public backlash.

Reversethetwo.org already has raised $123,105 that will be dedicated exclusively to defeating all 24, including Rep. Gerry Connolly, D-Va., in 2010 if they don't reject the final conference committee version of the bill. They "voted to take away your health care and put it in the hands of federal bureaucrats," the Web site says. "Democrats made a choice. Next fall, voters will make a choice."

They're not the only ones. Twenty-nine other House Democrats who voted for the bill come from districts thatSen. John McCain carried, making them particularly vulnerable to an angry electorate that never bought into the "hope and change" hype in the first place.

Democratic senators who are up for re-election next year in nine states face the same dilemma. As support erodes for Obamacare's massive tax increases and deep Medicare cuts, they must also consider the personal political cost. Only 38 percent of the public supports their health care plan, the lowest level of public support in more than two years. As more details of the 2,704-page behemoth — which most members of Congress seem to have not read — continue to trickle out, the more the poll numbers drop. It's not hard to figure out why. Obamacare was supposed to lower costs, extend coverage and improve Americans' health care options. It does none of that. Despite accounting gimmicks, Obamacare will cost $4.9 trillion in the next 20 years. This enormous sum will suck the wind out of an already-struggling economy. The plan includes higher premiums for younger workers, fines for those who refuse to purchase coverage, lower Medicare payments to doctors and hospitals, and job-killing taxes on employers. ObamaCare also will force an estimated 5 million workers to lose their employer-provided coverage.

Federal taxpayers will be forced to pay for elective abortions, even though only 13 percent favor such coverage. As far as improving health care options is concerned, the administration wants to cut down on mammograms and slash Medicare Advantage for seniors to save money.

After all this spending and upheaval, 24 million Americans will remain uninsured in 2010. Every Democrat who ignores the public will and votes for this higher-cost, lower-care monstrosity will be held accountable.

Voters back home won't let them forget it.

FROM READERS

Blighted mid-Market needs serious repair

Will mid-Market Street ever rise above exploitative strip shows, vacuum storefronts and predatory check cashing places? The Redevelopment Plan, which took 12 years to develop, would have dedicated arts funding for the area, strongly encouraged building owners to improve their property and maintained a hefty portion of affordable housing.

Any new housing developments were limited to rental only. But that was not enough. Prop. D's state-of-the-art billboards could have turned around the definition of the neighborhood. Critics screamed blight. The irony was stunning.

Next year a new supervisor will be elected in District 6. I challenge candidates to fight the status quo, make mid-Market Street a priority and bring us a sustainable plan to rehabilitate the heart of The City.

Lynn Valente
San Francisco

State upgrade essential

An upgrade is needed for the state's computer systems. The systems could not be older; it would be better to do maintenance and replace them now. Due to the antiquated systems, state officials have been forced to spend more hours entering data manually, which may cause trouble. The slow systems cause many projects to be delayed; it's embarrassing if California isn't up to date now, who can?

Anita Rossmannoeffel
San Francisco

Proof Santa Claus exists

I am glad the U.S. Postal Service has come to its senses and found a way for the small town of North Pole, Alaska, to process children's letters to Santa Claus, Virginia, there really is a Santa Claus after all.

Kenneth L. Zimmermann
Huntington Beach

No justice in BART Trial

There have been outbursts of joy as the judge moved the "BART murder" to Los Angeles — but for what seems to be the wrong reasons. It has been decided that the former BART police officer would not be able to gain justice within the Alameda County courts. Will true justice be served by moving a trial to an area where it is deemed more demographically favorable to one of the parties involved?

William J. Cohany
San Francisco

Subway facts misleading

A couple of corrections are in order for the Nov. 13 Examiner story about the Central Subway project. The Municipal Transportation Agency contends that "when fully completed — the $1.58 billion project, projected to be up and running by 2018, could carry as many as 100,000 daily passengers."

But the 100,000 daily passengers would include the passengers riding the already completed T Third line. The number of new riders attracted by the $1.58 billion subway is less than 20,000 a day, according to the environmental impact report. And even this much-smaller number is not expected to materialize before 2030, long after the project is fully completed.

Gerald Caulfield
Oakland

SOUND BITES

"You need the material [out] from Iran to defuse the crisis and open the space for negotiations."

— IAEC chief Mohamed ElBaradei. His firmest rejection to date of Iranian attempts to modify a proposal that would involve shipping close to 70 percent of Iran's uranium out of the country to be processed into fuel rods.

TO ADD YOUR VOICE

We give preference to letters containing fewer than 150 words. Please include name, phone number and city of residence.

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