

PANIL Notes

Volume 33

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

Oct 2008

Kaiser Phase 2 Design Sent Back for Revisions

By Valerie Winemiller

An articulate group of neighbors spoke at the Planning Commission hearing on Sept. 3 regarding the design of Kaiser's Phase 2 hospital replacement and related buildings on the MacArthur/Broadway block. Planning commissioners raised many of the same concerns neighbors have been voicing, and asked Kaiser to return on October 15 with better articulation on the hospital tower and better "activation" on Broadway. Due to its controversy, staff is recommending that the design of the sky bridge over Broadway, with its cement column in the street, have separate review, allowing the hospital design to move forward to required review by state regulating agencies on schedule.

To avoid blank walls as much as possible, the Broadway street frontage is to have public functions—such as a cafeteria and pharmacy waiting rooms—behind glass, but the only entrances/exits were shown on MacArthur and an internal mid-block driveway accessed from Broadway. The staff report recommended a door from the cafeteria to Broadway to help enliven foot traffic on the sidewalk. Kaiser has resisted this idea, citing "security concerns," an issue that staff and the commissioners felt could be overcome.

Kaiser instead proposed to enliven Broadway by paving a plaza across the street in Mosswood Park, where they would relocate their Friday farmers' market. This idea

had never been shown to the community, and it engendered great concern. Oakland Heritage Alliance and a member of the city's Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board both cited the historic character of the park and urged that any changes be reviewed by the Landmarks Board before approval by the Planning Commission. Several neighbors objected that paving scarce green space did not solve the design problems across the street.

Kaiser's architects had suggested some subtle color variations to help break up the visual mass of the tower. Commissioners and neighbors agreed that this measure was not enough for such a massive structure.

One Big Shock

One big shock at the hearing was a statement by staff that the large "skyline facade" signs, objects of great objection from neighbors, were to be decided by the commission and not as part of the "master sign plan" as neighbors had understood. The master sign plan has been under separate review, and commissioners have not heard the extensive testimony by neighbors presented to the city staff person who is to approve the sign plan.

Kaiser continues to argue that the 60-foot long, internally lit signs are for "way finding," though neighbor Lucia Huang presented maps and photos showing that by the time the signs are visible from the freeway, the driver has already missed the exit. Commission Chair Michael Colbruno, an executive with billboard advertising corporation Clear Channel Outdoor, stated that he liked the signs as emblems of pride that Oakland was receiving corporate investment. Neighbors still see the signs as advertising clutter, "branding" the public's skyline.

PANIL Monthly Meeting: Wed., October 8 — 7:30 p.m.

Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council — 7:30 pm

Paul Brekke-Miesner our Neighborhood Services Coordinator and members of the Oakland Police Department will discuss recent crime in the Piedmont Avenue neighborhood (Beat 9X).

General Meeting — 8:00 pm

Candidates for Oakland City Councilmember-at-large

Candidates for the District at-Large Director for AC Transit

This debate is your chance to raise questions and voice your concerns

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

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

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PSO John Cunnie
Problem Solving Officer

What is the NCPC?

By Ronile Lahti

The Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council, part of Oakland's neighborhood policing approach, brings together citizens who can speak for their areas with police leaders to discuss what the local residents want from the police officers who serve their local streets.

In 1996 Oakland's city council reaffirmed community policing "as the public safety policy of the City of Oakland and established Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils (NCPCs) as a way to develop a partnership between the police department and residents to solve problems." (Resolution No. 72727)

The PANIL area **formally** launched its participation in Community Policing on April 30, 1998 at a meeting held at Piedmont Avenue School. At that time, members of the community agreed that PANIL would act as the formal Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council for this area (Oakland Police Department Beat 9X). The boundaries for PANIL and Beat 9X are the same.

Recently the police department divided the city into three geographic areas. We are members of District 1. Paul Brekke-Miesner, our Neighborhood Services Coordinator (NSC) is also the Neighborhood Services Supervisor (NSS) for District 1. NSCs are not sworn police officers, but do work under the OPD command structure. They are officially assigned to the Neighborhood Services Division which is a part of the City Administrator's office. NSCs are the liaisons between the community and OPD and work with all parties to establish priorities and implement strategies and activities to improve the safety and health of the community.

The first part of every PANIL meeting is devoted to the NCPC (7:30 to 8 pm or until all questions/problems are addressed). Paul Brekke-Miesner, our NSC, presides over this portion of the meeting. Also in attendance are officers from the Oakland Police Department including our Problem Solving Officer (PSO) and often our avenue beat officer. Names and contact information for these individuals are available on our web site: www.panil.org/contacts.

During the NCPC meeting, neighbors agree on the top three priorities – what

they wish officers to concentrate on for the coming month. For example, garbage scavengers "working" the neighborhood, homeless on the Avenue, loud noises from certain establishments, blighted areas, increase in graffiti, and drug dealing in Glen Echo Park have all made the list in recent months. The Problem Solving Officer and our NSC then investigate these priorities and take appropriate action. A status report is issued the following month of what's happened to date, what may happen, and where the problem stands right now. In some cases, a priority may stay on the list for several months. It stays on the list until a resolution that satisfies the community and OPD is reached.

PANIL and the NCPC meet the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Piedmont Gardens, 110 41st Street, 11th Floor Sky Room from 7:30 to 9 p.m. The NCPC meeting is your opportunity to bring your concerns and those of your Neighborhood Watch Group to the attention of others in our community and the city. Only by your active participation can the Piedmont Avenue area remain the great neighborhood we all enjoy. Come and be a part of the process!

**Margitta Gardener
and Bill Manley**
are Co-Chairpersons
of our NCPC.

Reading Partners Wanted

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Elementary School**
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22nd Annual Halloween Celebration Saturday, October 25, 2008

Most Are FREE!!

9:45 a.m. — Free **Cartoons** at Piedmont Theatre, Linda at Piedmont Ave.

11:00 a.m. — **HALLOWEEN PARADE** — meet at the Blockbuster parking lot — Montell at Piedmont Avenue

Noon to 2 p.m. — *Trick or Treating* on the Avenue at **CANDY STATION** stores

Noon to 2 p.m. — **Music on the Avenue**

Piedmont Plaza: Linda at Piedmont Ave. and Key Route Plaza: 41st St. at Piedmont Ave.

Noon to 3 p.m. — Annual **Pumpkin Patch Meadow** at Mountain View Cemetery
5000 Piedmont Ave. — food, drink and all kinds of fun

Noon — The wonderful librarians of the Piedmont Ave. Branch will feature their **fabulously disgusting treats** at Key Route Plaza, 41st at Piedmont Avenue



Other Events:

The Pumpkin Patch is open from now to Halloween!

- **Pumpkins for sale (\$)**
4414 Piedmont Avenue (between Ken Betts Car Wash and J. Miller Flowers and Gifts)

At Issues—in front of 20 Glen (look for the special set)

- **Reading and author signing (free)** — **J. Otto Seibold**, creator and illustrator of *Olive, the Other Reindeer*—Mr. Seibold will read from and sign copies of his newest book, *Vunce Upon a Time*, the story of a vegetarian vampire.
When: Saturday, 10/25 at noon

Paws on Piedmont—3974 Piedmont Avenue

- **Best human and dog duo contest (free)** — great prizes!
When: Saturday, 10/25 at 1 p.m.

Piedmont Avenue School—4314 Piedmont Avenue

- **Annual school fair (\$)** with great food for sale and their fabulous *Haunted Hallway!* All proceeds benefit programs at the school.
When: Saturday, 10/25, Noon to 3 p.m.

Chapel of the Chimes—4499 Piedmont Avenue

- **Feast of the Angelitos (free)** — come and build a “nicho” to take home, make tissue paper marigolds, and other arts and crafts. Artist Melissa Garden Streblow will teach technique.
Time: Saturday, 10/25, 2 to 4 p.m.
- **Day of the Dead Procession (free)**
Where: Meet at the back plaza of the Chapel of the Chimes (on Howe Street)
Time: Saturday, 10/25, 6 to 8 p.m.

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

200-YEAR MASTER PLAN

Chapel of the Chimes to House the Living?

By Valerie Winemiller

In a community meeting on September 18, Chapel of the Chimes unveiled a 200-year master plan which includes developing rental housing. At the time of the Chapel's last expansion 12 years ago, it was PANIL advocacy that resulted in a requirement for a master plan before any future expansions are approved.

Lifemark Group/Chapel of the Chimes has been purchasing properties on Piedmont Avenue, Howe Street and Pleasant Valley Avenue for a number of years to hold for long-term expansion. These properties are not expected to be needed for mortuary/columbarium uses for 50-300 years. In the meantime, developing them as housing offers the company an income to build its trust to support long-term maintenance of their operations, including the Julia Morgan-designed building at 4499 Piedmont Avenue, a city landmark. State law requires a 400-year financial plan to ensure appropriate care of remains and the buildings.

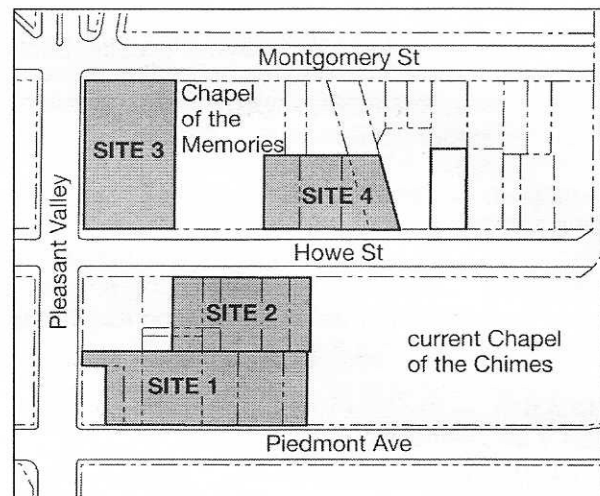
The new developments would be designed in clusters so they could be demolished in sections at 50- to 80-year intervals as needed.

That last addition, 12 years ago, caused some contentious moments in the permitting process, but Chapel of the Chimes now graciously acknowledges that they believe they have a better building because of community input. As a result, Chapel of the Chimes is involving the community early in the process this time and will be holding a series of meetings—probably every 3 weeks, beginning in January. Community input will help shape both the uses and the appearance of the proposed buildings.

Once a preferred design is chosen, the city of Oakland will require a formal zoning approval process with environmental reviews (including traffic studies), public comment periods and hearings.

Pyatok Architects (www.pyatok.com) have been selected to plan and design the development properties. The firm has won awards for both its new design and its historic preservation projects, and they have strong interests in affordable housing, sustainable/green development and participatory community design processes.

The clusters of individual lots have been grouped into four development sites. Marketing studies and community input will shape the mix of stores, offices and/or housing at Site 1 on Piedmont Avenue. Sites 2 and 4 on Howe Street are proposed as apartments and townhouses with garages; Site 3 on Pleasant Valley is projected as independent senior housing, either market rate or affordable. Thirty-foot heights



are projected for all the buildings, which will step down the sloped sites. Density would be less than the maximum allowed by zoning codes.

Concerns raised by neighbors included traffic impacts, both on Ramona and on the flow of Pleasant Valley; pedestrian safety in crossing Pleasant Valley, especially for seniors; potential parking impacts on surrounding streets, including accommodating the Chapel of the Memories needs; saving/moving the historic houses on upper Howe Street; maximum recycling of demolition materials; design appearance to fit in harmoniously with the area, without necessarily copying the historic buildings; and massing or size of the senior housing, slated to be the largest building.

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Former Massage Parlor Remodeled into Oblivion

By Valerie Winemiller

Sixteen years after PANIL first tried to shut down the nuisance massage parlor at 4107 Broadway, and two years after we succeeded, the building is being remodeled and the last traces of its tacky history erased. The warren of hot tub and massage rooms has been gutted and the exterior is undergoing a major renovation, partially funded by a facade improvement grant from the city of Oakland's Redevelopment Agency. The project will remove the 1960s era faux shingle parapet and the slit windows with yellow bull's-eye glass. A more classic storefront facade will be installed, with large windows over a granite base, a porcelain tile body, and a decorative frieze and molding at the top.

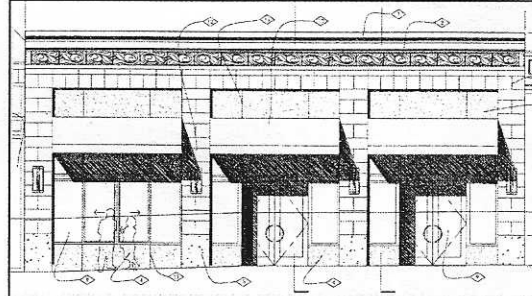
The building has been bought by Noha Aboelata, MD, who specializes in cosmetic laser skin treatments. Dr. Aboelata's Isis Health Center is currently located on Pill Hill. The space will be divided in two, with Isis Health Center taking about 2/3 of the square footage. A tenant for the remaining portion is still being sought.

The property is in the Broadway Auto Row/ MacArthur/SanPablo Redevelopment District, which extends up Broadway to 42nd Street. Property owners can apply for facade improvement matching grants of up to \$30,000, based on linear footage of facade, explains Christine Lebron of the Redevelopment Agency. The grants are a reimbursement, and may cover up to half the property owner's expenses. To ensure quality designs, design assistance of up to \$5,000 per project is available at no charge to the property owner. The architects are on contract with the city's Redevelopment Agency, with selection through a competitive process every couple of years.

Other local projects funded by the program have included KRW Printing; Art's Crab Shak [sic] (which got paint, a new sign and door; and 360 Burrito. In the works, Lebron lists facade improvements for a cafe at 3815 Broadway and for 4001 Broadway, which has a new owner. The latter project is to include paint, new tile, new signs over entries and new window framing.

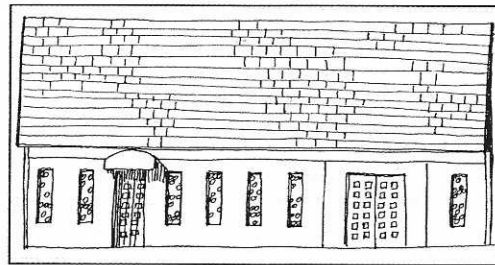
Funding for Redevelopment Agency projects is explained on the city's website. "State law allows a redevelopment agency to obtain funds using 'tax increment financing.' Here's how it works: on the date the city council approves a redevelopment plan, the property within the boundaries of the plan has a certain total property tax value. If this total assessed valuation increases, then most of the increase in taxes goes to the redevelopment agency. These funds are called 'tax increment.'"

While these are welcome improvements, the fact that so many Oakland properties are designated in redevelopment areas has become controversial. The redevelopment designations last 30 years, and during this time tax increment funds can be spent only on a restricted list of categories, generally



4107 Broadway as it will appear after facade improvements.
Credit: RPR Architects 4499 Piedmont Avenue

capital improvement projects. Without the redevelopment area identification, the increased property taxes from those properties would go to the city's General Fund, and help pay for police, fire, libraries, and other essential city services not allowed under redevelopment spending laws.



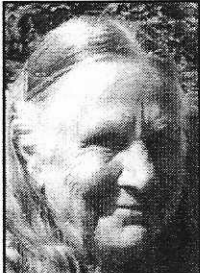
4107 Broadway with its former 1970s facade.
Credit: Redrawn from plans submitted by RPR Architects.

PANIL FOUNDER

Carrie King Sprague

By Valerie Winemiller

Carrie King Sprague, a founding member of PANIL and its second chair, has died in Berkeley after a 2-year battle with ovarian cancer.

**Carrie Sprague**

Her energy and vision were strong influences on PANIL's early development.

Carrie was teaching preschoolers in a children's center in the Richmond Public Schools, and raising three daughters in a rented flat in the 4100 block of Montgomery when she responded to a flyer on a phone pole calling for the first meeting of a new neighborhood group in 1974. Many of the PANIL weekly steering committee meetings happened in her living room in those early years. Her energy and interests were a strong influence on PANIL's focus and direction, and some current PANIL members remember being recruited by Carrie.

Nervous about public speaking when she first joined PANIL, she nonetheless became an effective advocate for neighborhood interests, perhaps because she taught herself so thoroughly about zoning codes and public involvement.

A master gardener, Carrie grew much of the produce for her family in the Montgomery Street back yard, a practice she continued after she married Stanley Sprague and moved to Berkeley in 1980, where she also became a leader at the Ohlone Community Garden.

In Berkeley, Carrie was appointed to the city's Solid Waste Commission (now called Zero Waste), serving for eight years; and she served on the Zoning Adjustments Board (the body like Oakland's Planning Commission)

for six years. She was a docent in the East Bay Regional Parks Botanic Garden for over a decade. For PANIL, Carrie researched and wrote a popular series of articles on the history and architecture of houses in the neighborhood. Later, she was also active in the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association and in a neighborhood historical society, which researched and produced a booklet on the history of the McGee Tract. She became involved in genealogical research, finding and meeting living relatives in Ohio and Slovakia she hadn't known she had. Carrie was a talented potter, quilter and photographer, with an artist's eye for color, pattern and composition.

Always interested in social justice issues, Carrie and Stanley were involved in peace and solidarity work in Central America; she traveled five times to Nicaragua and once to the Ft. Benning, GA School of the Americas for the annual human rights protest against the US military training facility for Central American paramilitary groups.

When someone moved into the neighborhood, Carrie made a point of ringing the doorbell to offer produce from her garden or baked goods. She then found ways to introduce neighbors to each other and get everyone involved in projects, stitching together a community from a collection of addresses.

She is survived by husband Stanley Sprague of Berkeley, daughters Tasha King of Roseberg, OR, Molly King (Bryan) Brown of Los Osos, and Aran King (John Kavanagh) of San Francisco, two grandchildren, four step children, brother Andy Brosco (Eleanor) of Calgary Canada and many nieces and nephews.

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

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PIEDMONT AVE PHOTO GALLERY

A View of the Avenue

Our neighborhood
is filled with charac-
teristic sights.

This photo shows
the house at the
end of a "not a
through street."

Photo by
Richard Friedman

We invite
photographers
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or in the neighbor-
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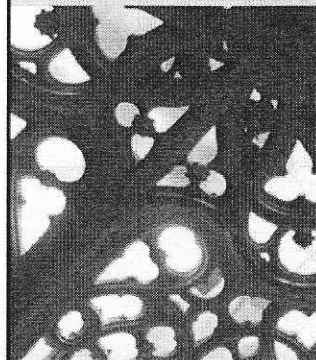
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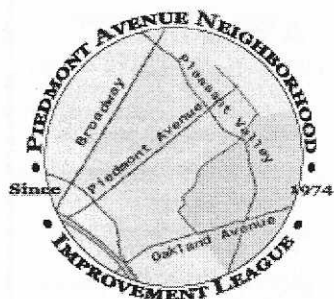
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Baritone Jamie Davis Performs October 19

Vocalist Jamie Davis will perform at JAZZ AT THE CHIMES on Sunday, October 19, 2008 at 2pm. Davis, dubbed the "chocolate baritone," holds a position amongst the pantheon of great male vocalists with a full deep baritone voice that has been paired with some of the world's most famous talent. Davis counts Patty Austin, Tony Bennett, George Benson, The Count Basie Orchestra, Rosemary Clooney, Jimmy Cobb, and Billy Cobham, Wycliffe Gordon, Plaz Johnson, Jimmy Heath and John Handy as some of the premier performers with whom he has shared the stage.

During his career, Davis has traveled and performed extensively around the world as a headliner and as the lead vocalist for the Count Basie Orchestra. His full rich, deep baritone voice was tapped to narrate 'A Time to Remember,' a docudrama which won the Black American Independent Filmmakers Award. In 1999 in recognition of his steady accomplishments in the San Francisco area jazz scene, Davis was invited to be a part of the prestigious 'Bay Area's Giants of Jazz' photograph, a event inspired by the acclaimed, historical 'A Great Day in Harlem' photo of 1952.

Davis' solo CDs include *It's All About Love*, *It's A Good Thing* and his newest *Vibe Over Perfection* (released July 2008).

Jazz at the Chimes, a monthly series sponsored by Lifemark Group's *Lifemark Arts* program featuring Bay Area talent. Jazz at the Chimes concerts are held at the Chapel of the Chimes in Oakland – a designated City of Oakland Landmark designed by Julia Morgan. The Chapel provides a wonderful visual backdrop and acoustic listening venue for live music in a setting like no other. or call 510/228-3218.

For more information, visit: http://www.lifemarkgroup.com/oakland/special_events.asp

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

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