



THE CITY STAR

SAN FRANCISCO'S FREE DAILY NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSPAPER WEDNESDAY, JULY 18, 2007

Portola Library On Its Way

Officials celebrate groundbreaking

By A.J. Fish
Special to The City Star

To any San Franciscan asking where all The City's children have gone, there is an answer. It seemed that nearly every kid in The City gathered to dance, cheer and watch Tuesday as the mayor and politicians

broke ground for the new Portola Library. The baseball diamond of Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School at the corner of Goettingen and Bacon streets, where the new library will rise in the Portola district — the only city district to see a recent increase in their population of children last year — was overflowing with kids yesterday. "Thank you for waiting 50 years," Library Commissioner Charles Higuera said Tuesday.

For half a century, the Portola Library has survived without a permanent home, hopping between rented facilities as leases expired. The 6,300 square-foot plot of land, purchased for \$1.3 million, couldn't be more appropriate for Portola's permanent home, said local parent Laura Kemp — the grounds just happen to be at the locus of three public schools. And the students of E.R. Taylor Elementary, which faces



Supervisor Sophie Maxwell speaks at the groundbreaking of the new library. COURTESY SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY

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Future Bike



TALIA SALEM/THE CITY STAR

Noe Valley resident Rhonda Price, 51, parks her bike on Castro Street before she heads off to do a little shopping. For more City Snapshots, please see page 12.

Supes Clash Over City Budget

Board members mostly in agreement with the exception of Chris Daly

By Kamala Kelkar
Special to The City Star

Chris Daly made quite a bang Tuesday at the Board of Supervisors meeting but his amendment propositions were shot down. The government and public employment funding propos-

als for the fiscal year 2007-2008 were approved by all members of the board except Daly, who was once chair of the Budget and Finance Committee. He made numerous attempts to reduce millions from programs that deal with street and sidewalk services, senior



Daly

housing and retirement plans and other general services to restore funds for affordable housing and public health, but no one seconded his motions. "This is politics over policy. This is comforting the comfortable," he said. "We're taking from the people who rely on the services of this city simply to live." Board President Aaron Peskin said he agreed with Daly, that the budget held a number

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Green Tenderloin Housing Nets Award

Local architecture projects garner national attention

An affordable housing project called the Curran House in The City's Tenderloin neighborhood that offers peaceful green spaces, a sprinkling of gardens and private balconies has drawn national attention to its designer.

The Andrea Cochran Landscape Architecture firm is scheduled to receive an award from the American Society of Landscape Architects for the Curran House this year, as well as for the design of a private residence in the city.

In addition to the Andrea Cochran Landscape Architecture firm's two awards, two

other companies in San Francisco will receive recognition for their designs.

The design firm Surfacedesign is scheduled to receive an award for its residential conception of a space fit for winding down at the end of the day, a low maintenance garden that leads to a deck and hot tub.

Hunters Point redevelopment

A national award of excellence in analysis and planning will be presented to Hargreaves Associates for a document that proposes the renovation of Hunters Point, an underprivileged community in San Francisco. Hargreaves outlined a plan called the Hunters Point Waterfront Project, which proposes a large park to bring in money, a clean-up sweep, and a plan to achieve environmental justice.

In addition to the three de-



The Curran House, at 145 Taylor St., has earned a local architecture firm an award.

sign companies scheduled to receive awards, three San Francisco landscape architects will be inducted into the ASLA

Council of Fellows. **Andrea Cochran, Bonnie Fisher and Owen Lang** will be honored for their landscape

creations, leadership, knowledge, and service to their profession.

San Francisco boasts the highest number of projects or designers to be awarded this year, and has been chosen to host this year's ASLA annual meeting from October 6 to October 9 at the Moscone Convention Center.

"We expect the largest gathering of landscape architects in history," ASLA President **Patrick W. Caughey** said in a statement regarding this year's meeting.

The ASLA promotes the landscape architecture profession through advocacy, education and membership.

The ASLA was founded in 1899 and represents over 17,600 members in 48 professional chapters and 68 student chapters.

★ LIBRARY *continued from page 1*

the library, MLK Jr. Middle School, and Philip & Sala Burton High provided a ready and ample audience for yesterday's cake-cutting ceremony and politician-shovel photo opportunity.

Hillcrest Elementary operates three blocks west of the library site and two private schools also neighbor the region.

Jonathan Auguitan and his City College classmates who form the "Jive Core Legion" breakdancing troupe performed head-spins aplenty in a pre-ceremony show.

The land, construction costs, permits and architect bills will all be paid with \$6 million from the \$106 million voter-approved Branch Library Improvement

Program bond, passed in Nov. 2000.

Friends of the Public Library plans to raise \$500,000 from a city-wide goal of \$16 million to purchase for new furniture and

Four libraries in The City's southern neighborhoods operate out of rented structures.

lighting fixtures, Friends of the Public Library Executive Director **Donna Berro** said.

Unlike other branch renovations, the Portola project received three architect bids that came in under The City's

asking price. Architect **Suzanna Meek**, with Stoner Meek Noll & Tam, said they modeled their folded exterior walls based on a "loose metaphor about books." Future patrons of the structure will peer out of windows

Like Portola's current branch, which rents space at 2450 San Bruno Ave. until the new structure opens, three other branches from The City's southern neighborhoods — Glen Park, Ingleside, and Visitation Valley — also operate out of rented structures. All four were to break ground on permanent homes between 2004-2008 as mandated by the \$106 million Branch Library Improvement Program bonds passed by voters in Nov. 2000.

★ BUDGET *continued from page 1*

of draconian cuts, but the budget is always full of trade-offs and tough decisions.

"We did the business that we were sent here to do. They were the right cuts," Peskin said.

Many concerns loomed in Daly's comments but he said the \$22 million cut from affordable housing would essentially promote gentrification in The City. He said in past years The City had a 40 percent Black population that has been whittled down to 9 percent.

He also said The City is the

only major one in America that doesn't have an increasing Latino population. The cuts that decreased 14 psychiatric beds for acutely-ill people and funding for public health nurses did not serve justice to The City's diversity, he said.

Peskin did motion to restore \$200,000 in funding for the Department of Public Health's two vacant nurse positions and the motion passed after a number of oppositions.

In addition to many other or-

dinances, the Recreation and Parks Department received approval to increase eight different fares for park accommodations such as wedding fees, athletic fees and clubhouse rental fees. Daly left the room for the majority of the voting but returned to vote "No" on the fiscal budget.

"We have a couple of tools, and only a couple of tools, to preserve this diversity. And affordable housing is one of those tools," he said. "Some of you just prefer streets."

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