



Neighborhood Views, Volume XLIV, No. 10, October 2017

PLEASE NOTE

THE NOVEMBER CSFN GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING WILL BE AT :

**ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL
1111 GOUGH STREET
CONFERENCE LEVEL**

CIVIL GRAND JURY TO PRESENT REPORTS IN OCTOBER

Members of the Grand Jury will be speaking before the General Assembly on October 17. Reports can be accessed through civilgrandjury.sfgov.org/report.html.

After starting to meet and deliberate in July, the 2016-17 Civil Grand Jury began its investigations of four topics in September. We chose to look at Government Performance, Pension Obligations, the Rec & Parks Department, and Female Inmates in Custody. The methodology included study of previous reports, city documents, media reports, ballot measures, and interviews with numerous SF officials and staffers, inmates and committee members. The reports were vetted by the City Attorney and submitted to Superior Court by June 30; responses were made by the

Departments, and presentations were heard by the Government Audit and Operations Committee before being presented to the Board of Supervisors.

Accelerating Government Performance: Taking Accountability and Transparency to the Next Level concentrated on how the San Francisco government defines its priorities and measures progress. We studied how the SF Government tracks progress in the top areas of public concern (homelessness, housing and public safety) and found many in the administration unaware of the Performance Scorecard Framework . The Controllers Office was open to suggestions.

The SF Retirement System: Increasing Understanding and Adding Voter Oversight focused on the risks associated with the current funding gap in the retirement fund. The report criticized the lack of transparency in the language of ballot measures that have added to public pension obligations, and recommended structural reforms in the administration of pension programs. (The GAO recommended consideration of the retirement board structure in December).

Planning to Make our Parks Even Better updated the 2013 Budget and Legislative Analysts Audit of Rec and Park and PROSAC (the Parks and Recreation Open Space Acquisition Committee) and found that since Prop B in 201, Rec & Park has implemented a Strategic Plan that informs its Operational and Capital Plans. Harking back to last year's report on Deferred Maintenance in City Departments, we touched on Preventive Maintenance to deter a backlog. Many of our Findings and Recommendations were accepted.

Educational Parity in Custody: Ensuring Equality of Women's Education dealt with a perceived discrepancy between educational opportunities for female inmates housed in CJ 2 and male inmates in CJ 5. It alleged bias in the housing of Transgender Inmates and lack of training and disciplining of SFSD deputies. Sheriff Hennessy disputed most of these points. However, the GAO Committee has asked her to supply information regarding several of the issues identified in the report.

Submitted by Charles Head (SHARP)



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Gus Vardakastanis, Gone Too Soon

My friend, Konstantinos “Gus” Vardakastanis, was killed in a horrible hit-and-run accident on Friday night, September 22.

According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, “Vardakastanis was killed early Friday when he was struck by a hit-and-run driver while crossing a street in the city’s Bayview neighborhood, where he had gone to the San Francisco Produce Market to peruse and purchase goods for his stores. The 57-year-old owner of Haight Street Market, Noriega Produce, and Gus’s Community Market died at the scene of the collision, according to the San Francisco medical examiner.”

Gus and his wife Georgia had immigrated from Greece in the early 1980’s. With the help of their two sons, Bobby and Dimitri, they worked hard every day and built the Haight Street Market into a neighborhood institution. Everyone on Haight Street loved Gus. He was widely considered to be a neighborhood character. He sometimes seemed unapproachable, but he had a heart of gold.

Gus would get-up every morning at 1:00 a.m. to buy the best fruit at the city produce center. He was crossing Jerrold Street at 2:12 a.m. when he was run down by a car traveling at excessive speed.

Jerrold Avenue is a busy thoroughfare that divides the two sides of the San Francisco Wholesale Produce Market. Jerrold Street is dangerous for all of the people who work and do business there throughout the night.

The city had announced a \$100 million development plan in 2012 that would reroute public traffic away from the market, but of course, that work has not yet happened.

I met Gus because he always worked hard and was always at the store in the morning stocking the shelves. Over time, brief hellos turned into conversations. I will miss my friend Gus. He was a working man's hero: A son, a husband, a father, a brother, and a grandfather. Rest in peace, Gus.

Summary and Vision Zero Context

The goal of Vision Zero is zero traffic deaths, period. Too many people die on the streets of San Francisco each year. Every death in this report represents an indescribable loss suffered by the individual and their family, friends, classmates, co-workers, and community. The report summarizes traffic death patterns to inform Vision Zero monitoring and initiatives to save lives.

The overall number of traffic deaths in 2016 was 30, compared to 31 in 2015 and 2014. Pedestrians made up the largest number of deaths, comprising over 50% of all traffic fatalities. Over 40% of all traffic fatalities were suffered by seniors. The most frequent primary collision factors for fatalities included red light running, vehicle failure to yield to pedestrians in a crosswalk, and speeding.

San Francisco's number of traffic deaths has been relatively flat despite the increases in population that have occurred in the city over the last few years. This is in stark contrast to traffic collisions on a national level. Preliminary data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) points to the number of traffic deaths rising in other cities nationwide. Road deaths in the U.S. rose 8% in the first nine months of 2016 compared to the same period in 2015, driven by increases in pedestrian, bicyclist, and motorcyclist deaths. Regardless, any traffic fatality is unacceptable.

City agencies are supposed to be working diligently to improve the safety of our streets, taking a comprehensive approach that includes engineering, enforcement, education, policy and evaluation — requiring coordination across multiple city agencies.

So far, the coordination between city agencies has been poor. The bulb-outs built by the Department of Public Works (DPW) have made it extremely difficult for fire trucks to make turns at narrow intersections. The bulb outs are six inches high and new city firetrucks can only go over four-inch curbs.

If you ever wondered why city speedbumps have large cuts in them — which will allow cars to drive through the speedbump rather than having to slow down and go over the speedbump — understand that the DPW speedbumps were damaging city firetrucks.

Three years ago, the entrance to San Francisco General Hospital's emergency room was on 23rd Street. The emergency vehicle entrance has now been moved to 22nd Street, in front of which a median has been installed, reducing access for emergency vehicles and patients enroute to the emergency room. To reach the hospital entrance, vehicles must now make a U-turn on Potrero Street and drive the wrong way on Potrero.

Pedestrian deaths are rising at a rate of about 11% a year. The real problem is the lack of personal responsibility of both drivers and pedestrians. Everyone has heard of distracted drivers texting on their smart phones or driving under the influence, but few people think of distracted walkers, (i.e., smartphone zombies).

A **smartphone zombie** is a pedestrian who walks slowly and without attention to their surroundings because they are focused upon their smartphone. This is now a significant safety hazard since distracted pedestrians cause accidents. Cities such as Chongqing and Antwerp have introduced special lanes for smartphone users to help direct and manage them.

In 2014, China had over five hundred million smartphone users and more than half of them have a phone addiction. In Chongqing, the government built a cellphone sidewalk, separating the phone users and the non-cell phone users. In Hong Kong, they are called *dai tau juk* (“*the head-down tribe*”).

A ban on pedestrians looking at mobile phones or texting while crossing the street will take effect in Hawaii's largest city in late October, as Honolulu becomes the first major U.S. city to pass legislation aimed at reducing injuries and deaths from "distracted walking."

The ban comes as cities around the world grapple with how to protect phone-obsessed "smartphone zombies" from injuring themselves by stepping into traffic or running into stationary objects. San Francisco has plenty of irresponsible, distracted walkers and drivers.

Starting October 25, Honolulu pedestrians can be fined between \$15 and \$99, depending on the number of times police catch them looking at a phone or tablet device as they cross the street, Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell told reporters gathered near one of the city's busiest downtown intersections on Thursday.

Who knows if San Francisco's Vision Zero program can save pedestrians from themselves. The millions spent, the endless construction, the narrowing of car lanes, the bulb-outs, the added medians clogging the streets cannot save wandering pedestrians. Only vigilant car drivers can save these zombies from themselves as they carelessly place their lives in the hands of drivers.

I miss my friend Gus Vardakastanis and wish that we could have had just one more conversation, just one more laugh. Tomorrow night, September 28, I am going to attend Gus' memorial service to say good-bye to a great, noble man who died far too soon, far too young.

George Wooding, President, Coalition For San Francisco Neighborhoods

Draft Minutes for the September General Assembly Meeting

1. **Call to Order.** President Wooding (MTHA) brought the meeting to order at 6:03 PM in the Northern Police Station Community Room.

a. *Quorum declared.* 17 delegates and alternates represented 16 CSFN member organizations. 6 guests signed in.

- b. *Agenda approved.*
- c. Introduction of delegates and guests/Short announcements.
- d. Host: **Dave Osgood (RPNA)** who regretted he had to work late asked his message be read by Glenn Rogers (PMAC). They still oppose the big wall on the waterfront, were able to help get the height of the Howard Street condo building by 40%, stopped the oversized office building for 115 Embarcadero, and saved the large trees at Howard and Spear. They were unable to scale back 160 Folsom or save the façade of the Audiffred Building. He noted that Supervisor Kim had not aided them in any of their campaigns.

2. Officers' Reports.

- a. **President Wooding (MTHA)** – in NL
- b. **1st VP Morgan (CHNA)** – No report.
- c. **2nd VP Boken (SPEAK)** – No report.
- d. **Recording Secretary Head (SHARP)** said the draft minutes were in the NL. Oct. 4 is the hearing for the last Civil Grand Jury reports to be presented to the Board.
- e. **Corresponding Secretary Rogers (PMAC)** – noted there was an article in the [Westside Observer](#) on nitrates.
- f. **Treasurer Scott (PHRA)** – passed out and went over the financials for 2017-18.

3. Committee Action Items

- a. *Executive* – in Newsletter.
- b. *Bylaws* – No report.
- c. *Government & Elections.* Chair **Charles Head (SHARP)** Our committee did not meet this month because of scheduling problems but will meet Friday Oct. 13 at 6 at Taraval Station to consider filing complaints to the Ethics commission.
- d. *Land Use.* **Ozzie Rohm (NNC)** reviewed and updated the Planning Commission debate at last month's GA.
- e. *Open Space.* **Charles Head (SHARP)** noted articles in the SFC about 10 areas under freeways that might become public areas or parks, and about the Transbay terminal having a lovely open area/park on top, but an open area underneath , because it will take \$ 4 billion to

RESOLUTION ON LUCKY PENNY SITE

WHEREAS, the Lucky Penny site at 2670 Geary Boulevard/Masonic is a small, odd-shaped 12,682 square foot parcel with an 80-foot height limit, zoned NC-3;

WHEREAS, dwelling unit density limits would only allow 21 dwelling units on the odd-shaped parcel;

WHEREAS, a full plan set was prepared with a Special Use District to allow density to be increased to 98 dwelling units with 18% on-site affordable housing units within the 80-foot height limit;

WHEREAS, the adjacent Public Storage building is approximately 75 feet in height, but that building towers over nearby structures;

WHEREAS, after HOME-SF was passed, the Planning Department insisted that the developer revise the plans and propose an 11-story, 105-foot tall building with 30% on-site affordable housing, which would constitute a high-rise with increased construction costs;

WHEREAS, the Planning Department failed to inform those who had attended the Pre-Application meeting or residents nearby the site that the project was being revised to apply under the HOME-SF program;

WHEREAS, the Planning Code provisions give the developer the choice of which affordable housing option he wishes to pursue, including Sections 415 through 415.11 (which allow the choice of the Inclusionary Affordable Housing Program including the On-Site Affordable Housing Alternative allowed in Section 415.6) and Sections 206 et seq, which allow the choice of one of four affordable housing bonus programs including Section 206.3 (Housing Opportunities Mean Equity -San Francisco Program aka HOME-SF) , Section 206.4 (100% Affordable Housing Bonus Program, Section 206.5 (State Residential Density Bonus Program: Analyzed), and Section 206.6 (State Density Bonus Program: Individually Requested);

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Planning Department should cease abusing its discretion by insisting that project proponents choose the HOME-SF program to the exclusion of the other affordable housing program options allowed by the Planning Code;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Planning Department should send a letter or other written notification to all persons and organizations who attended a Pre-Application meeting and all persons who received written notice of a proposed project that any project is being revised to apply under HOME-SF and that such supplemental notice should be sent within 7 days of the time that the Department receives the first plan set revised to apply under HOME-SF so that residents can participate in the planning process; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Coalition of San Francisco Neighborhoods supports the not in excess of 80-foot tall, approximate 98-unit alternative with 18% on-site affordable housing units for the 2670 Geary Boulevard site, which the developer has stated is financially feasible and opposes the Planning Department's attempt to force the developer to select the HOME-SF option.

Submitted by Kathy Devincenzi (LHIA)

Resolution in Support of the Clean Water Rule

Whereas, the repeal of the Clean Water Rule would accelerate wetland loss and flood damage, as well as reduce drinking water quality.

Whereas, current science overwhelmingly supports the Clean Water Rule.

Whereas, the Clean Water Rule was one of the most significant scientific and conservation advances of the Obama administration.

Whereas, the Clean Water Rule codifies the common sense fact that in order to keep our rivers, lakes and other “navigable waterways” clean we must make sure that the waters that feed them are also clean.

Whereas, an additional benefit of the Obama Waters of the U.S. rule is that by providing Clean Water Act protection for wetlands, small and intermittent streams and other areas it not only safeguards these natural water purification systems, it also conserves and restores millions of acres of essential habitat for rare plants and wildlife.

Be it Resolved, we urge you to support the Clean Water Rule, which is needed for us to achieve the Clean Water Act's objective to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters.

RESOLUTION ON WHOLE FOODS POLK STREET PROPOSAL

Whereas, Amazon/Whole Foods has proposed a 365 grocery store at the intersection of Jackson Street and Polk Street requiring conditional use authorization for a 20,000+ foot formula retail grocery use along with 77 off street parking spaces and a variance request for off-street loading of deliveries;

Whereas, the Polk Street corridor and the adjacent Van Ness Avenue corridor are experiencing unprecedented levels of traffic congestion resulting in slower transit trip times for the corridors 10+ Muni Routes including on Polk Street which is major North-South Pedestrian and Bicycle corridor;

Whereas, the 94109 zip code which include the Polk Street corridor is ranked number 2 in the City and County of San Francisco for no-fault evictions including evictions of seniors and disabled tenants via the Ellis Act;

Whereas; the Polk Street corridor continues to experience a strong demand for housing far exceeding the supply of new housing being built which in turn increases evictions of tenants as rents surge;

Whereas, Amazon/Whole Foods has refused to entertain a mixed-use project at this location which has no existing residential tenants or neighborhood servicing businesses;

Whereas, Amazon/Whole Foods operates another Whole Foods grocery store, 6 blocks away from the proposed project site and the intersection of California St. and Franklin Street that also provides off-street parking, less than a 10 minute walk, or 5 minute drive;

Whereas, the proposed 365 store will contain many of the same identical products of the already existing Whole Foods grocery store;

Whereas, Amazon/Whole Foods has the ability to operate stores at a loss for long periods of time by undercutting prices offered by local merchants such as ***Real Foods Company, the Jug Shop, Le Beau Market,*** and others thereby resulting in a substantial economic threat to viable independent retail in the neighborhoods;

Whereas, Amazon/Whole Foods has not partnered with organized labor to allow their workers the right of collective bargaining and unionization;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Coalition of San Francisco Neighborhoods opposes Amazon/Whole Foods request for Conditional Use Authorization for a 365 grocery store at 1600 Jackson Street and supports housing with ground-floor retail at the site to curb pressure on no-fault evictions in the neighborhood and to complement and support the corridor's many long-standing independent businesses.

Submitted by Moe Jamil (MPNA)

September Executive Committee Report

The CSFN ExCom met on Wednesday, September 27 at 4:30 pm. Wooding, Morgan, Boken, Head, Rogers, Scott, Clark and Zvanski were present and Harris was excused. A quorum was established.

President Wooding spoke on his work on the Blended Water Project, the Transportation Task Force and the RET and UDG positions being considered by the CSFN Land Use Committee.

2nd VP Boken is working on a presentation from the SF Port on the Seawall Project for the November GA and from the SFCTA on Regional Measure 3 for the January General Assembly.

1st VP Morgan will work on finding an alternative site for the November 14 General Assembly, as the Northern Station Community Room is not available. First preference would be St. Mary's Cathedral.

Treasurer Scott was commended on his work in preparing the 2017-2018 budget, which passed unanimously at the September GA. Following up on comments about the website costs from the GA, VP Morgan and delegate Matt McCabe will work on website issues and will set up a conference call with Webmaster Avrum Shepard.

Secretary Head requested that the Open Space Committee be convened, as it has not met in a while. He will contact Committee members to set up a meeting.

There was discussion on the Resolution on the Clean Water Rule brought forth by Secretary Rogers on Federal Water Policy. VP Boken will review for relevance to water issues in San Francisco.

ExCom members committed to start working on the December 6 Holiday Dinner, including recruiting sponsors, creating seating charts, name tags and table decorations, selling lottery tickets and staffing the registration desk. An updated invitation designed by Delegate Matt McCabe will be printed in the October Newsletter.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Submitted by Marlayne Morgan (CHNA)

Land Use Committee Report

The CSFN-LUC met at Northern Station on Wed., September 20, 2017.

The meeting commenced at 4:00pm. The Chair made a motion and the Committee approved unanimously for the LUC to work on a letter regarding the March 16, 2017 Draft Urban Design Guidelines (UDGs) document. [\(See both of these letters on the website\).](#)

The LUC also sent the Planning Commission a letter on the demolition/expansion proposals on September 1, 2017. These are the proposals for applying a floor-area-ratio (FAR) to residential parcels which have to date been exempt from FARs being applied to them. Planning Department calls the proposals “Residential Expansion Threshold” (RET). The Committee continues to work on these demo/expansion proposals as they continue to morph and dates of meetings change.

The demo/expansion proposals will be presented at Planning Department on 10/10 & 10/16 from 5:30p-7:30p in their conference room. The sessions are for D1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8 (“West” side) and D3, 6, 9, 10, 11 (“East” side), respectively. How many residents of each of these districts not hyper-involved in land use are aware of these new proposals?

The meeting adjourned at 5:35pm. The next LUC meeting will be held at Northern Station on Wed., October 18, 2017, at 4pm.

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

Transportation Committee Report

[SFMTA Rep Takes Heat as Everyone Objects to Dangerous Potrero Slalom Run](#)

Zuckerberg San Francisco Hospital Meeting 10/5/2017

Objections to the Potrero streetscape rollout took center stage at a neighborhood meeting at Zuckerberg SF General that was called to update concerned neighbors on the various construction projects underway and planned for the hospital grounds. The public has been complaining for months about the new slalom run on Potrero that mimics the curvy streets on Third Street, where traffic is forced on and off the light rail tracks, and distracted drivers have difficulty watching for pedestrians while they attempt to follow the lane changes...[\(more\)](#)

These complaints about the dangers of distracted driving are backed up by AAA ...

[Measuring Cognitive Distractions](#)

Report by AAA: In this landmark study of distracted driving, the AAA Foundation challenges the notion that drivers are safe and attentive as long as their eyes are on the road and their hands are on the wheel. Using cutting-edge methods for measuring brain activity and assessing indicators of driving performance, this research examines the mind of the driver, and highlights the *mental* distractions caused by a variety of tasks that may be performed behind the wheel...[\(more\)](#)

Accident Reports: We have requested police accident reports and will be investigating the cost of the many mistakes SFMTA has been forced to correct due to bad designs and implementation. Many of these mistakes appear to have been due to alterations to the plans after approval. Many of the alterations are noted and objected to by the public as they are going in. How do we get the SFMTA to listen to the public?

Changes at the SFMTA Board Meetings: If you watch the SFMTA Board meetings lately you have seen a different tone. This week the Board turned down the staff plan for a new Residential Parking Permit system. They also

killed the Washington Square Poets Piazza, supported by Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Angela Alioto.

Board of Supervisors Hearings: There must be an uptick in complaints to the Supervisors because they all are holding hearings on various aspects of major transportation problems, including: Tech buses, TNCs, Access issues, construction disruptions, pedestrian crossings, signage, lane diets, curving lanes, and pretty much everything else you can think of. It looks like this is the year to file complaints and demand answers.

For more updates on transit-related issues, sign up to follow metermadness.wordpress.com

For more neighborhood specific information, contact us and we will get you in touch with your neighborhood group. zrants@gmail.com

Submitted by Mari Eliza (EMIA), Chair

OCTOBER 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- Russian Hill Neighbors
- 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 September 19, 2017 Minutes
- 7: 15 VI. Unfinished Business
- 7:20 VII. New Business: **Resolution on the Clean Water Rule**
Resolution on Whole Foods Polk Street Proposal
- 7:30 IX Program- **PRESENTATION ON CIVIL GRAND JURY REPORTS**
- 8:30 X. Adjourn



Please join us!

Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods

45th ANNUAL HOLIDAY DINNER

Wednesday, December 6, at 6:00 p.m.
Patio Español Restaurant
2850 Alemany Boulevard

- *Menu Selections* -

Roasted Prime Rib
Breast of Chicken in Sherry Cream Sauce
Paella Valenciana
Vegetarian Pasta Primavera

- *Kenote Speaker* -

Supervisor Jane Kim

- *Special Recognition* -

Dyan Ruiz and Joseph Smooke
Journalism and Activism

- *Honoree* -

Christopher Bowman
Blended Water Challenger

Individual ticket - \$70
Sponsorship (one ticket) - \$140
Half Table (five tickets) - \$595
Full Table (ten tickets) - \$925

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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.

