

2008: Jan. 8, Feb 5, Mar. 4, Apr 1, May 6, June 3
(annual mtg), Sept 2, Oct. 7, Nov. 11, Dec. 2

at **West Portal Playground Clubhouse**
139 Lenox (above the MUNI Tunnel)

December 4th meeting: 7:30 pm

- Report of the President
- District 7 Sean Elsbernd will comment on Current Neighborhood Issues and answer questions.
- Guest Speaker: Dan Weaver will report on findings of the SF Utilities Undergrounding Task Force

Arden Wood continued

the towers.

NOA has been vocal in their opposition to the tower plan since it was presented in early 2007, as they do not accept it as a viable option; wanting the historically quiet, green and low density single family home area to remain so. To date, Republic Urban has not revised their plans despite their claim to be open to community input. The members of NOA are frustrated at the lack of detail in the developers' plans. Mr. Mendelsohn has stated that if the towers are not built, and low-rise buildings in keeping with current zoning restrictions are required, the green space will be cut down and site maxed out with condominium units.

At a neighborhood meeting on September 24, 2007, Mr. Mendelsohn stated he would be filing plans in a matter of days for Environmental Assessment. Since that time, Mendelsohn has stated that plans will not be filed for approximately 90 days, stating that they hope to incorporate community concerns.

During the question and answer period, concern about the additional traffic flowing onto 19th Avenue was raised as a critical issue. One neighbor also questioned if the State would permit access from the site onto 19th Ave (State Highway 1) since the State prohibited such access from the housing project built on the Shriner Hospital site. An alternative to developing this site for housing was also raised which

was that the land be purchased by the City for open space. San Francisco voters renewed the open space fund in 2000 and are still contributing to the fund in a percentage of their property taxes. Both Supervisor Sean Elsbernd and Supervisor Carmen Chu indicated

Arden Wood continued

that the City would not be in a position to purchase the property.

NOA considers the meeting a success, in that many of nearly 250 people attending had heard little to nothing of the development and are now more aware of happenings on the site.

Eric Castongia



NEW **on the** **AVENUE**

Christmas has arrived on the Avenue

The tradition of the stars that began last

year is continuing as they are appearing in store windows again. Trees on the Avenue are wrapped in tiny lights. New for this year is a 10 foot tree to be placed in the courtyard between *Book Shop West Portal* and *Washington Mutual Bank* where entertainment events throughout the holiday season will be scheduled.

Santa is coming Santa, will be collecting unwrapped toys in barrels that are already in place in many locations. On December 15, he will appear in person between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. in front of the *Village Grill* and *Just Because* to collect toys and also for photos with the little ones. Instead of a sled, however, he will arrive in a fire truck.

Preview Shopping There will be preview shopping evenings on Thursday and Friday, December 15th and 16th and stores will stay open until 8:00 p.m.

What's New on the Avenue Actually there are no new businesses opening up. Carrie Lee, OD, who is now at 340 West Portal Avenue will be opening

up her own practice Eyedentity Vision at 2786 Diamond Street in Glen Park.

Skip the Mall, walk the Avenue – Happy Holidays from West Portal Avenue

SFGH's 22 psychiatric beds saved by BOS

On November 7, the Board of Supervisor's Budget and Finance Committee recommended extending funding for 22 psychiatric beds at SF General Hospital for six months until the end of the 2007-2008 budget period. SFGH nurses, doctors, patients, and advocates for the mentally ill testified at the November 7 hearing of the danger of closing these beds on January 1, 2008. Later, the full Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to provide funding for the balance of the 2007-2008 year.

In the 2007-2008 budget, the BOS provided funding for the 22 beds for six months only, until January 1, 2008 because a non-profit group was negotiating to provide alternative mental health care after January 1, 2008, but failed to provide a program satisfactory to the BOS.

The alternate program, considered by the Department of Public Health, would have substituted the locked 22 bed psychiatric facility with an unlocked 14 bed Acute Diversion Unit (ADU) linked with a community urgent care program. Patients would be allowed to leave after 16 hours in the ADU.

Fred Martin, long time West Portal resident and GWPNA Steering Committee member, wrote a piece for the SF Chronicle on November 1, comparing the proposed alternative mental health care plan to the closing of the California mental hospitals in the '60's.

On November 6, Pam Fischer and Dale Milfay of National Association on Mental Illness (NAMI) asked and received support from the GWPNA Steering Committee to request that funding be provided for the 22 beds for the full budget year.

Facing a \$230,000,000 budget deficit in the 2008-2009 budget, the supervisors now have tough decisions to make about how funds are allocated. Hopefully, care of the mentally ill will not suffer by the necessary budget cuts.

Graffiti Watch

Graffiti Watch is a citywide volunteer program to prevent and remove graffiti from public property, such as, utility and light poles, mailboxes, traffic signal boxes and other street furniture that are favorite targets of taggers.

Graffiti Watch continued

The Department of Public Works working with the SF Police Department, in partnership with community organizations, has introduced a program for residents and merchants to make a two-year commitment to paint out graffiti in a four block heavily tagged area. It is important to remove the graffiti within 24 hours to discourage taggers.

Call 28-CLEAN (282-5326) or e-mail 28clean@sfdpw.org to get an application for Graffiti Watch or to report graffiti sites.

Bud & June Wilson organize K-9 dogs in the Mayor's Veterans' Day Parade

Bud and June Wilson, long time West Portal residents and GWPNA members, have been determined for many years that working dogs are honored for their military and police duties. This year they organized a contingent of six dogs and their handlers to march in the November 11 Mayor's Veterans' Day Parade.

This year the unit was led by Capt. Greg Corales, of the San Francisco Police Department, who rode in a WWII army jeep provided by Doctor Dick Agee of Hillsborough. Corales' dog Recon, also rode in the jeep.

Working dogs from the San Francisco Police Department, Beale Air Force Base, the Coast Guard, and Travis Air Force Base marched proudly with their human handlers.

San Francisco Police Officers Alex Brunner and Davin Cole were respectively accompanied by Crocker and Rocko

Two dogs from Beale Air Force Base were accompanied by Staff Sergeant Michelle Gordon, who has just returned from a tour of duty in Iraq, and Staff Sergeant Curtis Lewis. The two dogs are both named Jimmy and look so much alike that they were tattooed to tell them apart.

The Coast Guard was represented by Hawk who marched in the 2006 parade. His handler was Sandor Csitar.

Bud Wilson is President of the City and County of San Francisco Veterans Affairs Commission and past president of GWPNA. June is a long-time animal rights advocate.

GWPNA Steering Committee Members: Marilyn Amini, Joe Basuino, Sheila Bost, Eric Castongia, Tim Colen, Orla Fahy, Eileen Fanelli, Emeric Kalman, Carolyn Klemeyer, Ken Kruszka, Fred Martin, Helen Naish, Chris Nunes, Terry Roach, Howard Strassner, Steve Suacci, Karen Tarantola, Bud Wilson

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