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THINGS HAPPENING AND ARE GOING TO HAPPEN  
IN OUR LOVELY CITY.  
FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN MAKE IT EVEN BETTER!**



SHARP 1661 - 7th Avenue - San Francisco, CA - 94122

## **SUNSET HEIGHTS NEWSLETTER APRIL 2010**

**MINUTES OF MARCH MEETING.** The meeting was held at Secretary Friedlander's Home. Our guest speaker was Debra Baida of Liberated Spaces Debra gave us many suggestions on organizing our homes and offices covering everything from furniture to files. If you are interested in her services, her web site is: <http://www.debrabaida.com>

**NEW SHARP BUILDING.** I have been told that most likely we will hold our May meeting in our meeting room in the new building. The building has is nearly finished and now awaits certain utility connections appliances and final City approval.

**SFPD TARAVAL STATION.** Our neighborhood SFPD station, Taraval, has a new commander, Captain Denise A. Schmitt. Captain Schmitt is continuing the newsletter, albeit not on the daily basis of the former station commander.

**19th AVENUE.** You who drive 19th Avenue have undoubtedly noticed the improvements in the MUNI crossings at Judah and Taraval. Hopefully this improvement will last for the predicted 30 years.

Meanwhile one of the neighborhood papers brought up another problem that resulted from the improvement along the street. This time it's the new white pavement striping that marks the edge of pavement. Prior to this striping many drivers parked with two of their car's wheels sitting on the sidewalk. The previous captain of the Taraval Station was willing in many cases to allow this. For you legal types, such parking is prohibited by Section 22500 of the California Vehicle Code (CVC). This section reads as follows:

22500. No person shall stop, park, or leave standing any vehicle whether attended or unattended, except when necessary to avoid conflict with other traffic or in compliance with the directions of a peace officer or official traffic control device, in any of the following places:

f) On any portion of a sidewalk, or with the body of the vehicle extending over any portion of a sidewalk, except electric carts when authorized by local ordinance, as specified in Section 21114.5. Lights, mirrors, or devices that are required to be mounted upon a vehicle under this code may extend from the body of the vehicle over the sidewalk to a distance of not more than 10 inches.

Although parking on the sidewalk appears reasonable in view of the close quarters on 19th Avenue and the widening of the parking area by about one foot, the new captain of the Taraval Station has directed her officers to enforce the CVC and cite vehicles with wheels on the sidewalk. However, motorists who park legally—with no wheels on the sidewalk—have complained of having their cars sideswiped or the right rear view mirrors damaged. That does not excuse motorists from parking properly: on the roadway and off of the sidewalk. My personal observations are that (a) motorists should avoid parking on 19th Avenue, (b) if you must park there, before leaving or entering your car look upstream of traffic and be certain that the next traffic signal upstream displays red and there is no traffic on 19th Avenue traffic coming towards you and (c) be aware that side street traffic can legally turn right when 19th Avenue signals are red and suddenly be upon you.

**PEDESTRIAN SAFETY.** You who walk have noted the installation of so-called “Count Down” pedestrian signals all over town. They are now the city of SF standard. You may think that these signals provide some special privileges for pedestrians. They do not! Currently the CVC does not mention these signals and so I cannot advise pedestrians what to do when the countdown begins. As for pedestrians, these signals provide no special privileges. CVC Section 21456 states in part, no pedestrian shall start to cross the street in the direction of the signal when the flashing or steady "DONT WALK" or "WAIT" or approved "Upraised Hand" symbol is displayed, but any pedestrian who has partially completed crossing shall proceed to a sidewalk or safety zone or otherwise leave the roadway while the "WAIT" or "DON'T WALK" or approved "Upraised Hand" symbol is showing. You will note that while the pedestrian signal is “counting down” a steady “Upraised Hand” is displayed and pedestrians shall follow the above requirements. The intent of these signals is to advise pedestrians when the pedestrian signal interval ("Upraised Hand" symbol) will end and the yellow interval will begin and thus know whether or not they should walk faster.

another feature of some of the newer count down signals is a continuous rather raucous sound coming from the push button housing. This is to direct the visually impaired (blind in non-politically correct language) to where the pedestrian push button is. A different audible sound indicates when the WALK signal begins.

**INTERSECTION WORK.** You have undoubtedly noted the extensive construction work going on at various intersections, particularly along Irving Street. I have checked with DPW and found that this has to do with the construction of more wheel chair ramps at the intersections. CCSF also included some sidewalk repair, hence the extension of the work away from the corner. The fact that these ramps benefit skateboarders is of note.

**PG&E.** Members who live on 10th Avenue and certain side streets have endured the presence of the PG&E recently. The utility is installing new flexible gas service lines as well as new “smart” (remote reading) gas meters. They also added a gas pressure regulator, which means a vent out of the front of some houses. And as long as they were in the house they favored us with a “smart” electric meter. There is still a question as how accurate these new meters are and the PUC is still investigating. The problem is that too often they tend to err in favor of PG&E.

**STATE SENATOR LELAND Y. YEE.** Senator Yee continues his crusade to make transparent the activities of all public agencies. His latest target is the California State University System and their alleged financing of a speech by a former vice-presidential candidate (no names, please). Senator Yee has likened this matter to Watergate. In another area, Senator Yee recently teamed-up with San Francisco Supervisor Eric Mar, the American Lung Association, doctors, and firefighters to introduce legislation that would mandate health insurance policies to include coverage for tobacco cessation services such as patches, nasal sprays, inhalers, gum, prescription medications, and counseling.

**STATE ASSEMBLYWOMAN FIONA MAR.** Assemblywoman Mar was recently honored by being appointed Speaker pro Tempore of the California Assembly. She is the first Asian-American woman to hold this position. As the *San Francisco Chronicle* put it, “Ma’s new title means the former SF supervisor will preside over most floor sessions, essentially serving as the face of the lower house during policy deliberations.”

**SUPERVISOR SEAN ELSBERND.** Supervisor Elsbernd is currently focusing on a reform of Muni and will discuss this at our next meeting. Given the ingrained wasteful practices that have been incorporated into past legislation, his will be an uphill battle. However, the city’s unions are now realizing that the money just isn’t there for all these employees and are slowly giving in. The stress of negotiating was so great for Irwin Lum, the president of the Muni operator’s union, that he had to take a vacation in Paris.

Your editor has been on a spell of sick leave since the first of the year. He finds that he has recovered enough to continue the newsletter. However the comprehensive discussion of pedestrian safety will have to wait for a while.

**Editor’s Note:** If you have any information or thoughts you would like included in the newsletter please mail or e-mail it to me at this address:

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## Renew Your Membership or Join SHARP

**The Sunset Heights Association of Responsible People (SHARP)** is a 100+ year old neighborhood organization open to anyone who lives or works in the area bounded by Lincoln Blvd, 7<sup>th</sup> Ave-Laguna Honda, Dewey-Taraval, and 19th Avenue. We are a member-supported organization devoted to neighborhood improvement, with dues set at \$10 per person annually. Please renew your membership for 2009 and 2010 or join us by filling out and returning the coupon below.

**Mail Coupon to:** SHARP, 1661 7th Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94122

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