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Visitacion Valley Grapevine - Valley News - May 2009

Dawn of New Era Finally Arrives in Visitacion Valley



Pulvirizer tears down a building at the former Schlage Lock factory on Bayshore Boulevard.

by Fran Martin

Tuesday, April 21, 2009 was a red letter day for Visitacion Valley. On this auspicious day, demolition began at the former Schlage Lock facility.

In related news, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to create the Visitacion Valley Redevelopment Area. Mayor Newsom is required to sign the documents to approve and finalize the formation of the Redevelopment Area. These two major events mark the beginning of a new era in Visitacion Valley. Now that the way is clear to develop the Schlage Lock site, the community can

one day look forward to a grocery store, jobs, housing, open space and prosperity in a unifying new development.

This is the culmination of 10 years of efforts on the part of the Visitacion Valley Planning Alliance, a grassroots community organization, which has advocated for community planning at Schlage Lock, as well as the entire Valley. Since 1999, VVPA has held monthly educational meetings about transportation and land use issues and has advocated for housing, open space, neighborhood serving retail and community amenities.

The community, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, Planning Department staff, and the developer, Universal Paragon Corporation, have all worked together to get to this point. The Redevelopment Citizen's Advisory Committee has also met monthly for over two years. The remediation (toxics clean up) and demolition processes are being directed by Mary Hashem and Stuart Miner, Principals at Brownfield Partners, an urban infill and brownfield development company. They in turn are working with sub-contractors Recycled Materials Corporation, American Demolition and MACTEC to complete the work.

Demolition will take about three months and the remediation will take a little less than three years. Pre-demolition work, including removal of asbestos and lead contaminants (abatement) and stripping of useful metal materials, has actually been going on for a few months, but was largely contained within the buildings. Since the asbestos and lead have been already removed, there is less chance of harmful dust from the demolition process.

From Tunnel Avenue, you can get a view of the work, which proceeds from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Thursday. You will see workers spraying water on the demolition debris to minimize dust and giant wrecking machines, such as the Pulverizer, taking bites out of the concrete four stories high. It is interesting to watch, if you get a chance.

The demolition is the physical manifestation of the big changes coming to the Valley. Actual vertical construction will not happen for a few years. At that time, a significant number of jobs will be available.

In the meantime, Brownfield Partners is working with CityBuild to put some local residents to work on the project and to help create a training program for similar projects around the city. It is important that there be accountable job training and preparation for hiring for local community members, which is in the works. Shown in the accompanying photo is Dora Uiagalelei from Visitacion Valley who is a union member currently working at the site.

It is critical that community members stay focused and involved in the design process to insure that the new development will be beautiful, green and sustainable. Meanwhile, we should all take a moment to celebrate our victory and dream about a new, revitalized Visitacion Valley.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the demolition, please call J.C. Wolford, Site Supervisor at the site at (415) 505-8083 or Mary Hashem at 215-2813.

Mary Hashem will be at the next Visitacion Valley Planning Alliance meeting on Saturday, May 9, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon to discuss the demolition and remediation processes, There will also be an update on ongoing Valley issues. For further information, please call (415) 468-0639.



Dora Uiagalelei is from Visitacion Valley.

Visitacion Valley Neighborhood Library Campaign Gets Started

by Betty Parshall

On March 31, about 22 people met at the library on Leland Avenue to learn about the Neighborhood Library Campaign. Marian Chatfield-Taylor from the Friends of the Library passed out printed information sheets and discussed how and why the neighborhood campaigns work.

There are two overall purposes of the campaign. First, to raise money for those things that public bond money cannot cover, that is furniture, fixtures, up-to-date technology and other equipment. The bond money covers renovation or construction of buildings, but not the furnishings.

The second purpose of the campaign is to increase neighborhood support for its library and for a superior public library system in San Francisco. Each Neighborhood Library Campaign Committee will be active for about 2 years, will meet at least monthly, and can expect to devote an average of five or six hours a month to their campaign. The roles of committee members are varied:

*Provide local direction and implementation for their Neighborhood Library Campaign.

*Partner with the Friends of the Library staff to recruit and involve diverse community members to work on the Campaign.