

PANIL Notes

Volume 31 Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League PO Box 20375-Oakland CA 94620 Sept/Oct 2006

ASKED ON THE AVENUE

What do you like best about where you live?



**Laura Paratore,
Ramona Avenue**

It's urban yet friendly—unlike any other neighborhood I've lived in, including the suburbs!



**Joyce Roe,
Mariposa Avenue**

It's a very convenient location. I can walk to stores and to my jobs at the Video Room and the Piedmont Theatre. My daughter attended Piedmont Avenue School and is now going to Oakland Tech—both right here in the neighborhood.



**Fred VanderHeyden,
John Street**

There are so many opportunities to buy good food, from Peet's to Dopo to Bay Wolf. In the 42 years I've lived here, the neighborhood has gone from Sleepy Hollow to Yuppie Boulevard!

Continued on pg 2

UNDERGROUND GARAGE A POSSIBILITY Piedmont Gardens to Add a New Building

By Martin Huff

Piedmont Gardens is in the process of acquiring the residence at 80 41st Street. Plans are to erect a fourth building on the site bounded by Linda Avenue, Glen Avenue and 41st Street. As currently proposed, the new structure would be built within current height limits and setback requirements. No variances would be needed. It is intended that the external design of the new building blend into that of the existing ones and be neighborhood compatible. It is anticipated that a several story underground parking garage would be built beneath the new structure.

The 41st Street entrance would move down the block, toward the hills, making room for a curved, parallel entry arrival area. While this will entail giving up several metered parking places on the street, the new underground garage would take many more autos off the streets.

The 41st Street entrance area would be replaced by a large community room to be used for gatherings of residents as well as for meetings of neighbors, merchants, and public interest groups. It is anticipated that access to it by the public would be outside the security perimeter of the Oakmont building in order to facilitate its use for public meetings.

While the construction process will, of necessity, create some inconvenience, it will be partially mitigated if management is successful in leasing an off-site lot to store equipment not in use, to stockpile building materials, and to provide temporary parking that would be linked by a shuttle. The intent is to keep to a minimum the inconvenience and disruption of the normal flow of local activity.

Piedmont Gardens is owned and operated by the American Baptist Homes of the West. The first building, 11-story Oakmont, was opened in 1969. The second, 16-story Crestmont, and third, the three-story Garden Terrace (a skilled nursing facility, main dining room, kitchen, and administrative offices), were added in 1974.

Management have said they plan to hold occasional public meetings during both the planning and construction phases. An initial invitation to a meeting has been sent to Piedmont Avenue merchants.

The proposal is now in the active planning stage. Comments and suggestions from neighbors, merchants, and other interested parties are welcome. To submit questions or comments, contact PANIL through Valerie Winemiller. Call her at 653-4552 or send e-mail to vwinemiller@hotmail.com or through the PANIL web site www.PANIL.org.

On the AGENDA:

Review of propositions on the November ballot by the League of Women Voters

October PANIL Meeting

Wednesday, October 11, 2006 7:00 p.m.
(It's always the 2nd Wednesday)

Piedmont Gardens, 110 41st Street.

Oakmont Building, 11th Floor, Sky Room

**Piedmont Avenue
Neighborhood
Improvement League
PO Box 20375
Oakland CA 94620
www.PANIL.org**

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ASKED ON THE AVENUE

Continued from pg 1



**José Iuerdo,
Linda Avenue**

The public transportation is very good—I often take the #12 bus—and people are friendly. I moved here a few months ago, and I've been overjoyed to become a part of this community.



**Tom McCall,
Monte Cresta Avenue**

We like being close to everything—within walking distance of coffee shops, Long's Drugstore, the Monte Vista Market, and the Piedmont Grocery.



**Kevin Berne,
Bayo Vista Avenue**

I moved here four years ago from San Francisco, and was happy to find a place where the weather was good and I could minimize driving. I can walk to a café, the post office, the bank, the post office, and my yoga class.



**Tiffany Cothran,
Gilbert Street**

When we moved here from New York two years ago, we liked that the neighborhood had a village or small-town feeling. We appreciate the small businesses instead of large chain stores. And it's nice that there are so many kids.

*All photos
by Joyce
Benna*

**Do You Have a
Story to Share?**

Tell us your neighborhood news!

Email us through the PANIL web site at www.PANIL.org or drop us a line at P.O. Box 20375, Oakland 94611.

ZONING UPDATE

**Massage Center on Broadway
Near 41st Is Closed**

By Valerie Winemiller

The Oakland City Council has upheld the decision of Administrative Hearing Officer Barbara Killey and denied the appeal of New Beginnings Center (4107 Broadway) for a massage establishment permit that would have allowed the business to continue at that location. A new permit had been required because of changes in the city's codes.

Permits for massage, adult entertainment, and cabaret (live music/dancing) establishments are granted by an administrative hearing officer in the city manager's office. The hearing officer's decision may be appealed to the City Council.

When Hearing Officer Killey denied the New Beginnings applications, her letter of findings and decision cited a long list of evidence of criminal activity, including solicitation for sex and assaults on individuals, from police reports and testimony from neighbors given at public hearing on March 20.

Killey's report concludes, "By her own admission, [owner Hoang Kim Ngo] actually believes she should not, in some instances, and cannot, in other instances, control this activity. ... If Ms. Ngo is not capable of controlling it, she should not be operating this kind of business at this location."

The closing of New Beginnings represents the culmination of PANIL efforts begun in 1992. Letters of opposition to a new permit had been submitted by PANIL, the Oakland Technical High School Parent Teacher Student Association, Archway School, and a number of individual neighbors. Neighborhood Services Coordinator Paul Brekke-Meisner lent valuable support to these latest efforts.

Arturo Sanchez of Oakland's Nuisance Abatement Unit noted that the building may be sold and another business may open there. PANIL would strongly oppose another massage business in the building.

ZONING UPDATE

**Kaiser Expansion:
Master Plan Approved, but
Design Sent Back for Further Work**

Kaiser's Master Plan and zoning permits, with related zoning changes and conditions, were given final approval by Oakland City Council on July 13.

At that time, members of the community – some of whom are experienced architects and developers – argued to the end that the "Master Plan" lacked vision. Some said it resembled a hodge-podge of square footage insensitive to the surrounding community and even inefficient for Kaiser in the end. They urged a reconfiguration of buildings to bring about the desired end result, rather than to provide a solution to the short-term problem of "where to put this while we tear that down." Nonetheless, the Master Plan was approved.

Design Review for Phase 1 had begun even before final approval of the Master Plan, in a side stepping of usual procedure.

PANIL objected but learned that advance review was acceptable if no formal vote was taken. Phase 1 includes the medical services building and parking garage to be built on the west side of Broadway between MacArthur and 38th Street.. [See drawings on pg 4]

Because the design for Phase I will set the tone for the rest of the project, this review is considered a vital milestone in the process.

Members of the Design Review Committee found the plans "disappointing," listing a number of flaws, even though they had been effusive about Kaiser's Master Plan in earlier hearings. (The landscaping plan was the only element earning praise.)

**Back Wall of Garage
Near Manila Avenue
Should Be Solid**

A matter of specific concern is that Kaiser has not closed the back wall of the parking garage. This step was recommended in EIR comments to protect residences on Manila Avenue from fumes, noise (horns, alarms, squealing tires) and light spillover, as well as for safety, to prevent surveillance of neighbors' homes and yards from the very accessible structure.

Continued on pg 4

SATURDAY, OCT 28

Say 'Boo' to Halloween Fun

By Nancy Friedman

Pumpkins, parades, and prizes return to Piedmont Avenue during the neighborhood's annual Halloween celebration, Saturday, October 28. The festivities begin at 10 a.m. with an hour of free classic cartoons at the Piedmont Theatre.

At 11, costumed kids are invited to gather in the Blockbuster parking lot (Montell Avenue). Led by a traditional bagpiper, they'll parade up Piedmont to Linda Avenue. (Note to grown-ups: the street will be closed to auto traffic during the parade.)

After the parade, kids can trick-or-treat at "Candy Stations" set up by Avenue merchants. Parents can pick up tickets for merchandise and gift certificates to be raffled off by participating stores.

Kids who prefer storytelling to parading can visit the Piedmont Branch Library for storytime: 10:30 to 10:50 for kids 2 to 5, and 12:30 for kids 5 to 9.

Still full of spooky spirits? Don't miss the free Mountain View Pumpkin Patch just inside the cemetery gates, where from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. kids can bounce on jumpers, decorate a pumpkin, bob for apples, and snack on hot dogs, lemonade, and ice cream.

In Mexico, the end of October is celebrated as the Days of the Dead. The Chapel of the Chimes, at Piedmont and Ramona, honors that festival with a Feast of the Angelitos (little angels) from 1 to 5 p.m. Come into the beautiful chapel, designed by famed architect Julia Morgan, to build a nicho (small altar) and eat dulces (sweets). Admission is free.

As shadows lengthen, join the Chapel's Day of the Dead procession, which begins at 6 p.m. on Howe Street and continues until 8 p.m.

Can't make it on October 28? You can still buy a pumpkin and other decorations behind J. Miller's flower shop, 4416 Piedmont Avenue, beginning the first weekend in October.

For a complete Halloween schedule, check the posters in store windows!

Calendar

PANIL Meeting
2nd Wednesday of the month,

Steering Committee
1st Friday of the month, 7 pm
5th floor lounge
Piedmont Gardens
110 41st Street

**Glen Echo Creek
Work Day**
2nd Saturday of the month
9:30 am, Monte Vista Avenue
654.1930

**Chapel of the Chimes
Tour**
(Historical and Botanical)
3rd Saturday of the month
10 am to noon, FREE, 654.0123

**Mt. View Cemetery
Tour**
Docent led tour
2nd Saturday of the month
10 am, FREE

**Piedmont Avenue
Branch Library**
160 41st Street, 597.5011

Storytimes
Toddlers
Every Wednesday, 10:30 am
Preschool
Every Wednesday, 11 am

Saturday Knitting Club
Every Saturday
3 to 4 pm

**Lesbian, Gay, Bi,
Transgender Book Club**
is now holding meetings at the
L'Amyx Tea Bar
Piedmont Avenue at Linda
2nd Monday of each month
6:30 to 8 pm

For more neighborhood news,
go to
www.panil.org/calendar/

To place an item on the
Calendar, email us through the
PANIL website at
www.PANIL.org
or mail the info to
P.O. Box 20375,
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Kaiser Expansion

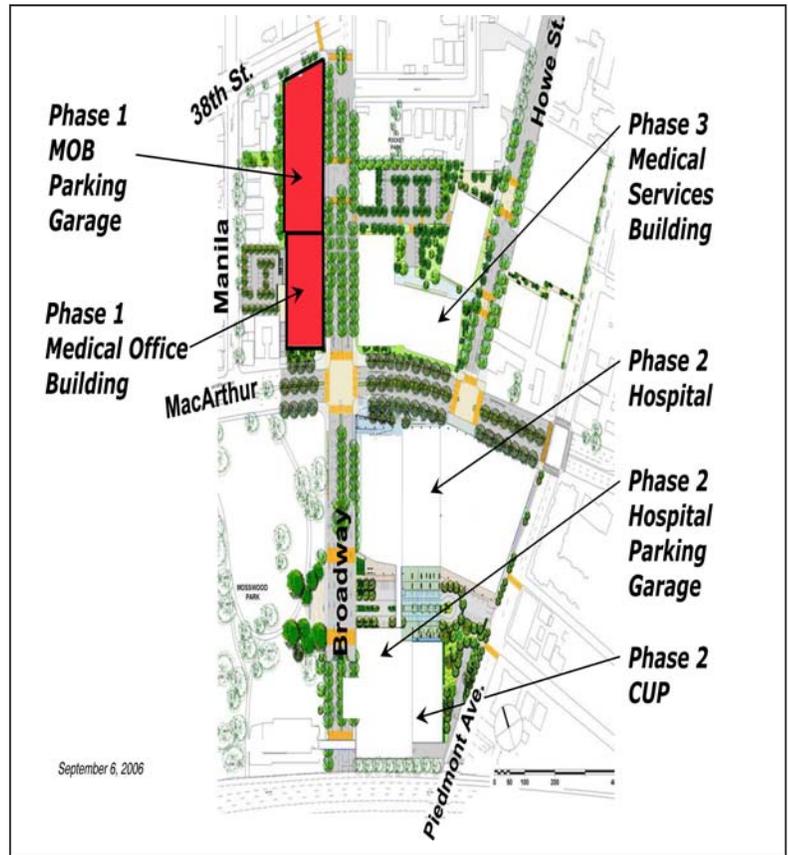
Continued from pg 3

In response to this critique, Kaiser made only small changes. At the meeting on September 6, the buildings were again criticized, especially for treatment of mass and bulk. Commissioners called one building a “basketball auditorium.” Temescal neighbor and architect Ron Bishop complained of lack of consideration for pedestrians and bicycles, as well as lack of “green” building strategies and products.

The Commission voted 4-0 to return the project to the Design Review Committee for another meeting in workshop format in hopes of improving the appearance of this important element .

Normally, a project would be approved by the Design Review Committee and go to the Planning Commission only if there was an appeal. Knowing the concern of neighbors, Councilmember Jane Brunner added a condition requiring approval of the full Planning Commission and making the decision of the Planning Commission appealable to the City Council.

Note: A more complete description of the status, including conditions of approval, will be posted on PANIL’s web site: www.PANIL.org.



KENIC — The Kaiser Expansion Neighborhood Impact Coalition

KENIC maintains a website to make information available to community members. A graphic representation of views of the proposed design is available at www.kenic.org.

Donations welcome PANIL is one of the neighborhood groups in the coalition. KENIC welcomes donations to cover legal, printing, and other expenses. To donate, make a check payable to PANIL with KENIC in the memo line. Mail to PANIL, P. O Box 20375, Oakland, CA 94620.



East Building Elevation

On Broadway from MacArthur on the left to 38th on the right.



West Building Elevation

As it would be seen from Manila Avenue.

ON PIEDMONT AVE

Fall Fashion Forecast

by ShopGirl

Say “aaahhh” to fall fashion—the season keywords are *languid*, *layered*, and *elongated*. Piedmont Avenue retailers share what’s in store for autumn.

The Bee’s Knees, 4024 Piedmont Ave. This longtime avenue merchant (formerly Don’t Eat the Furniture!) devotes the back of the store to young-at-heart clothing and accessories. Co-owner **Jan Kunkler** says fall trends include longer, looser-fitting pieces such as knee-length sweaters—a major change from past seasons’ close-fitting, cropped silhouettes. Black and white is a significant color combination this fall; if you prefer a shot of color, Jan has stocked plenty of teal, pumpkin, and chocolate. Linger over soft, lightweight sweaters and dresses from Kersh (\$40-\$70) and work-appropriate separates from Kenzie (\$90-\$115). Complete your outfit with a pair of Re-Mix shoes, very wearable updates of 1940s styles.

A Step Forward, 4018 Piedmont Ave. The focus is on comfortable, stylish footwear: the store specializes in Danskø, which has introduced some lighter-looking, trendier alternatives to the classic clog (which you’ll also find here, along with styles from Franco Sarto, Kenneth Cole Reaction, Clark’s Indigo, Keen, and Berne Mev). Wedge soles continue strong for fall, says manager **Ethel Dolan**, and “pumps are big.” In the back of the store you’ll find a good selection of updated basic separates in the roomier, layered looks that dominate this season. Don’t miss the innovative, form-flattering skirts, dresses, jackets, and coats from French designer Pile ou Face (\$100 - \$170) sized from small through XXL.

Ecclesiastique, 4183 Piedmont Ave. “Womanly and urban” is how store manager **Ree Reliford** describes the wares at this hip boutique. “Our clothes fit women with curves,” she adds. This is the place to shop for the latest in upscale jeans, from slick-finish Japanese styles to slim-legged Italian sil-

houettes to the ultimate luxury, a cashmere-cotton blend (\$250). Soft corduroy jeans are \$135. We saw a couple of terrific coats: a knee-length number from Liquid in charcoal wool with a drawstring waist and tonal embroidery around the hem (\$300) and a double-breasted velvet style that reminded us of the Beatles’ Sergeant Pepper phase. The overall look is youthful, but Ree notes that multit talented Berkeley resident Rita Moreno, assuredly a lady of a certain age, shops here “all the time.”

Abigail, 4167 Piedmont Ave. Feminine looks that combine fitted silhouettes and graceful volume fill the racks of this elegant and accommodating boutique. Owner **Gail King** stresses personal service: “We’ll special-order styles or sizes and often receive them within a week.” New this season: tailored cotton shirts from Audrey Talbott of Carmel (\$130 and up) and traditional quilted jackets from Barbour (\$200 and up), both featured in an October 5 trunk show (drop by between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.) Perennial best-sellers include Cambio jeans (a great-fitting alternative to ultralow-cut styles), beautifully tailored pieces from Max Mara, and—in the back of the store—comfy stretch-lace undies from Hanky Panky (\$18 and up), sumptuous Simone Perle lingerie, and full-figure bras from Fantasy, an English brand.

Britches, 4168 Piedmont Ave. Owner **Dorothy Griffin** now lives in Santa Monica, but she still does all the buying for this popular store—and comes back to visit once a month. She and manager **Michelle Greene** love the leggings trend; they offer printed styles as well as lace-trimmed black leggings. Shop here for packable MycraPac raincoats that stuff into an accompanying sack and for fanciful, funky shoes that recall the 1940s and 1950s. A pieced denim skirt from Cordelia (\$235) is a standout in the collection. Britches also carries a very creative selection of hats, handbags, and hosiery.

JOIN THE PANIL NOTES TEAM!

Calling all writers, editors, graphic designers, production artists, photographers, ad salespeople, and illustrators! We’re looking for able and enthusiastic team members to make the new PANIL Notes as great as the neighborhood it serves.

If you have a little time and talent to contribute, email us through the PANIL web site at www.PANIL.org or drop us a line at P.O. Box 20375, Oakland 94611.

Vote Nov. 7!

Your vote *does* count—especially on local issues like **Measure N**. This \$148 million bond measure—the first dedicated library bond measure in Oakland since World War II—would fund major improvements additions to the entire Oakland Public Library system.

Our own Piedmont Avenue branch would triple in size and gain a meeting room, public restrooms, and quiet areas for adults. To learn more, stop by the library.

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FREE 3-hour training session
 Sunday, October 15
 Ridgeway Studio 250
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TO REGISTER, contact
 Ellen Webb 655-2113
 Neela Manley 658-2419

Count Me In!

___ Here's my check for \$ ____ (minimum \$15.00) to join PANIL.

___ Please send me a safety whistle (\$3.50/each).

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