

Transportation & Planning Committee April/May update—from the Voice —Editor’s note: SEE EXPANDED INFORMATION ON 1700 MARKET STREET.

Here’s is an update on the key projects the HVNA’s Transportation & Planning Committee (T & P) has tackled since the beginning of 2015.

Affordable Housing

In March the HVNA unanimously endorsed a non-binding policy statement asking for more below market rate (BMR) housing in the Upper Market corridor. With less land for development and even less onsite inclusionary BMR housing being built in proportion to market rate housing, Upper Market neighborhood associations have organized to create a policy statement that will refuse to support any project that contains less than 20 percent BMR units on site.

HVNA’s T & P committee will consider expanding this policy statement to all of the Market/Octavia neighborhood, collaborating with neighboring organizations, as well as urge that the Board of Supervisors, planning department, and Mayor’s Office of Housing craft more aggressive measures to ensure that lower and middle class people can stay in San Francisco. This is a step in an emerging coalition to bring more affordable housing in this building boom. Residents with diverse incomes are part of a healthy city, and yet now a generation of new housing stock may be unaffordable to many would-be residents.

Octavia Boulevard Traffic Calming

HVNA has worked closely with SFMTA to produce a set of priority projects to reduce speeding, red light running, and other traffic problems around the Boulevard. Items on the priority list include pedestrian safety at the dangerous Oak and Octavia intersection, calming along the access lanes parallel to the Boulevard, bicycle safety on Page Street, and safety enhancements at the Market and Octavia intersection. In the meantime, with the repaving of Hayes Street expected soon, SFMTA has also proposed bus stop improvements and pedestrian bulb-outs as part of their “dig once” approach to repaving streets.

Tower on Market and Van Ness

Since January the T & P committee has met twice with Build Inc., which is proposing a tower at the Market and Van Ness/Oak intersection. Tentatively called “1 Oak” the project includes a 400-foot residential tower as well as required affordable housing on three of the parcels on Octavia Boulevard between Haight and Oak. With bus rapid transit coming in a few years, a pedestrian overhaul of Van Ness, and better biking facilities on Market, we continue to urge the developer to build with zero parking, provide what the M/O Plan allows. The transit-rich location of this tower, with the excessive parking proposed, will contribute to more car congestion, pedestrian/bike safety concerns.

HVNA T & P is also closely watching the proposal for the public space on Oak and Market Streets: the wind canopy and the relocated Muni Metro entrance. While all potentially good ideas, these concepts should be not draw from scarce community impact fee revenue. These fees are already obligated to important safety and traffic calming enhancements in the Market and Octavia Plan area.

HVNA is pleased that Build Inc. is proposing to put BMR units on Octavia Boulevard, within a few blocks of 1 Oak. Ideally, the best outcome for the city is 20% affordable housing within the tower itself, but the option of providing BMR nearby is promising. We also appreciate the openness of the developer in considering the needs of low-income transitional youth populations, which is what one of the Octavia parcels is obligated to serve.

This project is over a year away from the approval stages, and HVNA will continue to work closely with all interested parties in ensuring that a huge development like this works best for our community.

1700 Market Street

1700 Market Street is a proposal for 28 units at the corner of Market and Haight Streets (at the former Frame Shop). HVNA is generally supportive of the infill development here but are concerned about the housing unit mix being inconsistent with the Market and Octavia Plan. At the March 26th Planning Commission hearing at City Hall, the majority commissioners shared HVNA's concerns and requested the developer adjust the plan before getting approval. The developer has been seeking exemption from the M/O plan to avoid providing two-bedrooms and, at the time, chose avoid BMR units in the development. These two points are being discussed now, as we went to press April 13.

The two-bedroom unit mix was hard fought, and during the crafting of the Market and Octavia Plan (2000-2008), HVNA members made sure diverse housing units are built in new developments. The developer is asking for an exemption, but was also objecting to providing BMR on site. HVNA's T&P committee is hoping to help resolve the issues by the end of April.

HVNA's continuing mission

Affordable housing, and housing for diverse populations and needs is a central philosophical tenant and policy objective of HVNA and we will continue to watch projects like 1700 Market and the Tower at Market and Van Ness. The bottom line is that our community, by helping to create and champion the Market and Octavia Plan, incurred great value on land in our neighborhood, and we expect developers, with whom HVNA will continue to work collaboratively, to respectfully follow the rules.

If you are interested in affordable housing, sustainable transportation, or good urban design, contact Jason Henderson at planning@hayesvalleysf.org to get involved.

Suggested Headline: Small sub-header: Coming to Hayes Valley!

Headline: Large Community Art Space for our local artists

We are very excited that the Hayes Valley Neighborhood Assn. has been given the unique opportunity to create a neighborhood art community space on the former freeway lot know as Parcel O. This is a city-owned parcel of land (corner of Fell and Laguna Streets) on which 110 units of affordable family housing will be built beginning two years from now. HVNA will manage and have use of the land for approximately 18 months beginning in August.

We are in negotiation now to determine vision and site plan for this parcel of land which we hope will include the current construction trailer at the corner of Fell and Laguna which will house an Art Gallery and one single wide trailer along the Fell street frontage that will house an "artist in residence and workshop program" The outdoor space will be prepped with either drought tolerant grasses or a stone pebble surface so that it will be suitable an art installation area, sculpture garden and outdoor space for community gatherings and workshops.

We are defining the space usage to include our Hayes Valley community and are now calling upon the strength of our volunteer members to ensure its maximum use, enjoyment and maintenance of the space. We know that with our wealth talent in Hayes Valley from our artists, landscape architects, builders and designers, our interim use Parcel O for Hayes Valley Community Art Space, will be a very exciting activation of this site until the affordable housing construction is ready to be built.

Learn more, provide suggestions, most important, volunteer. We need your creativity. It will take a village to make this Community Art Space a reality! Remember, it's going to happen, so be a part of the innovative use of space in our neighborhood. ace@hayesvalleysf.org and president@hayesvalleysf.org.