New Alamo Square park irrigation plan approved

BY GUS HERNANDEZ, ALAMO SQUARE NEWSLETTER

In the middle of November, right before the holiday season, the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Commission unanimously approved the Alamo Square Water Conservation Project, with ASNA's support.

The $2.3 million proposal approved by the Commission will save over 2.5 million gallons of water annually once it is implemented. It includes funding to replace the leaking irrigation system, replace the 70-year-old quick coupler line, install a booster pump to address low water pressure, improve irrigation system design and layout, replace unusable turf with plantings where appropriate, and install a weather-based smart controller.

Community outreach will start in 2013, with a final project approval hearing by the Rec and Park Commission anticipated in April 2013, and construction starting in 2014 (scheduled for six months, from February through July).

Alamo Square currently ranks as one of the highest per-acre water user parks out of the 222 parks in San Francisco. It also ranks in the top five parks with the highest potential for water conservation. The park has an average annual water use of 7,718,612 gallons, or 23.7 acre-feet, for its 9.4 irrigated acres.

next meeting

General membership meetings are usually held the fourth Monday of every other month.

SUNDAY, JAN 27, 2013

Alamo Square Potluck and General Meeting
Where: 1021 Hayes Street
When: Doors open 12 p.m.
Potluck 12:30 p.m.
Meeting 1:15 p.m.
Agenda: Vote for the 2013 ASNA Board of Directors

Renew your membership at the door or online!
www.alamosq.org

Bring a tasty dish to share:
Last Name A-I: Main Dish
Last Name J-Q: Salad/Side
Last Name R-Z: Appetizer or Dessert
*These are general guidelines, please bring something else if you’d like!

upcoming events

Every Saturday
Fillmore Farmers Market
8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Fillmore & O'Farrell

Every Sunday
Divisadero Farmers Market
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Divisadero & Grove

First Sundays and
Every Tuesday
Alamo Square Playgroups
10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Meet near the playground.

see Events >
Thank you to our Holiday Party sponsors

BY PURVI SAHU, NOPNA BOARD MEMBER

Happy New Year! 2013 brings a new beginning, new hopes and new resolutions; the feeling of positivity, happiness, and celebration continues in our neighborhood!

What a fantastic year 2012 was to bring us all together. This year ASNA joined hands with neighboring NOPNA for their second Annual Holiday party at St. Cyprian’s where neighbors and kids greeted, mingled and danced late into the night to beautiful music coming from artists within our community!

From the decor to the libations, it was a fantastic turnout and prelude to our celebrations leading to the New Year. These good times would not have been possible had it not been for our local vendors who have been proactive and supported us in all our community endeavours. To this end, we are deeply grateful for their support and would like to thank them on your behalf! We as a neighborhood are thriving and happy with the improvements that have come in along with these businesses, making our community grow and become stronger. Thank you to our Holiday Party Sponsors:

Jennifer Rosdail of Paragon Real Estate Group:
Her over-arching goal is simple – to make your life better by helping you make informed choices about real estate that move you in the direction you want to go. She has been doing this since 2002 and hopes to continue with support from our neighbors for a long time to come.
Visit: www.jenniferrosdail.com

Slava Blazer Photography:
Slava Blazer is a San Francisco Bay Area photographer, who specializes in actor and corporate headshots, event photography, commercial work, modeling portfolios, engagement portraits and other types of photography. He captures a person’s natural emotions in a relaxed and fun environment. Slava’s list of clients includes names such as AT&T, Food Network, LA Fashion Week, BOXeight, Skingraft, Lez’u, as well as UCLA. He has vast experience working with Hollywood actors and fashion models from top modeling agencies such as Ford Models, Elite and others. Slava’s work has also appeared in several publications including Vogue, Bloomberg Businessweek, SF Weekly, CBS News Online Publication, Huffington Post, LA Times and LA Weekly. We continue to enjoy your shots from the holiday! Consider your next corporate headshot or create memorable moments with him.
Visit: www.slavablazer.com

Bistro Central Parc:
Located at 560 Central Street, Manuera opened his first restaurant, Baker Street Bistro in San Francisco, which he owned and operated for 18 years. His dream of creating a traditional neighborhood restaurant became a reality when he purchased a fire damaged building in the North Panhandle which he completely refurbished and transformed into Bistro Central Parc, a name chosen by neighbors and friends during a BBQ on a Saturday afternoon. So as you stroll through the streets of Nopa...
Dear Neighbors,

2012 saw a lot of new developments in our neighborhood and Park, many of them long-awaited and/or long-debated!

I am particularly interested to see the impact of the Fell and Oak Bikeways on our neighborhood in particular. Since I live at the corner of Scott and Oak, in front of the green “bike box”, I have witnessed the continual uptick in cyclists year after year. I’ve also seen a lot of conflict between bikes, pedestrians, and drivers. I’m hopeful that the bikeway will encourage better behavior from cyclists and drivers, as well as provide more safety for all.

The Oak / Fell bikeways will result in the removal of 40+ parking spaces on those streets. This has pushed the conversation about whether we should pursue a permit parking area in our neighborhood. It’s an ongoing debate, not just around Alamo Square, but in the Lower Haight and North of Panhandle neighborhoods. Elsewhere in the newsletter, we have published a synopsis of the comments we have received for and against the permits. What do YOU think?

Feel free to drop us a note at board@alamosq.org or post on our Facebook page.

Letter from the president

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see President’s Letter >
President's Letter, cont'd

The tour buses and employee shuttle buses continue to be a neighborhood hot topic. After an October 2011 MTA study that showed our neighborhood averaged one tour bus every three minutes, in spring 2012 the ASNA board requested a complete prohibition of the large (over eight passenger) tour buses within the Alamo Square Historic District. While that prohibition is not yet in effect, our request had the unintended consequence of more tour buses on fewer streets, impacting residents and business on those streets. We have had ongoing conversations with the MTA, SF Travel, and the SF Tour Bus Operators Association to find a compromise solution that will work for everybody. Ideally, the MTA will establish city-wide routes for both the tour and employee buses. We hope clear routes would mitigate the impact of the buses on neighborhoods, while enabling residents to have an easy commute, and visitors to see the sights and experience San Francisco. We will keep you posted.

Board members Katrina Jankowski and Margot Frey, both mothers of young children, launched our first Alamo Square Playgroups last fall. Every Tuesday morning, or the first Sunday of the month, neighborhood families meet at the Playground for coffee, muffins, and kid drinks. The Playgroups have been a resounding success, with nearly 30-40 kids (and their grown-ups) every week! If you have a child age 0-3, or know a neighbor who does, please join us in spreading the word about our neighborhood Playgroups. They are lots of fun, and a great way to meet other families.

Katrina has also been instrumental in working with the Rec and Parks Department for two projects that directly impact the long-term planning of our park: the restroom renovation and our irrigation project. We greatly appreciate the hours Katrina and other board members have spent in meetings representing Alamo Square and the needs of our park.

I’d like to recognize our retiring board members: Nico Lizarraga and Azalia Merrell. Not only has Nico been an excellent host for our meetings as the (former) manager at Chateau Tivoli, he has also managed our newsletter advertisement sales and marketing. We will miss you, Nico! Azalia is leaving the neighborhood and getting married! Azalia and her boys, John, Phineas, and David, have contributed so much to our park volunteer days and the annual Flea Market – especially selling raffle tickets! Many thanks to Azalia and her family. We wish you the very best.

Many thanks for all YOU do, and I look forward to seeing you in the park or in the neighborhood. Please join us for our annual potluck on Sunday, January 27, where we will vote for the 2013 ASNA Board of Directors!

Lisa Zahner, President
Alamo Square Neighborhood Association
Alamo Square board of directors slate for 2013

Officers
Lisa Zahner, current president, to continue in that position. Lisa has served as president since 2011. Her interest this year is in building ASNA’s membership.

Gus Hernandez, current vice president, to continue in that position. Gus is editor of the Alamo Square Newsletter and has served as vice president since 2011.

Erinne Morse, current treasurer, to continue in that position. Erinne is interested in traffic calming and pedestrian safety around Alamo Square. Erinne has served as treasurer since 2011.

Bill Bonds, current recording secretary, to continue in that position. Bill is dedicated to the protection and improvement of Alamo Square, for people and pets. He is also chair of the Park Committee. Bill has served as secretary since 2011.

Returning board members
Mary Bosworth to serve on her second year on the board. Mary was our Flea Market Coordinator in 2012 and will continue in that role in 2013.

John Dallas, long term board member to continue on the board, with an interest in park improvement projects.

Margot Frey Cusenbery to serve on her third year on the board. Margot’s interests are in Alamo Square events, in particular the new Alamo Square Playgroups she helped form last year.

LaVonne Hickerson to serve on her third year on the board. LaVonne is interested in helping with the annual Alamo Square Flea Market once again this year. She also serves on the Park Committee and is a dedicated volunteer.

Katrina Jankowski to serve on her second year on the board. Katrina’s interests include park advocacy and park improvements. She also helped form Alamo Square Playgroups last year.

Quintin Mecke to serve on his second year on the board. Quintin’s interests include bicycle and pedestrian safety, as well as community advocacy.

Christian Nguyen to continue on the board. His interests for the neighborhood include traffic calming and safety. He has served as liaison for Bay to Breakers and other neighborhood events.

Owen O’Donnell to continue on the board. His interests include park advocacy, park volunteer days, and community advocacy.

New board members
Katie Kincaid is a recent transplant from New York City and works as a public affairs consultant for Barbary Coast Consulting. She has come to love her new home in the Alamo Square neighborhood and wants to give back to the community.

J. Lee Stickles is a landscape architect/urban designer living in the neighborhood. Lee’s interests include park improvement and advocating for safe, walkable, bike-friendly streets.

Daniel Strongwater is a designer and human factors engineer. He is interested in growing and defining a cohesive neighborhood identity through design and connection to local businesses, residents, and spaces.

Members will vote for the 2013 ASNA Board of Directors at the January Potluck and General Meeting, on Sunday, January 27, 2013.

Restroom renovation update

After months of debate, neighbors have chosen the stand-alone unisex restroom design as their preferred solution for the restroom renovation project at Alamo Square. This ADA-compliant project would be located by the Playground on the existing ADA path, and still requires approval from the Planning and Historic Preservation Commissions.

The plan also includes renovation of the current restroom.

Host an INTERNATIONAL STUDENT!
• Seeking a new and exciting cultural experience?
• Would you like to host a short or long-term international student who is studying English?
• Does your home have wireless internet access?
• Do you live near public transportation and within 45 minutes of downtown San Francisco?

If you answered “Yes” to these questions, please contact Converse International School of Languages to learn more.
A parking spot of one's own?

By Gus Hernandez, Alamo Square Newsletter

Parking is a city-wide problem. It’s why I sold my car back in 2006 (after a few parking tickets, a fender bender and an unfair tow-away).

But when I hear people say, "I pay San Francisco rent, the least I can get is a parking spot nearby," I cringe. We can all agree the City is expensive. Neighbors who can afford car payments, insurance and vehicle license fees may think, "$104 for a yearly parking permit, what's the big deal?"

Yet neighbors who can barely afford these things, yet still need a car, may wonder, "Where am I going to get $104?"

Then there’s those of us without a car. If I rent a car to run errands or to take a trip, I have to either pay a larger per-day fee for a short-term pass, or suffer the wrath of SFDPT. I’m being penalized for not having my own automobile.

Of the 22,600 households in District 5, 10,000 have no vehicles; some by choice, others by necessity. Of the residents with employment, 32% drive their car to work, and 41% take transit instead.

Parking is free in our neighborhood. It makes it possible to have long-term visitors without worrying about running over the RPP time limit. I support finding alternate solutions to our parking problem, including the addition of angled parking, and I encourage those of us who can manage without a car to consider that solution as well.

Arguments against RPP

• Increased parking enforcement in the neighborhood for those without a permit
• A revenue generator for the City and an excuse to tax residents $104 per year
• More difficult for friends to visit and stay longer than the allowed RPP time limit
• May not resolve lack of parking during the evening hours
• Parking spaces are currently available during the daytime, when RPP is enforced
• Visitors permits require a trip to the SFMTA office and cost more than the yearly fee, per day
• Employees at local businesses aren’t eligible for a permit
• Residents who choose not to pay the fee will be forced to move their cars every few hours

Arguments for RPP

• Alamo Square is surrounded by RPP zones in all directions, so residents in those zones who do not want to pay for RPP park in our neighborhood
• Others outside the neighborhood park here for free and use employee shuttle buses, Muni, etc.
• $104 yearly fee is much less than renting a garage/parking space in the neighborhood
• Only 34% of vehicles in the neighborhood are registered in 94117
• 44% of vehicles are registered outside of SF or have no registration record

What are your thoughts on RPP? Join the discussion online at www.facebook.com/alamosquare or email board@alamosq.org.
You are Invited!
Alamo Square Neighborhood Association

New Year Potluck & General Membership Meeting

Sunday, January 27, 2013
Noon – 3pm
1021 Hayes Street

12:00 Welcome!
12:30 Potluck!
1:15 ASNA January Meeting

Agenda:
• Vote for proposed 2013 Board slate
• 2013 neighborhood projects

Please bring a tasty dish to share!
Renew your membership online or at the meeting
www.alamosq.org

As a member of the Alamo Square Neighborhood Association, you get the best price on our hooded, zip-front, fleece-lined sweater. Machine washable, sturdy, and perfect for those brisk days and nights at Alamo Square.

Hoodies (Black or Brown)
$45 Members
$60 Non-Members

$15 T-shirts (Green, Black, or Gray)

Email us to check availability and place an order: hoodies@alamosq.org or tshirts@alamosq.org.

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We’ve expanded!
Check out our larger selection

“I felt a lot of confidence throughout the process knowing I was working with someone who knew their stuff inside out”

— Joanna S., Buyer, Noe Valley

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Broker Associate / Attorney
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kho@vanguardsf.com
www.kevinho.org
Lic. #01485512

www.vanguardsf.com
By Nico Lizarraga, ASNA Board Member

On Friday December 7, our favorite local Indian restaurant Saffron Grill suffered a fire that has forced them to close. But thankfully, this won’t be the last we see of Saffron Grill. Open since 2009, Ajeet and Rita Mehta turned the space on Fulton into a haven for locals in need of a warm and relaxing atmosphere.

According to co-owner Ajeet who spoke to the local blog Haighteration, the fire did not affect their kitchen so they hope to reopen in a couple of months. We look forward to seeing Ajeet and Rita back at 1279 Fulton in the near future.

SFUSD proposes adding Gateway Middle School to Creative Arts Charter School campus

In the search for space for Gateway Middle School, SFUSD is proposing to add 300 middle school students to the Creative Arts Charter School campus at Pierce and Turk this Fall. This would increase the combined student population to 660.

SFUSD has not contacted ASNA about this proposal; however, CACS Director Fernando Aguilar, Ellison Folk, President of the CACS Board of Directors and ASNA neighbor, and Ross Hammond, CACS Board Member and parent, have attended ASNA meetings and discussed their concerns about the impact of this proposal on students and neighbors with the ASNA Board.

The CACS community is concerned that the proposed co-location limits the growth opportunity for CACS. Also, more middle-school-age students will tip the balance between younger and older students onsite, which could increase safety and liability risk for both schools.

There would only be 15 square feet of yard space per child, approximately half the outdoor space available at similar schools. There is also the concern that the influx of additional students to the campus will impact parking and traffic near the school.

CACS leaders have identified four alternative SFUSD school facilities with extra space within a two-mile radius of the CACS campus that may be appropriate for Gateway. CACS is proposing a meeting of all public schools in the area to develop a solution that works for all. For more information, visit http://www.creativeartscharter.org/news/pressrelease for the latest news.
This holiday season’s Divisadero Artwalk on Thursday December 13 may have looked quieter than most if you were strolling by, but that’s because the threat of rain, the fog and the cold were keeping all of our local art fans indoors inside Divisadero’s many venues.

The streets were less crowded with artists and art fans, but you could barely elbow your way into Workspace Studio, Mojo, Madrone, Rare Device or San Franpsycho. Divisadero between Grove and Hayes also had some exciting pop-ups. There was so much solid work on display that the lady and I ended up doing much of our Hanukkah and Christmas shopping on the corridor that night. She picked up some great earrings from Hadiya Jewelry (at Hayes and Divisadero where they were showcasing the original work of the NOPA staff). We then found ourselves debating endlessly over which of Studio Nico’s and Animal Instincts’ t-shirts to pick up.

The Gorilly Designs truck parked by Mojo had some irresistible locally flavored prints for sale by 3 Fish studios. At Big Umbrella Studios we checked out the work of Pete Doolittle, Rick Kitagawa and Eve Skylar. We then squeezed into Kelly Malone’s Workspace Studio and Madrone for a cocktail or two. It was warm and festive inside both, with Madrone adding live music as well. Madrone is currently exhibiting the beautiful photos of Dan Dion, the house photographer for both the Fillmore and the Warfield. With several new businesses and the dreary weather behind us, the spring Artwalk should be even more exciting. See you all in 2013!
San Francisco’s Victorian Specialist for over 20 years.

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**Events, cont’d**

First Saturdays, every other month  
**Alamo Square Park Volunteer Day**  
9 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
Meet near the tennis court; coffee provided.

Join us for our 2013 Park Volunteer Days hosted by Alamo Square Neighborhood Association.

Email us at park@alamosq.org to let us know you’re coming so we can plan the day’s clean-up activities!

**Save the Dates!**  
Saturday, February 2  
Saturday, April 6  
Saturday, June 1  
Saturday, August 3  
Saturday, October 5

**Important Contacts**  
Tom O’Connor, Manager  
Rec and Parks Department  
tom.o’connor@sfgov.org  
(415) 218-0259  

Greg Corrales, Police Captain  
SFPD Park Station  
(415) 242-3000  
SFPDParkStation@sfgov.org  

Ann Mannix, Police Captain  
SFPD Northern Station  
(415) 614-3400  
SFPDNorthernStation@sfgov.org  

ParkScan: Report park issues at ParkScan.org

**Privacy policy**  
Alamo Square Neighborhood Association (ASNA) will not share your information with anyone, nor will your information be given out for political purposes.

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**2013 ASNA Membership Form**

**Personal Contact Information**  
(2 contacts per general/family membership, will only be used for ASNA purposes)  

**Primary Contact**  
- Please print legibly

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**Membership Rates**

- $15 - Basic Membership  
- $30 - General / Family Membership  
- $50 - Contributing Membership  
- $100 - Supporting Membership  
- Other contribution__________

- **Check this box if you are renewing your membership**
- I would like to receive the Alamo Square Newsletter (bi-monthly)

**Indicate areas of interest:**

- Park Volunteer Days  
- Alamo Square Flea Market Volunteer  
- Transportation & Pedestrian Safety  
- Neighborhood Socials and Events  
- Other____________________________

Make checks payable to:  
ASNA, Box 15372, San Francisco, CA 94115
Alamo Square Newsletter
December 2012 – January 2013

December
Monday, December 17
ASNA Board Meeting

January
Sunday, January 27
Alamo Square Potluck and ASNA General Meeting
Doors open 12:00 p.m.
Potluck 12:30 p.m.
Meeting starts 1:15 p.m.
Agenda: Vote for the 2013 ASNA Board of Directors

February
Saturday, February 2
Alamo Square Park Greening
9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Meet by the tennis court; coffee provided.

Alamo Square Online: www.alamosq.org