



CSFN Newsletter Volume XLIV No. 8. August 2017

## **Residential Expansion Threshold -- Thumbs Up or Down?**

In the last few years, the San Francisco Planning Department has conducted public hearings on proposed legislation which purports to increase affordable housing in our city. CSFN has commented extensively on all these proposals, including **the Affordable Housing Density Program, Accessory Dwelling Units, HomeSF, and the Urban Design Guidelines.**

Our August program will address another housing-related proposal -- the **Residential Expansion Threshold (RET)** which is intended to replace the current **Tantamount to Demolition (TTD)**. According to the Planning website, one purpose of **RET** is to “*address the ongoing shortage of affordable housing as outlined in Section 317 of the Planning Code*” and to correct the current practice of project sponsors submitting applications that fall “*just short of the threshold, resulting in inferior design and/or significantly expanded projects.*”

The RET in these smaller residential project areas will, among other issues, have no guarantee of increasing units while increasing the building square footage on a lot. Older residential areas with existing smaller buildings could see “monster homes”.

Panel members include:

**Elizabeth Watty and Audrey Butkus of the SF Planning Department**  
**Ozzie Rohm of the Noe Neighborhood Council**  
**Joseph Smooke of the SF Tenants Union**

**Moderated by Rose Hillson, CSFN Land Use Chair.**

*Submitted by Marlayne Morgan, CHNA*

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**LAND USE COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON  
RESIDENTIAL EXPANSION THRESHOLD (RET)/TANTAMOUNT TO DEMOLITION  
(TTD)**

To Whom It May Concern:

WHEREAS, the San Francisco Planning Department (the "Department") is proposing a program entitled "Residential Expansion Threshold" (RET), all as more fully described in the Department Memo dated June 1, 2017, to the Planning Commission, whereby residential buildings on lots zoned RH-1(D), RH-1, RH-2 or RH-3, could be substantially expanded in terms of volume even though, as many have been built prior to the current Planning Code, they are not code compliant and already have volumes which may far exceed current code, and are thus below code requirements for open space; and

WHEREAS, RET would establish volume increases by applying a "Floor Area Ratio" (FAR), which is the ratio of the building sleeves square footage to the land square footage, and which, according to the Department, are either below or just slightly above current ratios, but has not provided any data to support those claims; and

WHEREAS, in addition to new FARs, RET would permit a further volume bonus of a) a code-compliant Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) and b) a 10% possible additional bonus; and

WHEREAS, so long as a proposed volume increase does not exceed an articulated ceiling ("trigger"), and otherwise will be Planning Code compliant (or were built prior to any existing Code mandates), a RET bonus would be "of-right" and not require a review by the Planning Commission for the volume increase; if a trigger were exceeded, the review by the Planning Commission would be a very subjective review of some very general design guidelines; and

WHEREAS, according to the Department, the RET program would replace the need to closely monitor whether RET-qualified projects were deemed a "demolition" or "remodel" under current Planning Code rules, which if applied properly can preserve existing housing, which is almost always less costly to access than new, luxury buildings/units for which no affordable housing is required; and

WHEREAS, as the Memo points out, the FAR is only applied to non-residential buildings – not to RH-1(D), RH-1, RH-2 nor RH-3 -- which have no bonus incentive programs whereas there are currently incentive bonus / inclusionary programs for residential already available to incentivize development; and

WHEREAS, a RET bonus package requires nothing from an existing eligible lot owner and yet it is almost a certainty that the land value will turn up if the RET program were approved, with no quid pro quo from the owner; and,

WHEREAS, RET effectively pre-empts the use of the Home-SF density bonus program for RH-3 lots and thus the opportunity for affordable housing units; and

WHEREAS, with the urgent need for affordable housing, the City should be influencing the use of all development resources to the development of such housing, and not to providing land value bonuses to land owners who give nothing in return; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that, upon the recommendation of the Land Use Committee (the "Committee") of the Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods (the "Coalition"), and for the reasons stated

above, the Coalition shall oppose, and does hereby declares its opposition, to the current RET proposal in its entirety; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee and others whom they may designate, be, and they are hereby authorized to take any and all steps which they believe are necessary and appropriate to fulfill the purpose and intent of the foregoing resolution.

CSFN Land Use Chair /s  
Rose Hillson (JPJA)



## President's Message

The creation of new San Francisco Transportation policies will cost the City billions in unexpected transportation costs.

New technologies are enabling rapid adaptation and innovation in San Francisco transportation modes and services. These technologies include ride-hailing services like Lyft and Uber, ride-pooling services such as Chariot, and autonomous vehicle technologies. Some of these services operate at legal margins and their impacts on the transportation system have gone unmeasured.

The technological advances in transportation services have resulted in potentially complementary and conflicting services with the City's Transit First and other policies and likely require updates to existing transportation infrastructure, rules, regulations and policies.

Currently, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) gets approached by various transportation, technology, and other companies wishing to use city street space, yet there is no consistent policy guidelines for how to engage with them.

San Francisco is developing a new set of Transportation Guiding Principles which will provide a tool for the City to engage with new transportation providers, and will help guide these services into alignment with city policies while hopefully minimizing the potentially detrimental impacts on the city's transportation network.

The City's financial bread and butter is about to be severely injured. The SFMTA ridership is in rapid decline due to Uber, Lift and Chariot. Muni just raised its prices to \$2.75 per ride while Uber is often charging \$3.00 per ride

Due to tremendous congestion, the average MUNI ride time is under eight miles per hour. Downtown traffic is gridlocked. San Francisco's Yellow Cab filed for bankruptcy and was repurchased by CitywideTaxi for \$810 thousand. Scoot, electronic scooters are allowed to park almost anywhere in the city without receiving a parking ticket.

In the not-too-distant future, fleets of fully autonomous vehicles could be transporting riders all across City's urban landscape, largely eliminating not only the need for private vehicles but also the revenue they currently bring in. Parking fees are a critical funding source for the San Francisco Transportation Department, accounting for nearly 32% of its total budget. Driverless vehicles would also cut into parking tickets and traffic citations, two other significant revenue streams for San Francisco and many other cities. If all of that revenue suddenly disappears, the City will have a huge financial issue to deal with.

San Franciscans already have the highest reported per capita car revenues of any city in the United States at an annual cost of \$512 .

Approval of the Transportation Guiding Principles for Emerging Mobility Services and Technologies will support the Vision Zero Policy, San Francisco Transportation Plan (SFTP) and the following goals and objectives in the SFMTA's Strategic Plan:

#### SUMMARY:

- A variety of mobility services and technologies have emerged over the past few years, from mobile applications that connect passengers with on-demand mobility services, shared ride van services, shared scooter services, to automated vehicles that are currently being tested on City streets.
- These new mobility services present the potential for both opportunities and challenges to the safe and sustainable movement of people and goods on the transportation network.
- With the goals of providing for safe, reliable, sustainable and equitable transportation choices, the SFMTA and San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) have collaborated to develop the Guiding Principles for Emerging Mobility Services and Technologies.
- The Guiding Principles will hopefully provide a consistent policy framework, available to all stakeholders, to evaluate new mobility services and will be taken into consideration in all SFMTA decision, policies, and actions regarding Emerging Mobility Services and Technologies.

- The Guiding Principles will be used as a tool by transportation staff to help guide these new services and technologies into alignment with city policies, while minimizing their potentially detrimental impacts on the city's transportation network.

What a transportation mess San Francisco has created.

*George Wooding (MTHA)*

### **Draft Minutes for the General Assembly Meeting July 18, 2017**

- 1. Call to Order.** President Wooding (MTHA) brought the meeting to order at 6:33 PM in the Northern Police Station Community Room.
  - a. Quorum declared.* 22 delegates and alternates represented 17 CSFN member organizations. 6 guests signed in.
  - b. Agenda approved.*
  - Introduction of delegates and guests/Short announcements.
  - Host – Telegraph Hill Dwellers- Paul Weber presenting
- 2. Officers' Reports.**
  - a. President Wooding ( MTHA ) – in newsletter.*
  - b. 1<sup>st</sup> VP Morgan (CHNA) – in newsletter.* She also noted a newspaper report about 1481 Post Street ( opposed by a CSFN Resolution) and asked delegates to sign up for committees on the large sheets on the tables to their right.
 

*nd*
  - c. 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Boken (SPEAK) – No report.*
  - d. Recording Secretary Head (SHARP) thanked Penny Clark for covering for him and said the draft minutes were in the NL.*
  - e. Corresponding Secretary Rogers (PMAC) – No report.*
  - f. Treasurer Scott (PHRA) – No report.*
- 3. Committee Action Items**
  - Executive – In the newsletter.
  - Bylaws – No report.
  - Government & Elections.* Chair Charles Head (SHARP) said there will be a meeting on August 11, 6 pm at Taraval about the Resolution on the Yee legislation on rental car identification, He noted the four civil grand jury reports now on line.
  - Land Use.* Rose Hillson (JPIA) said there was a report in the NL.
  - Open Space.* Kathy Howard (SPEAK). Charles Head ( SHARP ) talked of the Planning to Make Our Parks Even Better CGJ report and the bill for a state ballot measure for deferred

maintenance for parks. ( Reso on new park at Natoma and 11<sup>th</sup> passed last month)

f. *Transportation.* Maria Eliza ( EMIA ) Report in NL

g. *Water.* Chris Bowman spoke of the PUC action that has led to contaminants in SF blended water.

4. **Approval of the June 20 2017 GA minutes – they were approved unanimously.**

5. **Unfinished Business – There was none.**

6. **New Business** – Frank Noto (GGRA) read a resolution from GGH to support the Yee Legislation regarding rental cars. It will be published in the NL and voted on at the next GA.

7. **Program** – SF Firefighter Officers spoke about problems with changes in street design that negatively impact their vehicles.

8. **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:10.

... *Charles Head (SHARP), Recording Secretary*

## **July 2017 Executive Committee Report**

The ExCom was convened at 4:30 pm on July 26. All members were present except Treasurer Scott and a quorum was established.

President Wooding commented on his work on the CTA Transportation Task Force and testifying before the Board of Supervisors on 824 Hyde Street. First VP Morgan spoke about new plans that are emerging on 1481 Post Street, and the approval of the new Planned Parenthood facility in the Cathedral Hill Neighborhood. Second VP Broken reported on concerns around the streetscape redesign for Taraval Street and a HOMESF project slated for 3601 Lawton.

The Committee confirmed the Fall programs with delegates scheduling speakers for the following months:

**August- Residential Expansion Threshold (Rose Hillson)**

**September- Merger of ABAG and MTA (Eileen Boken)**

**October- Report of the Civil Grand Jury (Charles Head)**

**November- Rising Sea Levels and Resiliency (Eileen Boken)**

Chair Rogers began discussions of the Holiday Party planning, as Committee members have now volunteered to help plan the Dinner. Details of the Dinner are confirmed for:

**Wednesday, December 6**

**6pm**

**Patio Espanol Restaurant**

Two honorees and a keynote speaker need to be finalized and a “SAVE THE DATE” announcement sent out ASAP.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm.

*Submitted by Marlayne Morgan (CHNA)*

## **Land Use Committee Report**

The CSFN-LUC met at Northern Station on Wed., July 19, 2017.

The meeting commenced at 4:03pm. All agenda items were briefly covered. A more in-depth discussion ensued on Planning’s “Residential Expansion Threshold” (RET) proposal which seeks to increase the building size based on “Floor-Area-Ratio” (FAR) which is the building’s square footage to lot square footage. “FAR trigger” numbers are assigned to each residential-housing (RH) zone (i.e., RH-1, RH-2 & RH-3). The RET proposal would have project developers go before the Planning Commission when the FAR trigger numbers are hit. There also is a minimum unit size requirement and a proposal for “nonconforming” buildings over some yet undetermined period of years (though currently 5 or 10 years is the timeframe under consideration) to increase in size by 10%. Moreover, the proposal allows for the creation of ADUs.

This is part of Planning’s proposal in their June 1, 2017 Memo to the Planning Commission used to present changes to the “Tantamount to Demolition” (TTD) provision which today uses a formula to determine if a building is a demolition rather than an alteration in order to prevent sound and affordable housing to be demolished, including neighborhood character preservation, as goals. Planning wants to delete. The LU Committee unanimously voted to approve presenting the RET/TTD resolution to the GA in August. The meeting adjourned at 5:13pm. The next LUC meeting will be held at Northern Station on Wed., August 16, 2017 at 4pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Rose Hillson (JPIA), Chair*

## **Transportation Committee Report**

### **Fire Department Presentation on how the Street Improvements are Effecting their ability to work.**

Use this for the report on the Fire Department July program for the August Newsletter:  
<http://sfenuf.net/Fire%20Department.html>

*If there is too much copy, you can take some of it and include a link to the page*

The Powerpoint Presentation is linked on the page or attached.

The latest Potrero View has an article on the Potrero situation in front of General Hospital, but the digital version is not out yet.  
When it comes out I will include that on the page.

Also put in a link to this Culture Clash page and invite people to sign up for the MailChimp.  
<https://zrants.wordpress.com/culture-clash/>

Thanks,

*Mari Eliza (EMIA)*

## **Resolution on Rental Car Identification/Auto Burglaries**

WHEREAS, San Francisco has the highest rate of auto burglaries per capita of any major American city; and

WHEREAS, neighborhoods frequented by tourists with rental cars are especially plagued by smash-and-grab burglars who see identified rental autos as a lucrative opportunity to steal luggage and other items left in parked vehicles; and

WHEREAS, tourists and others renting such autos may be unaware of the danger of leaving luggage and other items in their parked rental cars in San Francisco, and burglars know that tourists may be unable to return to San Francisco to testify in criminal prosecutions of suspected burglars; and

WHEREAS, rental vehicles attract burglars to neighborhoods who also commit smash-and-grab burglaries on residents' vehicles and homes; and

WHEREAS, this criminal activity has a negative impact both on our tourist economy and on local residents and merchants; and

WHEREAS, the City of San Francisco and its departments and agencies, and the Superior Court, do not provide an accessible transparent system for the public to track accountability for property crimes including home and auto burglaries, and these agencies do not coordinate with each other to provide such information in an accessible form to the public;

WHEREAS, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors is likely to hold hearings on related legislation in the coming months;

WHEREAS, the Coalition of San Francisco Neighborhoods (the “Coalition”) wishes to have the City of San Francisco take action to have the concerns expressed herein recognized and considered by whatever means may be available;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That (A) the Coalition urges the Board of Supervisors to approve and the Mayor to sign legislation revising the Police Code to require rental car companies to provide written disclosures to customers advising them to remove valuables from their cars and lock the doors, and to prohibit advertising and visible barcodes on rental vehicles rented in the City or at San Francisco International Airport; and (B) the Coalition urges the Board of Supervisors to approve and the Mayor to sign legislation and take other measures necessary to create accountability for and track outcomes for property crimes including home and auto burglaries and those convicted of such crimes; and (C) the President of the Coalition and, as designed by the President, representatives of one or more members of the Coalition are hereby authorized, jointly and severally, to take any and all actions which the President deems necessary or appropriate in seeking to have the concerns expressed herein recognized and resolved in any relevant legislation or implementation measures.

## AUGUST 15, 2017 CSFN GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENDA

- 6:00 I. Sign In and Refreshments
- 6:30 II. Call to Order/ Ascertain Quorum
- A. Introduction of Delegates and Guests / Short Announcements
  - B. Host- **University Terrace Association**
- 6:45 III. Officers' Reports
- A. President
  - B. Vice Presidents
  - C. Secretaries
  - D. Treasurer
- 7:00 IV. Committee Action Items—written reports in Newsletter
- A. Executive
  - B. Bylaws
  - C. Government & Elections
  - D. Land Use & Housing
  - E. Open Space
  - F. Transportation
- 7:10 V. Approval of June 20, 2017 Minutes
- 7: 15 VI. Unfinished Business- **Resolution on Rental Car identification/ Auto Burglaries**
- 7:20 VII. New Business
- 7:30 IX Program- **SF Planning - Residential Expansion Threshold Program**
- 8:30 X. Adjourn

## **ExComm—How to Reach Us:**

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## **NEIGHBORHOOD VIEWS**

**Neighborhood Views is published monthly, the official voice of the Coalition for SF Neighborhoods, Inc., a 501(c)4 organization.**

**To Submit Articles: Email articles by the 3rd (third) of the month to: Newsletter Editor (1st VP) in Microsoft Word-compatible document (i.e. no pdf's) in-line or as attachment. Articles reflect the opinions of the submitter, not necessarily the opinion of the CSFN. We invite material from member organizations as well as rebuttal to articles already printed. We reserve the right to edit where necessary.**