



PHOTO: RORY McNAMARA

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Expansion plans vex West Portal residents

Locals charge loss of trees, lack of notice in nursing-center project

By Michelle Terwilliger

NEIGHBORHOOD REPORTER

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But treeless gaps in the forest and a neighbor's sign reading "Arden Wood, tell the truth" reveal a less-than-idyllic time in neighborhood relations between the facility and area residents.

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EXPANSION: Fight

continued from page 23

that they are taking down trees at the same time they're planning this structure," said Karen Caldwell, who lives across the street from Arden Wood on Wawona. "There was a loss of credibility of the way they're going to proceed with the nursing home."

Trees deemed safety hazard

Ed Sage, Arden Wood administrator, said the \$100,000 project to cut down 50 of the property's approximately 4,000 trees was no big secret, but he didn't think there was a need to consult neighbors about removing the ailing trees, which three arborists had deemed safety hazards.

"What we have out there is an unmanaged forest," Sage said. Because of the density and lack of light, some of the 70-year-old trees only had branches on top and had become sick and top-heavy. A few trees have fallen within the last year, he said.

"The neighbors are saying that they're beautiful to look at, but if it [falls over], you can lose yourself and your family," Sage said.

However, nearby residents — still fuming from the sight of trees coming down and the sound of chainsaws and woodchippers — said the idea of creating plans for a new building without talking to them was unconscionable.

"It was like the neighborhood had to squeeze it out of the workers themselves," said Rodger Garcia, who lives at 15th Avenue and Wawona Street. "I bought that house specifically because I can't find open spaces in this city very easily. I have bay windows that open up onto the property because of the trees."

The proposed project will mean an significant change in his view, Garcia said.

"We get to see all of the stairways to their new building. We get to see the service parking areas. It's very unappealing," he said. "It doesn't seem like there's much consideration of the neighborhood coming into this whole thing."

Trees, building separate issues

Sage, who met with residents on August 20 about their concerns, maintains that the removal of trees is a separate issue from the proposed construction, and he asserts that Arden Wood is only in the planning stages for a new nursing building.

The proposed building would continue the same kind of short-term care that the Christian Science Church provides in its current facility: healing through prayer, without the use of drugs or medical devices.

"There are lots of nursing-care patients that are only here for a few months," Sage said. "It's like hospital care for Christian Scientists."

Under current plans, the 69-year-old main building at Arden Wood will undergo a \$7 million renovation and will be used as residences for part of its 150-member, full-time staff. Many staff members already live on-site in four smaller buildings some distance from the nursing area.

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Locals cite zoning concerns

Despite its module design, neighbors are unhappy about the estimated \$7 million project invading their neighborhood, which is zoned for single-family homes. Some neighbors say they would rather see Arden Wood sell the property to a developer who would create more homes, rather than face a new Arden Wood building.

"If it's large-scale development versus homes, we want homes," Caldwell said.

Howard Strassner, a member of the Greater West Portal Neighborhood Association, disagrees. Strassner, who sees Arden Wood from his Vicente Street home, says that, with Arden Wood, the neighborhood knows it will get something that looks nice; with an outside developer, no one can promise what might be built.

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SECTION 3 OF THE INDEPENDENT

THE NEIGHBORHOOD

NOE/HAIGHT/CENTRAL EDITION

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1998

S.F. Chamber's moneymaker

IT'S PROBABLY a good idea to call a columnist or a reporter back in a timely fashion. When people don't, it gets us to thinking. Last week on the heels of returning from the East Coast, I got a flier from the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce offering a three-day trip to Boston. The trip, sponsored by the Chamber, offers a



NOAH GRIFFIN

variety of comparative government experiences, from a meeting with Boston's mayor to spending time with Harvard's med-school dean, who used to be dean of the medical school at UCSF. School-to-career programs would be explored, and there would be side trips to Boston's museums.

Here's the catch: the trip costs \$2,800. Sounds like the cost of a trip to Europe. Not wanting to get my head yelled off by my editor for even asking, I called the Chamber and asked if it would be possible to travel there on my own, cover the events for our readers, but

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Andre's

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spend the \$350 I normally spend for air fare and stay at an \$89-a-night room. "No, we can't offer any scholarships," was the response. It occurred to me they didn't necessarily want the trip covered from a news perspective. It's a moneymaker for the Chamber. The trip must offer some value. Forty people have signed up, and more power to the Chamber for finding inventive ways to make money. Don't try to do it off of journalists. And when they find out that you are, return their calls.

Beat the drum: At least one San Francisco agency is on the ball, and that's the Convention and Visitors Bureau. President John Marks spoke last week to the Golden Gate Breakfast Club. San Francisco has 16 million visitors a year, and they spend more than \$5 billion. The city's hotel occupancy rate is at 80 percent. Among the upcoming conventions is that of the American Dental Association, which brings approximately 62,000 visitors to town. The Bureau has been operating since 1909. Its 2,200 members make it the largest such agency in the nation. The big hotel-building splurge between 1971 and 1975, which added 5,200 rooms, could be repeated in the next two to three years with another hotel boom. Look for a ballot initiative in the fall to maintain the 14 percent hotel tax so that the Bureau can keep on with its great accomplishments.

All aboard: The San Francisco Zoo is a couple of months late in getting its Puffer Train moving, but it's finally chugging away. The Oakland Zoo's train brings in \$100,000 per year, a fact that prompted former zoo CFO Jim Lazarus to explore bringing back our own train, which had been inoperative for a couple of decades. The irony is that the zoo, according to Lazarus, spent an extra \$200,000 to circumvent trees in the track path. With that kind of money, it could have reforested a good part of the zoo!

Get-well note: Everybody's favorite, former assemblyman Charley Meyers, is in Saint Mary's hospital on the mend from hip-replacement surgery.

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PHOTO: RORY McNAMARA

ANGRY: JaNeal Granieri says the conversion of a building on Ninth Avenue will only worsen problems for area neighbors.

Sunset neighbors decry clubhouse demolition

Locals say senior housing will crowd area further

By Michelle Terwilliger
NEIGHBORHOOD REPORTER

As a Sunset Heights community group plans to demolish and rebuild its clubhouse, which currently houses the Lone Mountain Children's Center, nearby residents are asking the organization to scale down its plans.

Most voting members of the Sunset Heights Association of Responsible People (SHARP) want to tear down their nearly 90-year-old clubhouse at 1738 Ninth Avenue to make way for a new four-story facility. The new building would house eight senior-housing units and possibly continue as the site of Lone Mountain Children's Center.

SHARP has leased the one-story building to the children's center for the past 19 years, but preschool officials aren't sure if the new construction will be big enough to fit their needs.

Meanwhile, two dozen residents in the vicinity of Ninth and Moraga avenues are organizing in the hope that the project will be thwarted or at least scaled down.

"It's totally too large for this neighborhood," said JeNeal Granieri, who has lived near the center since 1977. "We probably would support four units or cut off a story for six units."

Emilia Jimenez, who has lived across the street from the building for 30 years, says she worries that an increased number of cars from residents or residents' caregivers will crowd the street.

"We don't want the units to be built," Jimenez said. "The street is very, very congested as it is."

Apartments irk residents

Under the current plan, SHARP, a nonprofit group, would take out an estimated \$1 million loan to demolish its clubhouse and build a four-story apartment building with part of the first floor devoted to preschool space.

The fourth floor would be inset from the rest of the building and not visible from the street.

"It has the illusion of a set of



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- RCA 13" Kitchen White\$179
- RCA 27" PIP.....\$357
- RCA 4Head Mono VCR\$149
- SONY 13" w/earphone Jack.....\$223
- Zenith 27" Stereo\$291
- RCA 36" PIP.....\$883

CLUBHOUSE: Protest

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two-story flats over a garage," said SHARP president Denis Quinn. "Every apartment is going to have its own balcony."

SHARP would pay the loan back through rent from the units and from leasing the preschool space.

SHARP board members say the 10,000-square-foot building would have only two parking garage spaces: one for the children's center and another for a vehicle for the residents. But they say parking shouldn't be a problem as they will try to find tenants who do not own cars. In addition, there will be parking in front of the building.

"The No. 6 [Muni line] to downtown is right on the corner," Quinn said. "There's all kinds of transportation."

Preschool may be lost

Dai To, who lives next door to the SHARP clubhouse and children's center, had no idea when she moved into her home last November that the organization was proposing the changes. She used to have hopes that her toddler son might one day attend Lone Mountain. Now she worries if the preschool will still be there.

"We're concerned about Lone Mountain. It's a great school," To said. "Under the current proposal, there isn't enough room for them."

Jacque Grillo, director of Lone Mountain Children's Center, said moving the preschool from its current space of 2,800 square feet to the proposed 1,600 square feet allowed for the school in the new project might be impossible.

"We've made it very clear to [SHARP board members] that the space they were proposing is insufficient for us," Grillo said. "They've attempted to be accommodating."

Under current plans, Lone Mountain might still utilize the space in the building, but it would not be able to run its entire operation there, Grillo said.

Rumors of sale

In discussing alternative plans, Grillo said that Lone Mountain would be willing to put forward \$100,000 toward the building.

"They're united against what we're doing," Quinn said. "We can't legally stop that. If we prevail, they'll have a right to file an appeal. We're not excluding them from the process."

One member's dissent

On the seven-member SHARP board, only Robert H. Sorenson has spoken critically of the project. Sorenson, the only board member who lives on Ninth Avenue, says he has tried to keep residents informed of SHARP's proposals.

"The neighbors around here just became aware of it. They had no voice until recently," Sorenson said. "It seems the design of the building is not compatible with what neighbors think ought to be there."

His wife, Danita Sorenson, also a SHARP member said, "All the neighbors recognize that the building is in bad repair. They recognize something needs to happen. They're not opposed to putting in a few units for seniors. The concern is that SHARP has been unresponsive. The size and the scope of the project is the big, big sticking point."

But Quinn argues that the project has been in the making for nearly a decade and that residents chose to get involved much later than they could have.

"We're not sneaky about it," Quinn said. "Some people don't come out until someone knocks on their door."

Despite neighbors' concerns, SHARP project manager John Barry says the goals of the project are noble: to provide a place for seniors who no longer want to live in their large homes.

The building would have six two-bedroom and two one-bedroom units with rents of approximately \$1,000 per month, Quinn said. Creating fewer units, like neighbors suggest, would run up rental costs, he said.

"We have a lot of seniors in our membership," Barry said. "Some are rattling around in old houses living lives of isolation. ... We want to create a community place for the seniors to meet."

Needed senior housing

SHARP would give first preference

Manners and etiquette: The competitive power of self-confidence

A VIETNAMESE WOMAN, who fled to the United States more than 10 years ago, called Syndi Seid to ask for help. The woman and her husband were very successful in business after their immigration. As a result, they were moving up in society, being invited to dinner parties, and in the process of buying a new home in Hillsborough. The woman was shy about her social skills and asked Seid to give her a daylong training in the skills she needed to feel comfortable and accepted in her new environment.



Syndi Seid is the founder and president of Advanced Etiquette and a graduate of the Protocol School of Washington in the nation's capital. She conducts seminars and personal trainings designed to raise the self-confidence level of its clients.

"Who gets the job?" Seid asks. "The person with the B.A., MBA, or Ph.D. and dress-for-success wardrobe? Or the person who has the poise, grace, and self-confidence combined with the education?"

Almost inevitably, Seid declares, it's the person who comes to the job with social graces in addition to the other attributes.

Seid believes that etiquette and manners are the "missing links to a person's professional education."

She cites the case of a young man who attended one of her corporate workshops. He called to ask her how he might win a job

advancement for which he was being considered. The job required giving formal presentations for his company, and the interview was to be conducted in a small auditorium, where he would present his case from a stage.

Seid advised him to enter the room, approach the four or five interviewers, greet them, shake their hands, and then proceed to the stage and give his presentation.

The young man followed her sage advice and won the job. Seid's theory was that most candidates would enter the auditorium fearful and confused about the process. They would probably proceed directly to the podium and begin their presentation. Shaking hands and approaching each of the interviewers personally, the young man established a physical contact as well as the beginning of a relationship.

While most of her work over the years has been in the corporate setting, Seid, at the onset of her business, set the specific goal of reaching out to people of color and women.

Cultural differences can often work against minorities. Handshakes, assertiveness, and male-female relationships may present difficult situations for minorities who hope to climb America's corporate ladder.

Seid began to turn her focus away from corporate workshops and toward public meetings. She developed curricula that could assist men, women, and youths "to become world-class competitive."

Seid advises her clients of the value of entertaining business associates. "What can you do if you don't play golf?" she asks. You can invite clients to the theater, dinner, Stern Grove picnics, or baseball games. Or, as Seid and her husband, Ron Hildebrand do, you can invite them on salmon-fishing trips.

People moving up in the business world, Seid believes, must be well rounded in their knowledge of sports, theater, music, and

other topics that people talk about.

In addition, people who want to develop international trade must understand the characteristics and customs of the people in other countries where they do business. "Body language," Seid says, "often speaks louder than words."

The contemporary handshake is a "mutual form of greeting throughout the world," she says. "It is often the only physical contact between business associates, so people should concentrate on the gesture. The hand should come straight on, web to web. One embraces the hand and adjusts the pressure as appropriate. Never let it be limp or the Victorian fingertip touch, even when shaking hands with petit women. The glove handshake, where one puts the left hand over the two clasping right hands, and the grabbing of the associate's arm should be left to priests and politicians," Seid says.

"Your words and eyes express your true feelings." Be "genuine," she warns, "not cutesy, and don't be afraid to compliment someone of the opposite sex as long as the remark is straightforward and sincere."

A new trend in business entertaining that is moving quickly from east to west, according to Seid, is the enjoyment of afternoon tea. More and more hotels and restaurants are featuring the dainty cucumber sandwiches and traditional silver service.

Seid advocates for this practice, which she describes as calming since "there is no rush to get back to the office. It's fun and different and cost-controlling," she says.

"Afternoon tea can be had for about \$15 per head, where lunch these days usually results in a \$50 tab for two, and breakfasts break into the day."

Advanced Etiquette's new focus is on families. "I love it when I have whole families at my workshops," Seid says. "Parents and their children gain so much when they learn the techniques of etiquette, entertaining, and social skills together."

For information on the extensive offerings of Advanced Etiquette, call Syndi Seid at 346-3665.

EXPANSION: Trees, open space at issue

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\$100,000 toward refurbishing the current building in exchange for a long-term lease agreement; or it might even consider buying the property and allowing SHARP to meet there.

But Quinn said he has not heard of any concrete buying offers and that the property is not for sale. He also said that the preschool space would be sufficient under city planning codes and could be utilized more effectively than the current arrangement.

Neighbors have supported Lone Mountain's alternative offers, and they have been meeting weekly on their own and recently attending SHARP board meetings. Sixteen neighbors recently tried to join SHARP and sent in dues, but the board rejected their membership.

"They just wanted to join SHARP to stop this," Quinn said.

Voting members of SHARP turned in their ballots on Sunday and club officials announced that the majority of members want the board to continue with the project.

Quinn says he already knows what the nearby residents think and is aware that they might fight SHARP in the permit process.

Quinn would give first preference to its own members for the units and would provide a community room for their activities, Quinn said.

"We're not living off of this thing," said Quinn, who stresses all members are volunteers. "It's a labor of love."

Although SHARP has not applied for the permits it needs from the city yet, Quinn said official meetings with city planners were positive.

At earliest, the group would have bulldozers on the site on July 1, 1999 — the last day of Lone Mountain's current lease agreement — and the building would be open six to nine months later, Quinn said.

Whether this exact plan occurs, Barry is convinced that something must be done to replace the old building, which is plagued with leaks, roofing-repair needs, and foundation problems.

"It looks like it might fall over," Barry said. "We spend thousands of dollars on it every year. ... If we're going to have to remove the building, why not use our potential and make senior housing?"

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corridor. Brown hotly denies the comment. He's too smart not to know he has to build coalitions to be re-elected and not alienate a newspaper publisher or a community.

Well versed: Computer specialist Reg Young of Orca Computer Solutions has a budding poet in the family. Thirteen-year-old Christina, an eighth-grader at Good Shepherd Elementary School in Pacifica, turned in a sheaf of her originals to receive an A for excellence. The world needs more poets, Christina. Keep it up!

Noah Griffin can be reached by phone at 281-0219; by mail at 1201 Evans Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94124; or by e-mail at arkside@slip.net.

Return to sender: A story commonly known around the philanthropic community is that the head of Mervyn's made a substantial contribution to USC to endow a chair. One year, then two years, passed and there was no response as to what the university was doing with the money. Each time Mervyn's asked, USC's head guy passed the duty of responding to the query to some underling. Nothing was done and the money had to be returned. I heard it went to a local charity. Don't delegate.

Shining hour: Three hundred-and-fifty guests attended an event at the Fairmont sponsored by *Hispanic Magazine* last Wednesday night — the magazine's 1998 achievement awards. Local luminary Herman Gallegos was honored.

Derail it: There's a vicious rumor that supervisorial candidate the Rev. Amos Brown has vowed to "Run the Fangs out of town" upon the completion of the Third Street rail

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| Age | Guar. 5-Yr | | Guar. 10-Yr | | Guar. 15-Yr | | Guar. 20-Yr | | |
| | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | |
| 25 | \$19 | \$17 | \$19 | \$17 | \$21 | \$19 | \$26 | \$22 | |
| 35 | 19 | 17 | 19 | 17 | 22 | 20 | 29 | 24 | |
| 45 | 33 | 26 | 35 | 28 | 41 | 32 | 53 | 41 | |
| 55 | 69 | 47 | 76 | 51 | 94 | 61 | 119 | 80 | |

Graded Premium Life Insurance (Policy Form No. 1410-GP et al). Includes \$70 annual policy fee. Rates for other underwriting classifications are higher.
Underwritten by First Colony Life, Lynchburg, VA,
a GE Capital Services company

GRIFFIN

continued from page 23

All the best to one of San Francisco's best.

An author among us: Eleanor Jacobs, once former mayor Frank Jordan's homeless coordinator, is now executive director of the Santa Clara Office of the United Way. More significantly, she has written a book titled *Ten Pearls of Wisdom*, subtitled "Achieving Your Goals and Capturing Your Dreams." What I didn't know about Eleanor is that she had a high-school diploma, a broken marriage, a dead-end job, and car trouble before she awakened one night with a plan of action. She is now happily married and a proud mother, and she oversees a staff of 50 and a budget of \$21.5 million. That's a book I want to read.

Gotta hand it to him: Emmett W. MacCorkle, "supreme commander" of MacCorkle Insurance Services out of San Mateo, has a corker of a promotion. He hands out 1998 pro-football

weekly schedules in lieu of cards. The postcard-size items contain a slide-out schedule for all pro-football teams, with pertinent information visible through a window, complete with cities and dates. Pretty ingenious.

Same, but different: Locally based master magician Tom Nixon has an interesting claim to fame. He hails from Whittier, California. As he says in his promotional material, he shares the same name and hometown as the former president Richard Nixon, as well as a common interest in public deception, but he does not claim the same gene pool.

Right on the money: Joseph Zanetta is vice-president for advancement at Whittier College (where Nixon went to school). He was in town last week. He tells about Tom Claussen, the former head of Bank of America. Tom returned to the bank's Glendale branch and asked about a large corporate account that Tom had landed years before. "Well, we lost it" was essentially the response. The story goes that Tom marched the bank rep right over to the company, made an

impromptu appointment with the head guy, and got the account back.

Return to sender: A story commonly known around the philanthropic community is that the head of Mervyn's made a substantial contribution to USC to endow a chair. One year, then two years, passed and there was no response as to what the university was doing with the money. Each time Mervyn's asked, USC's head guy passed the duty of responding to the query to some underling. Nothing was done and the money had to be returned. I heard it went to a local charity. Don't delegate.

Shining hour: Three hundred-and-fifty guests attended an event at the Fairmont sponsored by *Hispanic Magazine* last Wednesday night — the magazine's 1998 achievement awards. Local luminary Herman Gallegos was honored.

Derail it: There's a vicious rumor that supervisorial candidate the Rev. Amos Brown has vowed to "Run the Fangs out of town" upon the completion of the Third Street rail

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