

The Richmond is talking . . .

Join us for the first annual BalBOOa Fright Festival! Neighbors and merchants of the Balboa Street corridor are working to organize trick or treating and activities with participating merchants along Balboa Street between 35th and 40th Avenues this Halloween (Saturday, October 31).

St. Thomas the Apostle School will sponsor a festival at 39th Avenue and Balboa Street. Visitors will enjoy pumpkin decorating and costume contests as well as other Halloween-themed activities for kids and adults. To join in planning what is sure to be a fun-filled event, or for more information, contact Marjan Philhour at 415-395-6275 or by email at marjan@philhour.com.

Pedestrian walk times have increased on some signaled lights in the Richmond. Among them are Sixth, Eighth, Tenth, and Twelfth Avenues at California Street. Pedestrians crossing California Street have



an advanced walk prior to the light turning red. Walk times at the avenues have been increased to 20 seconds, and walk times at other intersections along Geary Boulevard have also been increased.

continued on page 3



UCSF campus at Laurel Heights facing massive redevelopment

The 10.3 acre UCSF property at 3333 California Street will be getting a new look. SKS Partners LLC and Prado Group, which won exclusive negotiating rights with University of California San Francisco earlier this year, signed a 99-year ground lease for the campus this month.

They will lease back the space to UCSF for the next five years while they work on development plans. The developers will meet formally with neighborhood groups in the coming months to unveil what will likely be a plan for hundreds of housing units and some retail space.

The property located at the east end of the Richmond District has had several tenants throughout San Francisco history. It has been a cemetery, an insurance

company headquarters, and just recently a school of pharmacy.

From about 1854 to the 1930s, several cemeteries occupied much of the area that now includes the University of San Francisco, Lone Mountain College, Rossi Park and the UCSF School of Pharmacy at California and Walnut Streets.

In the early 1900s, the push for land development for commercial and housing for the living residents of the city—as well as overcrowding of the cemeteries—led the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to ban future burials within the city of San Francisco.

Colma, a city south of San Francisco, was incorporated in the 1920s, and its

continued on page 3

Summer 2015 PAR Meeting

. . .

Representatives from the SFPD and SF Rec & Park, concert organizers and others will discuss issues arising from summer concerts in Golden Gate Park.

. . .

Wednesday, July 15

7 to 9 p.m.

Richmond Recreation Center
251 18th Avenue
(between Clement & California Streets)

Paid parking is available one block away in the lot behind the Alexandria Theatre between Clement Street and Geary Boulevard.

Muni: 1 California and 38 Geary

Pedestrians and bus riders to benefit from changes along Geary

The Geary Corridor, which includes Geary Boulevard and O'Farrell Street, is the most heavily used transit corridor in San Francisco.

The Geary Corridor Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project's goals are to improve bus travel times and reliability and improve pedestrian safety and access to public transportation. BRT works by giving buses their own travel lanes, operating the traffic signals to give buses the green light more of the time and enabling passengers to board and disembark faster.

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority (SFMTA) is waiting to release the Draft Environ-

mental Impact Report (EIR) for public outreach until final approval by the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA), which is expected shortly. There will be widespread public meetings when the Draft EIR is released.

Meanwhile, the SFMTA is continuing with planning and implementing Phase 1 near-term improvements that do not require FTA funding. Some were implemented in 2014 and 2015, but the remaining improvements are pending adoption of the final EIR in 2016.

Phase 2 is the full build out, including construction of center-running lanes and utility work in the Richmond

continued on page 2

Letter from the President

Dear PAR Members,

In 2012, I joined the PAR Board of Directors. There I found a group of board members deeply interested in quality of life in the Richmond. Many had been involved with PAR since its inception in 1970 when it formed in the wake of piecemeal housing development. I also found 500 PAR member households with a long commitment to Richmond District. I was recently elected president and am joined on the executive committee by Andy Thornley (vice president), Nick Belloni (vice president), Chris Wright (treasurer) and Brenda Altman (secretary).

A change in leadership portends new ideas and opportunities. That said, PAR is only as strong as its foundation. The contributions of PAR's immediate past

president, Raymond Holland, cannot be acknowledged enough. Ray headed the organization for many years and provided solid leadership. I will continue to rely on Ray for his historical knowledge.

PAR's mission is to maintain and improve the quality of life for Richmond District residents and to protect those things that are important to us all.

In the months to come, PAR's board of directors will focus on implementing a bold strategic agenda. This agenda includes tactics designed to grow PAR's membership, lead in policy development, coalesce the voices of our members and to guide our elected representatives.

In the coming year, PAR will be partnering with the many smaller neighborhood organizations in the district in an effort to support their work on issues of more local concern and to leverage PAR's strength to help such groups advance good public policy.

We will continue to focus energy on the Veterans Administration Hospital's development plans, the Presidio and the Golden Gate Recreation Area, the AT&T U-verse buildout, utilization of Golden Gate Park, development of the old Fireman's Fund building and the Geary Bus Rapid Transit project.



New PAR President Richard Correia

We will add more skilled volunteers to our committees and see that the Housing and Land Use committee continues to be staffed with the skilled volunteers required to support the needs of the Richmond.

PAR will have a greater social media presence and will be working to grow our membership role to a 1,000 member households.

We experience vacancies on the board of directors from time to time. If you would like to join PAR's board or serve on a committee, please email me at president@sfpar.org.

Richard Correia
president@sfpar.org

Officers & Directors

Officers

Richard Correia, President
Nicholas Belloni, Co-Vice President
Andy Thornley, Co-Vice President
Brenda Altman, Secretary
Christopher Wright, Treasurer

Directors

Fred Altschuler	Raymond Holland
Dan Baroni	Margie Hom-Brown
Gene Brodsky	Jason Jungreis
Julie Burns	Brian Larkin
Eliote Durham	Claire Myers
Herb Elliott	Marjan Philhour
Paul Epstein	Bill Shepard
Robert Fries	Peter Winkelstein
Sharon Gadberry	Julie Cheever (<i>alternate for Fred Altschuler</i>)

Emeritus Directors

Lynn Altschuler • Jim Lazarus • Ron Miguel
Paul Rosenberg • Michele Stratton

PAR Representatives in Other Organizations:

Friends of Mountain Lake Park Playground:
Claire Myers
Housing Action Coalition: Dan Baroni
Kaiser Permanente Citizens Task Force:
Peter Winkelstein
Neighborhood Associations for Presidio
Planning: Paul Epstein, Sharon Gadberry,
Ray Holland
Neighborhood Working Group for Presidio
Master Plan: Ray Holland
Ocean Beach Master Planning Committee:
Julie Burns
Presidio Restoration Advisory Board:
Julie Cheever
Richmond Community Coalition: Ray Holland,
Nick Belloni

Geary BRT improvements continue

continued from page 1

District. There will be widespread public hearings before Phase 2 is implemented.

Status of key Phase 1 near-term improvements:

- Side-running, transit-only lanes. Completed: Market to Gough Streets. Phase 1 Plan: Stanyan and Wood Streets, Gough Street where feasible.
- Transit signal priority extends green phase for buses. Completed: 33rd Avenue to Market and Third Streets. Phase 1 Plan: queue jumps are dedicated during bus phase to give bus priority through the intersection. Phase 1 Plan: Powell Street at O'Farrell Street and Geary Boulevard at Masonic Avenue.
- Muni forward service improvements. Completed: increased frequency of 38 and 38R, Sunday service of 38R. Phase 1 Plan: bus stop modifications, stop optimization

(move near side to far side at signals, consolidation of closely spaced stops; conversion of three rapid/local stops to local only.

- "Walk-First" safety improvements. Combination of parallel efforts and Phase 1 elements: pedestrian bulb-out curb extensions at key locations to increase pedestrian visibility, shortening crossing distances and slowing turning vehicles, pedestrian signals: new signalized crossings, new countdown signals, high-visibility crosswalks and day lighting.
- New and extended transit bulbs to provide smoother, more reliable rides. Eleven new transit bulbs and four extended bulbs.
- Japantown transportation improvements focusing on roadway redesign through Japantown, including Webster Street pedestrian bridge removal.

UCSF campus at Laurel Heights slated for change

continued from first page

land was dedicated to the relocation of San Francisco's dead to Colma, where the tongue-in-cheek motto became "It's great to be alive in Colma."

Reburial of the dead in Colma was at the families' own expense; those not reburied in individual plots were interred in mass burial sites. Abandoned tombstones were reused as building material—some can still be seen at low tide at Aquatic Park or the Wave Organ in the Marina.

Eventually all the San Francisco cemeteries were relocated to Colma, with two notable exceptions: the historic cemetery at Mission Dolores and San Francisco Presidio military cemetery.

The Fireman's Fund Insurance Company purchased the property in the 1950s and built a state-of-the-art four-

story office building, complete with outside parking and landscaping. The construction of a Christmas tree made of lights that could be seen by drivers on Pine Street approaching Masonic Avenue was a yearly holiday highlight.

UCSF purchased the site in 1985 to develop for its pharmacy school. With the development of its Mission Bay properties in the late 1990s, UCSF relocated its pharmacy school. Since early 2013, UCSF has been looking for a developer for the California Street site.

Once again, as in the early 1900s, scarcity of land for housing makes this city site valuable for development. While mixed housing and retail seem a likely use for the site, nothing has been decided.

PAR and the Laurel Heights Improvement Association will be attend-



UCSF's 10.3-acre property at 3333 California Street, now facing development, awaits its next incarnation.

ing a community meeting on July 23 to hear plans and offer input.

Neighborhood input is vital to this project. Check the PAR website (sfpar.org) for dates, times and locations of upcoming public meetings.

Richmond is talking . . .

continued from page 1

Drivers are reminded to rely only on the traffic light—rather than the countdown signal—before proceeding into an intersection. Further pedestrian safety improvements are planned for Geary.

New aquatic residents at Mountain Lake Park include the Western Pond turtle.

The turtle, native to the healthy aquatic ecosystem, was reintroduced after the aquatic plants, lake clarity and toxic removals were established. The turtles' survival depends on educating the public about its habitat. Visitors should refrain from feeding the ducks and other wildlife.



© Y. S. Krishnapada

Furthermore, unwanted aquatic pets including other turtles or goldfish, should not be set free in this newly restored habitat. An "amnesty box" for unwanted aquatic pets is on the south side of the lake. For tours of the lake or further information, contact Jason Lisenby at Jlisenby@presidiotrust.gov.

Safeway at La Playa update: The new executive management team for Safeway at La Playa is reviewing all major projects with fresh eyes.

During this internal review process, the La Playa redevelopment application remains on file with the city. The impact of the Albertson merger is so large that management has been occupied with reorganization of the store's day-to-day operation and probably will be for at least the next few months.

In the meantime, Safeway is working on an overall cleanup, which is sizable because the store had so much deferred maintenance. Ninety percent of the work is inside and related to replacing refrigeration freezers, cases, décor, etc. On the outside, Americans with Disability Act-compliant parking accommodations will be updated, and faded signage on the building will be replaced.

Got junk? Tables, desks, mattresses,

TVs and other unwanted household items should not be left on the sidewalk unless there is



a scheduled pickup by a reliable recycle service or nonprofit organization.

If you see discarded household items on the street and don't see a pickup note or "RMJ" (recycle my junk) label, call city services at 311.

If you have unwanted items, call Recology for a bulky item pickup. Tenants and homeowners are entitled to one or two free, curbside pickups of large items yearly. Don't abandon your junk on the streets we share.

continued on last page

Resolved: Actions taken by PAR

The board unanimously approved a letter to Project Director Robin Flanagan responding to the San Francisco Veterans Administration Medical Center's Environmental Impact Statement regarding the planned construction at the site.

PAR's response focused on the existing parking deficit on the city streets and

parking lots in the surrounding area. The deficit will increase with the expansion of the research facilities at Fort Miley.

PAR has suggested that the VA and UCSF move the planned research facilities to the UCSF campus at Mission Bay, which features greater capacity for on-site parking.

Join PAR now and make your voice heard.

Membership is open to all persons living, working, or owning property in the Richmond District of San Francisco. PAR is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Your contribution is tax-deductible as provided by law.

Yes! I/we want to support the Richmond District.

First name(s)		Last name	
Name of business (for business members)			
Address			
City		State	Zip
Primary phone		Cell/other phone	
E-Mail <i>PAR respects your privacy and will not share your email.</i>			
Membership			
		<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> Business
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting membership, \$15.00/year and above <input type="checkbox"/> Subscribing membership, \$25.00/year and above <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor membership, \$50.00/year and above <input type="checkbox"/> Patron membership, \$100.00/year and above			

Please complete and cut out this form and mail it together with your check (payable to the *Planning Association of the Richmond*) to

PAR
5758 Geary Boulevard, Box 356
San Francisco, CA 94121-2112

THANKS for helping to support the quality of life in San Francisco's Richmond District.

Pay Your PAR dues online!
sfpar.org/site/join-par-via-paypal.html
to join, contribute or pay your dues the easy, electronic way!

Richmond is talking

continued from page 3

The Design Lab is your space to draw, debate, engage, and, most importantly, share what you want to see at the new Presidio Parklands, 10 acres connecting the beautiful waterfront and the Presidio. How can we make this place welcoming, safe and fun for residents and tourists? The Design Lab is free and open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., seven days a week, on the Presidio's Main Post at 103 Montgomery. Guided tours and discussions for community groups are available. Call 415-561-5300 for more information.

Wanted articles and photos! Are you interested in helping out on the PAR newsletter? Become an active PAR member by becoming a contributor!

The PAR newsletter comes out quarterly prior to PAR general membership meeting. Articles cover news on parks, elder care, safety, infrastructure, development, and other Richmond District issues. We are always looking for brief news items and pictures for "The Richmond is Talking" column. Contact Brenda Altman at brendalaw@earthlink.net.

SFPAR.ORG

Don't miss a single
 PAR meeting in 2015
 Wednesdays • 7 to 9 p.m.
 Jul. 15 • Oct. 7
 Richmond Recreation Center
 251 18th Avenue

The date code above your name on the mailing label indicates when your membership expires.

