

CORBETT HEIGHTS NEIGHBORS - Meeting Minutes - April 22, 2010

Hi Neighbors,

Thanks to all of you who turned out for the meeting Thursday - especially considering the competition. (Ru Paul was having a book signing just down the street!)

I'd really like to thank the folks who distributed the fliers: Leslie & John Koelsch, Kevin Dunn, Rick Johnson, Kazumi Matsuyama, Pat Hufford, Marianne Mitten, Barbara Presta and Kathy & Hank Flanders.

Rebecca Prozan and Scott Wiener, who are both running for Supervisor in our district, attended the meeting, answered several questions and spoke about their accomplishments and what makes them especially qualified to represent us.

Rebecca has been endorsed by Kamala Harris and Bevan Dufty - among many others.

Scott has been endorsed by Gavin Newsom and Mark Leno - among many others as well.

For detailed information about their background and qualifications, check out their websites:

www.rebeccaprozan.com

www.scott2010.com

Some brief examples of the questions asked and their responses:

1. Do you support the "sit/lie ordinance" that would make it illegal to sit or lie on public sidewalks. Scott is in favor of it as a first step. Rebecca feels it is incomplete, would be harmful to some as a broad brushstroke and is against.
2. How much input should neighbors have on development projects that appear to satisfy the Planning Codes? Both support the idea that people who will be living near a new development should have some say in its ultimate impact, and that some changes to the way the Planning Dept operates are in order to address this.
3. MUNI is likely to cut service. The 37, 35 and 33 will experience reduced service under a proposal recently discussed. How would you deal with this possibility? Both supported keeping those lines and others at the current frequency given the importance to users, and would work to solve the budgetary issues another way.
4. How would you protect open spaces from the likes of the surplus property ordinance? Both are serious backers of open space. But the possibility of another similar ordinance, given frequent budget crises, is always there.
5. How would you get more adequate funding for public schools? Or put a cap on charter schools? How do you feel about a tax on private corporate schools?

Scott stated that, in addition to reforming our state budget process (which would be the solution to our education funding crisis) we should consider a parcel tax, with exemptions for seniors and others on fixed incomes, to prevent teacher layoffs.

Rebecca would fight with state delegation for funding, reinstate rainy day fund for schools. She would organize auctions to help all of the schools in District 8. She would support keeping current charter schools.

6. The Market Octavia Plan was developed over 7 years by various neighborhood groups working with the Planning Dept to create a cohesive plan for developments along the Upper Market corridor. It would also create a fund from money collected from developers on a per

square foot basis that would be used for vast neighborhood improvements that include art & greening to name just two. For reasons too lengthy to go into, it stopped at Noe St. There are 3 projects in the works on the block betw Noe and Castro that will not need to adhere to Market Octavia. Would you approve extending Market Octavia which would involve hearings, studies? A solution favored by some is Spot Zoning, which allows developers to ignore the code by creating "special use districts" for each project? Rebecca will continue to monitor the Gold's Gym issue as the first test of the difference between Market-Octavia and Castro Charette plans. She questions the efficacy of extending Market-Octavia. Decisions to do so would involve hearings and studies. Would consider spot zoning, but acknowledges its troublesome nature. Scott responded by saying he is not a fan of spot zoning. He is open to considering an extension of the Market-Octavia Plan to Castro St.

136 Ord - Outcome of Discretionary Review:

If a property owner in San Francisco decides to apply to the Planning Dept. for a permit to build or alter a building, and if the plans submitted seem to abide by all of the building codes, a permit may be issued. The only option for a resident who feels this project should not move forward is to apply for Discretionary Review by the Planning Commission. Our membership voted unanimously (those present at 2 meetings) to approve Corbett Heights Neighbors' applying for a "D.R." to protest the proposed project at 136 Ord. The immediate neighbor to the north applied for a DR as well.

The hearing was on Thursday, April 15. Quite a few neighbors showed up and sat for hours waiting to speak out against the proposed plan which was to build a house 15' back from the sidewalk, thus diminishing the overall parklike character of the block.

Both sides had a number of people speak for their side. In the end, 2 of the commissioners felt the project should move forward. 7 felt it needed to be reworked in a way that they (the Commission) and hopefully we (the DR applicants) would be satisfied.

8 felt that it was too far forward. The Commissioners moved to continue the hearing to May 27. During the next month the project sponsor will most likely come back with a more acceptable plan. We are hoping he considers our concerns in his modification.

17th Street Traffic Calming:

About 3 years ago we began a process that will hopefully lead to reduced speeding by cars heading downhill on 17th Street. We had several meetings with MTA staff, and a plan was agreed upon. Since this agreed upon plan would need to satisfy other MTA officials as well as the SF Fire Dept it needed to go thru a lengthy study to ensure that neighbors, as well as city officials were satisfied.

The plan was to install an island above the top of the Corbin Steps. This island would be located entirely within the downhill lane, diverting traffic slightly towards the steps. This part of the plan will probably be installed before Fall. The other part of the plan is to install a speed radar sign - similar to the ones on Market St near Eureka - somewhere in the 4300 block of 17th St. This may be installed as early as next month.

The funding for these projects has been approved - finally!

Friends of City Planning event:

Many of us are very interested in Planning issues in our neighborhood. Several Planning

activities are not funded by the city and depend on grants and individual support for them to be able to happen. Neighbor Mark Ryser announced that the annual Friends of City Planning event will take place on May 4. It is an opportunity to spend time with not only the Commissioners, but with architects, other neighborhood groups and other members of Planning staff.

The website is: <http://sffocp.org/>

Trader Joe's:

Trader signed a lease for the old Tower Records space about 7 months ago. The owner agreed to a date - May 7, 2010 - by which Radio Shack would agree to move out. If they insisted on staying, Trader Joe's could be released from their lease obligations. As of now, Radio Shack, which has at least 10 years remaining on its lease, is not budging. Even if they were to agree to move, a traffic study would still need to happen to determine the suitability of a large grocery store on that site. There would be several dozen deliveries per day, a loading dock on Market St and extremely limited parking.

I'll let you know what happens after May 7.

Whole Foods:

Whole Foods is mostly good to go into the old S&C Ford dealership. There still need to be some modifications to the facade, and a local neighborhood group is objecting to the size. A recently released traffic study revealed that there would likely be around 45 deliveries a day.

Gold's Gym:

Currently the Gold's Gym on Market at Noe is 2 floors above a small garage. The owners would like to add floor(s). A plan that would satisfy the Planning Dept would be to add one additional floor of gym. The owners, however, would prefer to add 2 floors above that for rental housing. No additional parking would be included. There would need to be some sleight of hand to make the larger project materialize, but because of the rental element, it is supported by many local officials.

Hope to see you on July 22 for our next meeting.

Gary