



May 2024 News

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Tuesday, May 21, 6:30 PM – Zoom

CSFN General Assembly Meeting Program:

Rob Avino, Together SF Report on Mayoral Debate

And CSFN Board Elections

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZludOGpqz0qGdeFyYUdrv0HK3IVCfGnnf3E>



Drama is on the Menu for this Election Season: Parties are confused about the rules of engagement forcing candidates to work harder for our votes in spite of all the turmoil.

Watch for Mayoral Candidate Forums and Debates - Top 5 out of 47 (last we heard)

Peskin - aaron2024.com

Lurie - daniellurie.com

Farrell - markfarrell.com

Breed - londonformayor.com

A President's Journey: From Pre-Covid Inauguration To The Present Elections



When I took office in 2019, everything was normal - or so it seemed. With the help of members of the Dinner Committee, plans were made for the annual Holiday Fundraiser Dinner at Patio Espanol in December. Journalist Heather Knight was to be our speaker, and Stop Crime SF was an honoree. The city was humming along, and so were we. I chaired General Assembly meetings at Northern Station, attended various committee meetings there and at Taraval Station, and oversaw CSFN involvement in city and neighborhood issues. A good time was had by all at Patio Espanol!

And then Covid changed everything. Eventually in March 2020 the General Assembly meeting was cancelled, and with the help of several officers we arranged to have meetings on Zoom instead of in person. The transition went smoother than I anticipated, and eventually we had more attendees than before! Committee meetings were Zoom meetings also, and plans were eventually made for a Holiday Happy Hour on Zoom. Attendees wore festive garb; we sipped our beverages of choice and listened to Capt. Kevin Paulson-Fisher, who had gone from running Civil Jail 5 to being a Chronicle columnist. Prior to this there was an election for Officers and an inauguration overseen by BOS President Walton, both on Zoom!

So we soldiered on. Our membership changed, as some organizations stopped meeting, but our concern was as always for the SF Neighborhoods, "not of some, but for all " as I said when identifying myself and giving testimony, now allowed online for SF Government meetings. A non-holiday fundraiser was suggested, so we had a Gala Comedy Cabaret on Zoom with graduates of the Comedy Academy in the fall of 2021. Citywide redistricting came about; we championed our own plan, authored by our friend Christopher Bowman, the first time we had ever done this!

We were concerned about homelessness, so we supported Rescue SF and Supervisor Mandelman's " A Place for All " plan. Stop Crime SF also was important to us. We had city speakers such as City Administrator Carmen Chu, BOS president Aaron Peskin, and Controller's Office representatives to inform us on finances. We also heard from State Controller Betty Yee. There were ballot measures to discuss and endorse, for we prided ourselves on being vigilant! We even worked with the Ethics Commission on a ballot measure reforming city behested payments (It finally passed too!) On April 18, 2023, the 117th anniversary of the 1906 earthquake, we had a news-making panel discussion on the documented, yet largely concealed, risks facing many of our city's high-rise buildings.

We had our Semi-Centennial year in 2022 and organized a Celebration at the Flood mansion honoring one of our founders Martin Macintyre. Last year we had a Celebration Plus One at the same venue, with the same success, honoring departing City Controller Ben Rosenfeld.

In the last year we've added some new members on the Westside. We've seen other changes as well, joining forces with, and contributing to Livable California and Catalysts. For the latter one I led a CSFN SF team to Lobby Day in Sacramento both last year and this, to resist state takeover of local control of planning. The General Assembly approved a different Newsletter format, with coeditors. We're even considering having a benefit auction this year.

Which brings us to now. I am not running for reelection as President but am standing for First Vice President. The other candidates are Glenn Rogers, whom you know, for President; Lee Anne Prifti, of Diamond Heights NA, for second VP; Mari Eliza for Corresponding Secretary; Deborah Murphy of Mid Sunset Neighborhood Association for Recording Secretary; Greg Scott for Treasurer. For Members at Large we have Mary Harris of Ocean, Merced, Ingleside Neighbors in Action; David Osgood. President of Rincon Point Annex; and Steve Ward, President of Lay Playa Park Coalition,

Excelsior: onward and upward



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Support Our Neighborhoods

CSFN Board Candidates For MAY 21, 2024, Election (as of April 4, 2024):

PRESIDENT - Glenn Rogers, current Vice President, formerly Corresponding Secretary, President of Parkmerced Action Coalition, Landscape Architect D-7

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT - Charles Head, current President, formerly Recording Secretary, Past President of Sunset Heights Association of Responsible People, Retired History Teacher D-7

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT - Lee Ann Priffiti, Past President of Diamond Heights Improvement Club, City and County of SF employee, SF Labor Council and DCC D-08

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY - Mari Eliza, Interim Recording Secretary, Member at Large, Artist D-9

RECORDING SECRETARY - Deborah Murphy, current Member at Large, Board Member of Mid-sunset Neighbors Association, Online Bridge Instructor D-4

TREASURER - Greg Scott, current Treasurer, Pacific Heights Residents Association, Certified Public Accountant D-2

Initiative to limit the number and power of unelected Commissions.

By Rob Avila, of Together SF, our presenter for the May 21, GA

San Francisco has over 130 commissions and committees, more than double that of other major cities in California like Los Angeles and San Diego, and they hold a lot of influence over our city government. Currently, unelected city commissioners are responsible for hiring and firing most City department heads and developing departmental policy, making it impossible to hold City officials responsible for their performance. Some departments have multiple commissions with authority over their activities, creating confusion and inertia in solving problems. One commission even oversees a department that no longer exists.

TogetherSF Action is putting a measure on the November 2024 ballot to fix this. If passed, their ballot measure will kick off a public process to reduce the number of commissions San Francisco has from 130 to 65, remove commissions' ability to hire and fire department heads, and make most commissions purely advisory bodies so they are no longer creating policy for departments like the SFPD. This measure will help create clearer lines of authority in city government and put power back in the hands of voters so they can effectively evaluate the performance of our city officials and elected leaders.

You can find more resources about the measures here. Any questions can be sent to their team at hello@togethersf.org

Update on Legislation and Lawsuits: Neighborhood Relief is on the Menu

The SB9 case went our way: I can share some notes from Attorney Pam Lee re: the LA County District Court's ruling. The judge ruled that SB. 9 is unconstitutional as it applies to charter cities *and the reach goes beyond housing issues*. The judge addressed the issue of local control and community autonomy as it is written into the California State Constitution. Pam cautioned us that the state may appeal and the Legislators may amend the bill to meet those requirements, but, that will take a while. The most effective way to stop the bills is to vote for new leaders in November.

This law could be applicable to all charter cities. *San Francisco is a Charter City.* There are 2 requirements that the State legislation is supposed to meet that SB9 fails to meet:

The court found that it did not meet either of these 2 requirements, and therefore SB. 9 was struck down as unconstitutional.

1. It must be reasonably related to furthering affordable housing.
2. It must be narrowly tailored as a law not to unnecessarily interfere with local governance.

There are a lot more details on this case and there is another case that is under appeal for General Law cities. The state may appeal this in a higher court but if they lose in a higher court, that ruling could apply to all Charter Cities.

Some local Legislation has also gone our way lately. Aaron Peskin convinced the Supervisors to protect the Marina Green and some historic neighborhood areas. He also convinced the Mayor to back off on some of her most egregious density bills. Most of the candidates for Mayor claim they want to *densify the downtown* with housing first and spare the West side Neighborhoods. There are some creative financing ideas being floated by Aaron for affordable housing programs. Things are kind of looking up.

West Portal was saved for the moment. Frida Kahlo Way was not.

Alert: Save 10 big beautiful trees

By Dave Osgood

Please call in to the SF Board of Appeals this Wednesday evening, May 15, to oppose an appeal that, if granted, would kill 10 large and healthy Ficus trees at the northwest corner of Mission and Spear. Yes, you can still call in (details below).

The corporate building owner (60 Spear) claims the trees cause “flooding” but offers no solid evidence. Not surprisingly the Bureau of Urban Forestry (BUF) rubber stamped their removal. A hearing was held at DPW and the Director, Carla Short, reversed BUF. The property owner is now appealing Short’s decision, and we are opposing his appeal. In an odd and mysterious turn of events, one “Urban Forester” wrote May 9th to say “...Public Works will now support the appeal.” Did someone tell them to support the building owner? How does one person at BUF overrule the Director? The appeal hearing will still be held this Wednesday evening.

I met with the building’s owners on site, and their biggest complaint was about “staining” on the basement walls. That’s what they show in their photographs. The building is 58 years old and has one of those basements that extends under the sidewalk and adjacent to the street’s gutters and drains. They are usually damp, dark and dank. Pipes often leak and break. When the matter got to the comprehensive DPW hearing, and their lawyer was involved, suddenly we started hearing about “flooding.” They offer no details about how the trees cause flooding. The Director ruled against them and they are now appealing her thoughtful decision. They are calling Director Short’s decision “arbitrary”. I attended the DPW hearing and it was complete. The owners simply didn’t make their case.

The 10 trees are in 4 foot planter boxes and only cover 40 feet of the approximately 256 feet of sidewalk (or about 16%) in front of the building. Of course the trees get blamed for 100% of the water seepage. We believe the owners want to remove the trees to show off the building’s street level storefronts which they plan to remodel. BUF applauds the owners’ plans to plant 3 foot high replacements. We call them twigs.



The trees are item #5 at this Wednesday’s (5/15) hearing which starts at 5:30 PM. It’s easy to watch the hearing on channel 78, go about your normal business, and call in when they get to item 5. You know the drill:

Call 1-669-900-6833 and enter the meeting ID: 820 2140 8763. To comment please dial *9 during item 5 and this will show a raised hand. Staff will allow you to speak when it is your turn. (You may have to dial *6 to unmute yourself.)

More info can be had at: <https://www.sf.gov/meeting/may-15-2024/board-appeals-hearing-may-15-2024>

STONESTOWN MALL



Review by Glenn Rogers

The project was unanimously passed by all Commissioners of the Planning Committee. Most notably, Commissioner Vice President Kathryn Moore, described the project as “transformational”. In addition, the Sierra Club San Francisco chapter, endorsed the project. During “Public Comment” only one individual questioned the findings of the report.

Advantages of the Project are:

- *27 acres of parking lots will be converted into mixed use housing, commercial space and parks
- *6 acres of parks including paths, plazas and a farmer’s market will be included.
- Retail center to become a Town Center.
- 20% of the housing will be Affordable.
- 3,500 total housing units are to be built.
- 300 units will be Affordable.
- 390 will be in lieu housing to be built elsewhere.
- 200 senior housing units are to be provided.
- 7,000 sq. foot senior center to be provided.
- Hotel concept was removed and added 400 more residential units.
- Childcare for 100 children will be provided.
- YMCA building will be torn down and replaced with new structure for the same use.
- New YMCA or new owner to pay Brookfield \$1 a year.
- \$1 million to be donated to Park and Recreation for future improvements.
- For every tree removed, 2 new trees will be replaced.
- Land grant could allow property to be much less expensive.
- Rental units to rent for 100% of AMI.
- Home ownership to be 110% of AMI.
- Shadow present at Rolph Nicol Jr. Park in the morning to be only 11%.

Disadvantage of the Project is:

- Low income housing not allowed in this development.

TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR CSFN GA MAY 21, 2004

- 6:30 PM Call to order, approval of agenda
- 6:40 PM Spotlight: Frank Noto, SHARP
- 6:45 PM Program: Rob Avino, Together SF

- 7:30 PM Business Meeting: (*Excuse guests*)
- Officer Reports
- Committee Reports
- Approval of draft Minutes for April 2024 GA
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- 8:30 Special Order: Officer Election of Officers and Members at Large of the Executive Committee
- For the Good of the Order:
- 8:40 PM Adjournment

DRAFT MINUTES FOR CSFN GENERAL ASSEMBLY APRIL 16, 2024

- Call to order was at 6:40
- Spotlight: Steve Ward, (La Playa Neighbors)
- Program: Robert Feinbaum (Save Muni) and Renee Lazar (SON SF) discussed the SFMTA and the Muni Train Coupling controversy.
- Officers Reports: President Head reported on Lobby Day with Barbara Heffernan (CVA), and then on the CSFN elections; Vice President Rogers spoke on SF Tomorrow ; Corresponding and Recording Secretaries had no reports; Treasurer same. State and Federal Liaison Boken reported on the California Coastal Commission.
- Committee Reports: Chair Rogers spoke about a Gold Hydrogen article; G&E Chair Wooding reported on voter turnout and candidates; Land Use Chair Mari Eliza stressed signing the petition against SB 951; Open Space Chair Rogers spoke about the Ocean View Library.
- Draft Minutes for the March minutes were approved.
- Unfinished Business: the Nominations Committee reported on the candidate slate for May's election; the Earthquake Shack appeal failed.
- New Business: the SPEAK resolution on the SFMTA Muni Train Coupling was approved.
- For the Good of the Order: The Benefit Auction proposal was discussed further and will be more in Ex. Comm.
- Adjournment was at 8:35

CSFN Meetings: The public is always invited to our General Assemblies on the third Tuesday of each month, and to attend committee meetings and town halls. In addition to the members of our organizations we have many Friends of CSFN that contribute! We are transparent and cast a wide net to attract all those interested in improving San Francisco and all of its neighborhoods.

Send articles and other materials you want to share to: csfninfo@gmail.com

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