

139 Lenox Way (above of MUNI Tunnel)

Arden Wood Plan Changes (continued)

Two existing buildings are to stay, building 701 which is currently staff housing and the director's house, and are to be remodeled as part of the development. Robert Mendelsohn, President of Republic Urban Properties San Francisco Branch, states that although a Planned Unit Development will still be needed to build the project, it will be built to existing zoning guidelines, with the height staying within the 40 foot height limit.

Some of the project specifics:

- ❑ 60-75% of the existing trees are to remain
- ❑ Green space will be maintained at the perimeter of the site
- ❑ Three walking paths were highlighted for access from the development to the West Portal transit hub, one of which was shown behind the Arden Wood Christian Science Facility
- ❑ The auto entry and exit to the development will be on 19th Ave. Cal Trans has not yet given approval for the access
- ❑ The 18th Ave. and Wawona gate will be used only for emergency vehicles
- ❑ The revised scheme plans for 141 units-down from 162
- ❑ LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certification-a rating system by the U.S. Green Building Council to promote environmentally sensitive construction (renewable resources), sustainable site development (such as collecting rain water for landscape irrigation) and energy efficient construction. Republic Urban is shooting for a 'Gold' Certification
- ❑ The developer plans on filing plans for their environmental evaluation application (pre-Environmental Impact Report) within the next month
- ❑ The developer may opt to pay a fee in lieu of providing for the city's inclusionary (or workforce) housing requirement

The neighbors I spoke to about the revised design were optimistic, but still had some concerns which are:

- ❑ Sufficient on-site parking. The anticipation is that many new residents will have multiple cars and not enough parking.
- ❑ How will site traffic go South on 19th Ave? In a previous scheme, the site's auto entry/exit at the 19th and Wawona traffic light, allowed a left turn from the site to go South and end dangerous U-Turns in front of St. Cecelia's.

To create an acceptable project, the developer, neighbors, Cal Trans and the City of San Francisco will need to remain involved and committed to resolving the issues special to this area. With neighbor involvement, the proposed project has gone far since its inception. The developer has been asked to present to the greater neighborhood in the near future. Stay informed, involved and vocal.

By Eric Castongia

School of the Arts, a Hidden Jewel in GWPNA's Backyard

School of the Arts (SOTA), San Francisco's acclaimed public arts high school, annual gala musical theater production, "Beauty and the Beast," is now in progress with performances until March 22 – right in West Portal's backyard.

SOTA is a specialty school offering young artists an intensive education in their fields of art – while also providing high-quality student entertainment that's too good for the general public to miss.

SOTA, with a diverse student population of about 625 young artists, is located at the former McAteer High School site, at Portola and O'Shaughnessy. Long-term plans are to move to a downtown site near the symphony, ballet, opera and museums. But that requires a capital campaign, which is currently being planned, and SOTA will be at its current location for several years.

The high-achieving school admits students by audition or judging in their specific artistic discipline. SOTA was conceived in the 1980s as a regional arts school and admits a percentage of students who live outside the city, as well as from San Francisco public and private schools. SOTA is a prestigious destination school even in high-income Bay Area suburbs for students who are able to pass the auditions.

SOTA offers top-quality instruction in instrumental music, vocal, visual arts, theatre arts, creative writing, dance, theatre tech, piano and media

School of the Arts (continued)

arts. Students study academic subjects in the morning and focus on their arts discipline in the afternoon.

Performances are held at the school, most on the main stage at 555 Portola (which has free parking!). Some performances may sell out in advance. For information about tickets, and future programs, visit www.sfsota-ptsa.org or call 415/695-5720.

West Portal neighbors are especially invited to check out these high-quality student productions.

By Caroline Grannan



NEWS on Tavaval

Skip the Mall,
walk the Avenue

GWPNA members have devoted time and energy to retain the charm of West Portal Avenue by encouraging and aiding neighborhood-serving independent retail stores. But West Portal Avenue is not the only commercial area serving West Portal.

There are unique retail outlets on Taraval Street and a tiny cluster of stores and restaurants on Dewey Boulevard uphill from Forest Hill Station.

At 450 Taraval Street, Dragon Printing is a traditional Mom and Pop store but in an untraditional line of business. Dedicated to holding 8 1/2 x 11 Xerox copies at 5 cents, for twenty-one years Dragon and May Wong have been serving the printing and copy needs of neighborhood organizations, San Francisco State University, San Francisco City College and West Portal folks who just want to copy bills, birth certificates or whatever.

It hasn't been easy according to May Wong, because people are using computers to communicate and the Wongs have seen a decrease in their Xerox business. But the Wongs are flexible folks. At 3:30 pm, a bunch of Hoover Middle School kids squeeze into the aisle between four copy machines in the front of the store, and Dragon Printing's customers know to wait until 4:00 to get any business done on school days. In addition to serving the after-school cravings, the Wongs rent post office boxes, send fax messages, and even sell sundries like t-shirts and backpacks.

May and Dragon were born and raised in Canton, but they didn't meet until they both fled China in the wake of the Cultural Revolution. They met when both were working in a San Francisco restaurant. They fell in love and married, and when their three children - two boys and a girl - were born, they continued to work in the restaurant because they were able to arrange their schedules to care for the children.

When their family didn't need constant care, they decided to buy into the American Dream and establish a printing business on Taraval Street.

Now, when Dragon Wong is asked when the price of an 8 1/2 x 11 is going up, he adamantly says "never". He and May have it figured out and that's the way it is

Good News/Bad News

At the March 4 GWPNA meeting, Supervisor Sean Elsbernd announced that soon Portola Drive will be paved from Twin Peaks Boulevard to St. Francis Circle. The good news is that a smooth asphalt cover will replace the patchwork of various greys and the obstacle course of potholes. The bad news: traffic will be a nightmare for about a month.

Eddie Huang's Mango-Avocado Salsa

At the GWPNA Christmas party, Eddie Huang's salsa was such a hit that people didn't ask for the recipe, they *demand*ed it. So here it is:

- 1 tomato, diced
- 1/4 red onion, diced
- 1 mango, peeled and diced
- 1 avocado, diced
- 1 green chili pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 Tbsp cilantro, loosely chopped (see Note below)
- The juice and zest of a 1/2 lime

Note: Combine ingredients (except salt) in a bowl and mix. Add avocado last to prevent browning. Add salt, sugar (if mango isn't very sweet) and cilantro to taste. Don't choose very ripe avocados because it makes the salsa messy if the avocados are too soft.
Serving portion: 2 (as a side dish) 6 (as a chip dip)

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Families working to improve their neighborhood

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