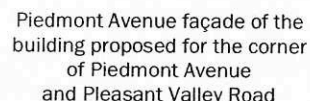


Volume 30 Issue 4—Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League—PO Box 20375—Oakland CA 94620—March 2005



(Drawing courtesy of
Kirk E. Peterson and Associates)

By Jim Ploss

At the February PANIL meeting, John Protopappas (developer) and Kirk Peterson (architect) presented plans for the vacant lot at the corner of Piedmont Avenue and Pleasant Valley Road. The design is an Italianesque structure intended to appear as if it is a number of different buildings to lessen the visual impact. Protopappas has a long history of highly-regarded projects in Oakland, including the Tribune Tower and the Sears building renovations. Peterson is also well regarded for his projects, mostly in Berkeley, which, he is proud to say, most people think are renovations of historic buildings rather than new construction. His best-known Oakland Project is the YWCA renovation.

The lot at Pleasant Valley Road is governed by two different zoning regulations. As the applicable code is not clear, the plans are not final. The building will be either 35 or 40 feet high facing Piedmont Avenue and lower on the end toward Howe Street. Open space will be provided by a 20 foot wide central courtyard as well as a roof terrace above the residences on Pleasant Valley Road.

The project as currently planned consists of 26 market-rate housing units above two 1,500-sq-ft retail spaces. A total of 33 parking spaces are to be provided, based on a puzzle parking system (see: <http://www.hyundaelevator.co.kr/enhtml/auto3.html>). The entry will use the current curb cut on Piedmont Avenue.

Protopappas estimated that construction would take approximately twelve months and, if all goes well, would begin about September 2005.

Neighbors questioned whether planned parking was adequate. Some

suggested that parking be sold separately from the apartments so that residents would be encouraged to use bicycles, transit and Car-Share. Possible traffic congestion was also discussed as were the problems of construction noise and disruption.

What will occupy the retail spaces? When Protopappas indicated that it was too early to know, PANIL members expressed their hope that the new businesses would increase the diversity on the Avenue and not add to the number of food establishments with their traffic and parking demands. Local residents cautioned that prospective buyers should be warned about the noise at that corner from Kings-X, the Ken Betts car wash and normal traffic.

Readers can send comments to
PANIL c/o rklahti@aol.com or PO Box
20375, Oakland, CA 94620.

For further information contact Valerie Winemiller at 653.4552 or e-mail vwinemiller@hotmail.com.

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

Wednesday, 3/9, 7:15 pm — note early start time

Agenda:

- **Kaiser's expansion and construction projects**

Speakers:

- Kaiser executives, architects and contractors
- Councilmembers Brunner and Nadel (or staff)
 - City zoning staff

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

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**Steering Committee
and Working Groups**

Arts/Culture/History

Jim Ploss
420.0570, jopl@mindspring.com

Finance/Membership

Bess Ellinger
923.1748, eaellinger@earthlink.net

Library

Joan Dark
338.1315, rklahti@aol.com

Media

Ronile Lahti
655.1723, rklahti@aol.com

Public Safety/Parks

Bill Manley
658.2419, bmanleynow@yahoo.com

Advertising/Senior liaison

Martin Huff
655.1748, martin_huff@hotmail.com

Zoning/Building

Valerie Winemiller
653.4552, vwinemiller@hotmail.com

PANSA

John Woodbury
654.6591, drjohnw@ix.netcom.com

PAMA

Ann Kravak
428.2698

City Government

District 1 Councilmember

Jane Brunner
238.7001, jbrunner@oaklandnet.com

District 1 School Board Rep

Kerry Hamill
879.8653
kerry.hamill@secmail.ousd.k12.ca.us

Oakland Police Department

Sandi Mauricio, NSC
615.5929, smauricio@oaklandnet.com
Lt. Lawrence Green
238.7147, lgreen@oaklandnet.com

PANIL Notes

Ronile Lahti, Coordinator
Gail Jara, Editor
Jane A. Margold, Proofreader



LIBRARY

**How do we fund
an expansion?**

By Joan Dark

At its February meeting, PANIL's Library Committee heard from two City of Oakland employees, Mark Morodomi of the city attorney's office and Jerry Garzon of the library department. Morodomi reviewed methods of funding for an expansion of the current library or a new library. He outlined the basics of the formation of an assessment district and discussed other approaches that might be available. Garzon answered the committee's questions about a possible new bond measure in 2006 that may be put before Oakland voters for a new main library and could include funds for selected branch libraries, perhaps including Piedmont Avenue. He also brought the committee up to date on current library projects in the city, including the newest 21,000-sq-ft branch on 81st Avenue.

While Piedmont Avenue's much-loved library is the second smallest branch (at 1,700-sq-ft) in Oakland and can get quite "cozy" during busy times, the committee's aim is not to "grow" a huge, impersonal library. Rather, the goal is to triple the space and keep the coziness. It is clear from funding projections that librarians will be fewer than ever in the immediate future, and large libraries could find themselves with sections roped off for lack of personnel to support the space.

The committee welcomes community comment. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month at 7 pm at

Piedmont Gardens
110 41st Street
5th Floor Lounge

The survey asking the preferences of neighborhood residents, conducted in January, is not closed. Survey forms are still available at the library. They can be mailed to you (call 655.1723 to order) or e-mailed as a Microsoft Word attachment (contact — rklahti@aol.com).

Thank you to new and renewing members: Colleen Vetter, William Broucek and Martin Wong, Brad Newsham and Rhonda Gillenwaters, Nettie and Wilbur Leonard, Roseanne Eigenfeld, Clyde and Joan Sugahara, Elisabeth and Whitney Griffinger, Carol and Marvin Neveu, Katherine Sher, Anne Marie Berry, Elizabeth Lake and Daniel Francis, Claus Jaeger and Antonio and Maria Leal.

PANSA

Work day at Owl Park — 3/19

The Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood School Association (PANSA) will hold a work day on Saturday, 3/19 (4/23 if it rains) at Owl Park. Remember, Owl Park is not only the school's playground but our community park.

Projects: paint lines to create a basketball court and install backstop and hoop, plant trees and install benches and tables, paint mural of a creek with stylized fish and amphibians, paint map of the US on the playground, paint lines showing classroom lineup locations.

Carnival. Planning has begun for the annual school carnival to be held on Saturday, 6/4. Volunteers are needed to help construct booths and furnish baked goods for the bake sale. On the day of the carnival, folks are needed to barbeque hot dogs, prepare nachos, help with the various games and (most important) work on the clean-up detail. If you would like to participate, e-mail John Woodbury at drjohn@ix.netcom.com or call 654.6591.

Raffle. Once again PANSA is sponsoring a raffle to benefit Piedmont Avenue School. If you or your business would like to contribute, contact Ronile Lahti at 655.1723 or e-mail rklahti@aol.com.

ON THE AVENUE

Piedmont Ave t-shirts



In celebration of their 15 years on the Avenue, Piedmont Stationers and Office Supply, 4171 Piedmont Avenue, 655.2375, is now carrying a line of **Piedmont Ave** t-shirts (modeled by Viki Salazar). Colors are white with red lettering, gray with black and gray with blue. Sizes range from small to x-large. Check them out! Owner Shelly Lowe and her assistants — Viki Salazar, Nora Wilcox and Jon Crowl — will be happy to assist you.

(Photo: R. Lahti)

ZONING/AVENUE UPDATES

By Valerie Winemiller

Condo conversion laws to remain

After a lively discussion at PANIL's meeting last August, the members present agreed to send representatives to the Coalition to Protect Rental Housing which was formed to resist the weakening of tenant protections under Oakland's 1981 Condominium Conversion laws. The coalition was effective; attempts to change the city's rules for conversion of rental units to condominiums have been dropped for now. A coalition representative informs us that there was an effort in the state legislature to preempt local controls. A bill was introduced but it failed to get out of committee. However, the vote in committee was close, so the issue will bear watching during the next legislative year.

80 seats approved in restaurants

The public comment period has ended for two additional food use applications at 4301 Piedmont, the new building at John Street. The proposals, which have been approved by the Planning Department, total 80 seats in two restaurant spaces: 34 for an Ethiopian restaurant, and 46 for an ice cream parlor and candy shop.

PANIL's letter (and letters from several neighbors) raised concerns regarding the over-saturation of restaurants and the high traffic and parking demands they generate. The new building not only eliminated 6 - 8 parking spaces and increased the number of restaurant seats on the property, but it provides no loading zone to ease traffic obstruction for deliveries to the restaurants.

The nearby school crosswalk makes traffic especially worrisome.

In response to PANIL's concerns, the new permit for the specialty food market/deli requires that seating cannot be added without public review.

Permit rescinded for advertising bus shelter at Linda Avenue

The permit was rescinded for a large bus shelter with advertising that was to have been installed at the front of the public plaza at Piedmont and Linda Ave-

nues. The property owner of 4184 Piedmont had appealed the permit on behalf of his tenants, concerned that the shelter would block sight lines to the businesses. PANIL's letter to the City emphasized that the shelter would also unreasonably constrict sidewalk space and impinge on the enjoyment of the plaza.

According to AC Transit, only seven bus riders board at this stop during an average day. It appeared that AdShel's wish for a shelter at this site was more for advertising visibility for Piedmont- and Montclair-bound drivers than sheltering riders.

The appeal hinged on narrow technical grounds. Director of the Public Works Agency, Raul Godinez II, ruled that PANIL had, in fact, objected to the shelter as required during the public comment period in August, 2002.

Thanks to neighbors and shoppers who signed petitions and sent e-mails to Director Godinez.

For further information on any of the above issues, or to get involved in PANIL's activities to monitor zoning decisions that affect the neighborhood, please call Valerie Winemiller, 653.4552

LIBRARY

Dr. Seuss night

Bring your family and join a community read-a-loud to celebrate Dr. Seuss' 101st birthday.

The Piedmont Avenue Branch Library is looking for volunteers to read favorite Dr. Seuss stories (a short one, please) or other short picture-books on Monday, 3/7 at 6:30 pm. Sign up at the library or contact children's librarian, Helen Bloch at 597.5011. All are welcome!



Join the
Piedmont
Avenue
School
Reading
Partners

To volunteer, call Ruby Long
at 595.9514
or Donna Bersaglieri at 482.0862

Calendar

PANIL Meeting

2nd Wednesday of the month,
(See page 1 for information)

Steering Committee

1st Friday of the month, 7 pm
655.1723

Glen Echo Creek Workday

2nd Saturday of the month
9:30 am, Monte Vista Avenue
654.1930

Note: Earth Day is Saturday, 4/23. If you would like to participate, please e-mail
ayfeng@alum.mit.edu.

Projects include weeding, transplanting and ivy removal.

PANSA Meeting

2nd Monday of
the month,
7 pm
654.6591

Piedmont Avenue
School Library

Note: North Oakland District 1
Town Hall Meeting
(see page 4 for details)

Piedmont Avenue Branch Library

160 41st Street, 597.5011

Story times

Preschool
Wednesdays, 11 am
Toddlers
Wednesdays, 10:30 am

Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Transgender Book Club

2nd Monday of each month
6:30 to 8 pm

This month's selection:
Memory Mambo by Achy Obejas

To place an item on PANIL's
newsletter or web site calendars,
e-mail Minnie Sage at
mamsage@earthlink.net.

Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League
P.O. Box 20375
Oakland, CA 94620
www.panil.org

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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Mail to PANIL, PO Box 20375, Oakland, CA 94620
Contributions to PANIL are not tax deductible

Please check your expiration date

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NORTH OAKLAND DISTRICT 1 TOWN HALL MEETING

Boardmember *Kerry Hamill* invites you to attend a discussion on the

- Multi-year fiscal recovery plan
- Central office redesign

Special Guests:

- Dr. Randolph Ward, State Administrator
- Katrina Scott-George, Special Assistant

Question and answer period

Potluck and childcare will be provided

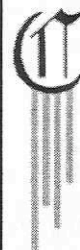
Tuesday, 3/1, 6 to 8 pm
Piedmont Avenue Elementary School
4314 Piedmont Avenue

Call 879.8653 with questions; leave a message for Kerry Hamill



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PANSA

Piedmont Avenue
Neighborhood
School Association

Piedmont Avenue School Library—4314 Piedmont Avenue

General Meeting and Book Care Night
—second Monday of each month, 7 pm

Call 510.654.6591 for more information

