

PANIL Notes

Volume 33

Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League - PO Box 20375, Oakland 94620

June/July 2008

Kaiser Hospital Redesign Draws Praise, But Some Concerns Remain

By Valerie Winemiller

In May, revised plans for the new Kaiser Hospital building were presented to the Oakland Planning Commission's Design Review Committee and received several positive responses from the audience at the meeting, even though many neighbors said they have continuing concerns. The new team of architects from NBBJ, led by Jeffrey Bailey, received thanks and praise for finding solutions that Kaiser had earlier said "could not be done." For example, in the new design, entrances for truck deliveries have been moved off Piedmont Avenue to Broadway. Trucks will

enter the hospital from Broadway to a dock completely hidden underground. The project will occupy the entire block from MacArthur to the 580 overpass, between Broadway and Piedmont Ave. with the hospital tower, clinics and services such as MRI, administration space, garage, and a plaza for a farmers' market and other activities.



Architects' rendering of the Kaiser hospital replacement with landscaping and background structures removed. Broadway is to the right, MacArthur to the left.

The landscape designers were praised for their efforts to enhance the streetscape and buildings and to minimize water runoff with landscaping. Plans show two inner courtyards that punctuate the podium base of the tower. And there is discussion underway of a rooftop garden on the low-rise section which could be a much more pleasant sight for hillside neighbors whose houses look down on it than the usual tar and gravel with condenser units.



A pedestrian sky bridge connects the Mosswood office building with the new garage. The 580 overpass is just out of view to the right. This design proposes a very utilitarian cement column in the middle of Broadway.

There remains some controversy over use of stucco panel siding in some areas, as a number of neighbors are concerned that their texture will quickly collect freeway grit and look shabby. In other areas, metal panels and ceramic tiles will be used. Commissioners expressed concern over the architectural treatment at the important intersection of Broadway and MacArthur. While they praised the ground floor transparency, they said design would be better if the floors above could "address the intersection" and if the window patterns looked less monotonous.

Neighbor George Horton, who is an architect, critiqued the tower. It is still an undifferentiated block, he said, needing 3-D or 2-D variation. Its windows are too regular, and window details will likely be lost at this scale.

Continued on page 2

PANIL Monthly Meeting: Wed., July 16 — 7:30 p.m.

Summer Walks/Rides/Sails in Oakland

Save Gas, Learn about Oakland, Improve Your Health!

Speakers from Oakland Heritage Alliance, City of Oakland, Oakland Museum, Port of Oakland talk about great things to do this summer.

And, representatives from the City of Oakland tell us about the Bicycle Plan for the city.

**Piedmont Gardens, 110 41st Street
11th Floor Sky Room**

**Piedmont Avenue
Neighborhood
Improvement League**
PO Box 20375
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Problem Solving Officer

Kaiser Hospital (continued from page 1)

In the first detailed drawing of the sky bridge to connect the Mosswood office building with the new garage, we see that a cement support column was placed in the middle of the public street below. The unattractive column has the potential to become a traffic safety obstruction, and would certainly preclude configuring of the street lanes in the future to accommodate changes in traffic patterns or transit. The bridge itself is potentially interesting, but more information is needed, including views showing the sky bridge in context with the freeway, before comments can be formulated.

Most neighbors testified that the community workshop process had been far more productive than the meetings during the Environmental Review and zoning permits process. Kaiser's new team of architects from NBBJ proved more creative and responsive to neighborhood concerns expressed in the workshops. The project is still unavoidably massive in scale for the neighborhood, however. Neighbor Charlie Milgrim got the biggest laugh of the evening when she praised the revisions, and then added, "I still hate it, but not as much."

Kaiser's full presentation is available on the city's website as a 3-part PDF file.

At www.Oaklandnet.com, select Jump to a Department, Community and Economic Development Agency Planning and Zoning Major Projects. Then scroll down to Kaiser Hospital Design Review. Download the staff report and 3 PDF documents of the pictures under Design Review Committee, May 28, 2008.



Main entry to hospital and garage on Broadway, viewed from Mosswood Park. The existing traffic light at the Mosswood office building would be moved here. Pedestrians, but not vehicles, could walk through to Piedmont Ave., across from Westall Street. The garage would be partially covered by a "green wall," and solar panels sit on its top floor. The architects use changes in building color and materials to help mark entrances.



In this view of Piedmont from Westall to the 580 overpass, a landscaped pedestrian plaza connects Glen Echo Creek and Westall with Mosswood Park. The Central Utility Plant is set behind trees. The driveway at the right leads to the emergency room entrance; ambulances are to park under a hidden overhang.

THIS IS THE 13TH YEAR

John Street Jumble June 28!

The John Street neighborhood holds its 13th annual Jumble Sale on June 28. When, back in 1996, Julia Curtis and Lesley Mandros Bell decided that it might be more fun to have a block-long event than individual garage sales, they had no idea how many people would share their enthusiasm. The first one expanded to include most of their block, with neighbors happily exchanging furniture and other treasures and selling to visitors. Each year found more people asking to join, until the year when over 65 sales happened simultaneously!

Now, volunteers leaflet the area a month or so in advance to spread the word. Neighbors can set up in front of their own houses or find a John Street resident to lend them some sidewalk. Some entrepreneurs will prepare an array of baked goods for hungry buyers. Sellers help offset copying and advertising costs by pitching in \$2 per stall.

There always seems to be enough interest to keep neighbors going through attics and garages for the next sale. Unusual items often appear. Etchings, antique furniture and collectibles turn up, as well as a great array of household goods, clothing and toys.

This year the Jumble will be on Saturday June 28, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., centered on the 100 block of John Street. Parts of Howe, Montgomery, Gilbert, View, and Mather are expected to be hosting sales also. Come by and see.



"Sale organizers Lesley Mandros Bell and Julia Curtis, accompanied by neighbor Sarah Abrams, enjoy John Street Jumble."

Calendar

(for more neighborhood events go to www.panil.org/calendar)

PANIL Meeting

2nd Wednesday of the month
7:30 to 9 p.m.
Piedmont Gardens
110 41st Street
11th Floor Sky Room

PANIL Steering Committee

email contact@panil.org for time, date and place of monthly meeting

Glen Echo Creek Work Day

2nd Saturday of the month
Monte Vista Avenue, 9:30 a.m.
654-1930

Mt. View Cemetery Tour

Docent led tour
2nd Saturday of the month
10 a.m., FREE

Events at the Chapel of the Chimes

4499 Piedmont Avenue
654-0123

Historical and Botanical Tour

3rd Saturday of the month
10 a.m. to noon, FREE

Jazz at the Chimes

3rd Sunday of the month
\$20/children under 12 FREE
2 to 4 p.m.

Oakland Heritage Alliance Lecture Series

Thursday lectures start again in January

\$8 OHA members/\$10 non-members/\$5 low income
For more information contact:
www.oaklandheritage.org,
763-9218

Piedmont Avenue Branch Library

160 41st Street, 597-5011

Storytimes

Toddlers
Wednesday, 10:15 a.m.
Pre school
Wednesday, 11 a.m.

Saturday Knitting Club
Every Saturday 3 to 4 p.m.

To place an item on PANIL's calendars, send e-mail to: contact@panil.org

Summer Session Drawing Lessons in July Acrylic and Watercolor Workshops in August

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The Changing Scene

by ShopGirl

Say hello to...

Optimum Pilates relocated in March from Montclair to 3966 Piedmont Ave. (second floor). The studio offers group classes, private and semiprivate sessions, and independent workouts for experienced Pilates enthusiasts. The Pilates workout emphasizes flexibility, core strength, and balance, and is often recommended for rehabilitation from injuries. Call 508-1408 or visit optimumpilates.com to see full descriptions and schedules.

Tango Gelato, purveyor of authentic Argentine-style gelato, has joined forces with Rockridge's **LuluRae Confections**, so you can satisfy your sugar craving in many ways under one roof. LuluRae sells locally produced XOX truffles as well as goodies from around the world: Turkish Delight, licorice, old-fashioned lemon drops, caramels, and nut clusters. Drop in at 4184 Piedmont (across from the movie theater) or call 655-5014. On the web: tangogelato.com, lulurae.com.

The space long occupied by Connie's beauty salon has been rented to **Royal Handicrafts**, formerly of Berkeley. The store will sell gifts and jewelry from Thailand and Nepal. No word yet on an opening date; check the location at 4212 Piedmont.

A new spa, **Sol y Mar**, has moved in at 3923 Piedmont, where Meditrina World Healing Spa used to be. The décor and treatment options evoke a tropical oasis; services include facials, peels, many types of massage, and body polishes and "cocoon," as well as special treatments for men. Enjoy complimentary refreshments in the tea room before your treatment. Call 601-7111 for an appointment. On the web: solymardayspa.com.

Say farewell to...

Women's clothing retailer **Abigail** is having a closeout sale and moving to Alameda sometime in the autumn. Owner Gail King is looking for a more intimate space in which to offer her upscale fashions and lingerie, and hopes her Oakland fans will seek her out after the move. 4167 Piedmont Ave., 985-0446.

Capoeira Mandinga, the Brazilian dance/martial arts studio above the Mille Fiore flower stand, is relocating to Broadway.

Piedmont Lighting, on the avenue for 11 years, is having a going-out-of-business sale. Stop by to check out some excellent bargains on lamps and lighting fixtures and to say good-bye to owner Siavash Haddad: 4094 Piedmont Ave., 923-1115.

Switching places...

After 54 years in the same Piedmont Ave. location, kitchen and bath designers **J.B. Turner & Sons** are relocating up the street, to 1866 Pleasant Valley Road.

Three avenue hair salons are changing locations: **Hair Worcz on Piedmont** is moving upstairs from its current 4131 Piedmont Ave. location; **Studio 88** is moving down the block into the old Hair Worcz space; and **Gerard's Hair Design**, formerly upstairs at 4125 Piedmont Ave., has moved downstairs.

Applying for permits...

A beer and wine retailer has applied for permits to move into 4183 Piedmont, next door to L'Amyx and the former home of clothing retailer Ecclesiastique.

The owners of the popular Italian restaurant **Dopo** have applied to open **Scopa**, a wine bar, on the ground floor of Il Piemonte, corner of Piedmont and Pleasant Valley.

Both businesses require special permits from the city with formal public comment periods. The sale of alcohol also requires review by Oakland Police Department and a license from the state of California. OPD has opposed past applications at the corner of Piedmont and Linda, due to city codes regulating the number of nearby alcohol outlets, especially when near schools.

P.S. Do you have news about avenue shops and services? A suggestion for a future ShopGirl column? E-mail me at shopgirl@panil.org.

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REMOVE A STORY, DEVELOPER URGED

412 Monte Vista at City Hall

On Wednesday, May 28, the Design Review Committee of the Oakland Planning Commission considered the 40-condo development proposed for 412 Monte Vista Ave. next to Plymouth Church. In this proposal, the existing historic mansion would be moved, lifted and divided into condos, and a new seven story building would be added to the rear and side of the lot. (See our March 2007 issue archived at www.panil.org for pictures.) The May 28 meeting was focused on the new construction portion of the project and questions of its height, bulk and massing.

Naomi Schiff of Oakland Heritage Alliance questioned the timing: why were we having this discussion now when the Environmental Impact Study is still underway, looking at impacts on historic resources and traffic, as well as considering alternatives such as fewer units? Schiff suggested that it was difficult to discuss part of the project in isolation, without having any EIR data.

Several neighbors raised concerns of traffic, parking, and shadows, pointing out that other buildings in the area are three to four stories tall – about half the height of the proposed building. An Olive Ave. resident brought a petition with 30 signatures documenting opposition to the size. Valerie Winemiller, speaking for PANIL, agreed with Schiff's concerns.

Normally, zoning codes require setbacks and buffering when high density abuts lower density housing. Wine-miller said PANIL takes a dim view of city zoning staff's interpretation that those codes do not apply because adjoining property is in Piedmont, not Oakland.

All three committee members praised the architect, but two of them raised concerns about the project's height. It was Committee chair Suzy Lee who said she thought "the design fits the neighborhood well."

Commissioner Huntsman pointed out that the project is not really on a "transit corridor" as claimed, but there is a constant flow of [auto] commuters on the streets. After the hearing, zoning staff stated that they would be taking direction more from the two commissioners who urged consideration of a slightly lower building, because Commissioner Lee's term had ended and the May 28 hearing was her last meeting.

Bike Racks on Piedmont Avenue

About 200 racks are scheduled to be installed throughout Oakland by the end of the year with funds from the state Transportation Development Act.

Two white dots mark places on Piedmont Avenue that are proposed locations for new bicycle racks, according to the city's Neighborhood Bike Parking Plan from the Bicycle / Pedestrian Facilities Program.

The plan shows the criteria for locating bicycle racks, maps of proposed rack locations, and information on bicycle rack types, options for property owners and merchants, and other relevant information. To see the plan, go to <http://www.oaklandpw.com/Page127.aspx#NBPP> or www.oaklandbikes.info.

District 1 City Council Member Jane Brunner has already used some of her discretionary transportation funds to help alleviate the shortage of parking for bicycles in the Piedmont and Rockridge areas. Thirty-six new bike parking racks were installed in these areas in January 2008.

If you know of a good location for a bicycle rack, review the guidelines and submit your location request by e-mail to bikeped@oaklandnet.com

Anyone can request a free rack be placed on public property. For information: 238-3983.





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PANIL Steering Committee

The Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League was founded in 1974 to give voice to the concerns of the neighborhood, especially about growth and development. Over the years, PANIL has become an influential voice within Oakland and can be relied upon to keep neighbors informed and to speak loudly and effectively for neighborhood interests.

PANIL uses the income from dues to pay the costs of this advocacy — most often printing and mailing expenses but sometimes filing fees for appeals at City Hall, and occasionally for legal costs.

Who decides what actions PANIL takes?

A 5-10 member Steering Committee is responsible for the direction of the organization. Meetings are the second Monday of every month, usually at Piedmont Gardens. Meetings are open to any member of PANIL. Dues are \$15 per year.

The Steering Committee is made up of persons active in the community and interested in serving. PANIL members vote every year to ratify the membership on the Steering Committee to insure that it remains representative of the neighborhood and that the actions of PANIL as an organization continue to be in line with the views of the members.

For the 2008 elections, ballots will be mailed to each PANIL member in July with information about each person on the slate. Ballots must be returned to PANIL within 14 days of mailing.

PANIL's Financial Report

Balance Sheet as of June 1, 2008

Account Balances - As of 6/1/2008

Bank Accounts	11,653.69
Liability Accounts	
Gilbert Mather Funds	-1,206.85
KENIC Funds	-336.44
Mt View Cemetery legal	-1,743.00
TOTAL Liability Accounts	-3,286.29
Uncommitted Funds Balance	8,367.40

Income Statement 1/1/2008 through 6/1/2008

2008 INCOME

From advertisers	1,750.00
From member dues	812.00
TOTAL INCOME	2,562.00

2008 EXPENSES

Newsletter	2,822.44
Postage	39.20
Web Site	113.77
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,975.41

Net Income (loss) (413.41)

2008 Ballot for PANIL Steering Committee

Margaret Callahan lived in Piedmont for many years and now resides at Piedmont Gardens. She was one of the organizers of the Christopher Rodriguez Benefit sponsored by the J. Callahan Piedmont Piano Company. Margaret also assisted in organizing the recent PANIL candidate forums.

Joan Dark is active in the neighborhood in many ways. As a realtor, she specializes in the Piedmont Avenue area and donates a percentage of her realtor's fees to Piedmont Avenue Elementary School. Joan is also the neighborhood watch captain for her block and a board member of the Oakland Heritage Alliance.

Margitta Gardner has been involved in the Piedmont Avenue neighborhood for several years. She coordinates PANIL's Whistlestop program, is the neighborhood watch captain for her block, co-chair of PANIL's public safety committee (Beat 9X NCPC), and a member of the Friends of the Piedmont Avenue Branch Library.

Kelsey Krausen grew up in the Piedmont Avenue neighborhood and has lived here almost her entire life (30 years). For five years, she worked with Oakland School Board member Kerry Hamill to organize family reading nights in North Oakland schools. Kelsey currently works for the National Writing Project as a development and policy associate and serves as Chair of the Board for Oakland Ready to Learn. Kelsey is active in local politics and is interested in joining the PANIL Steering Committee to encourage residents of all ages to get involved.

Bill Manley has lived in the neighborhood since 1990. He is active in the planning group for the MacArthur BART Transit Village, works with the East Bay Bicycle Coalition, maintains PANIL's financial records, and is co-chair of the PANIL public safety committee which coordinates between the neighborhood (Oakland Police Department Beat 9X) and the Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC).

Maira Nichols has lived in the Piedmont Avenue neighborhood for 14 years and is a volunteer at the library and the annual rummage sale at Piedmont Gardens. Maira is also a long time member of the United Nations Association and participates in the association's annual UN Day. Currently Maira serves as PANIL's senior liaison.

Valerie Winemiller has a longstanding special interest in land use and zoning. She often speaks for the neighborhood before Oakland's Planning Commission and City Council. A member of PANIL since its inception 34 years ago, she works with neighbors to see that development in the area meets the city's stated policy goal to "preserve and enhance" the best in the neighborhood.



PIEDMONT AVE
PHOTO GALLERY

**A View of
the Avenue**

Our neighborhood is filled with characteristic sights. This photo, from the City of Oakland's website, memorializes the coffee drinkers along the side of Gaylord's at 41st St. and Piedmont Ave.

We invite photographers to send photos taken on the Avenue or in the neighborhood to contact@panil.org.



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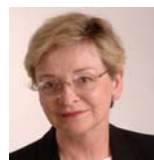
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25th Anniversary for National Night Out — Tuesday, Aug. 5

Come on, now; let's get together. Outside. Into the evening for a barbeque, good food and a visit with your neighbors. It's National Night Out, and all over the country groups will hold block parties.

When neighbors know each other, neighborhoods are safer. The Oakland Police Department sponsors the event by sending staff members to visit every registered block party with give-away items for kids and a special gift for the organizer.

In past years, there have been six to 10 different gatherings in the PANIL area: the Rio Vista area, Glen Echo Park at Montell Street, Ramona Avenue and Pleasant Valley Court, One Kelton Court, Rose Avenue, Entrada and Glen Avenue, among others.

To register, go to www.oaklandnet.com/nno2008.html



The Rio Vista gathering in 2007

Photo by Joyce Benna

Count Me In

I want to support PANIL's work to keep the neighborhood informed and make our voices heard. **I want to be a member. I want to vote for my representative on the PANIL Steering Committee!**

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ (minimum of \$15) made payable to PANIL

Name _____

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Mail to PANIL, PO Box 20375, Oakland, CA 94620

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