# **NORTH PANHANDLE NEWS**



North of Panhandle Neighborhood Association

www.nopna.org

Jul/Aug 2015

# **New Developments Proposed** for Harding Theater

By J.J. Strahle



Once a theater, then a church, the Harding has sat vacant for more than 12 years. Photo: Libby Estell

The long-vacant Harding Theater could see a new tenant in the near future. This would be a new lease on life for the 82-year-old landmark at 616 Divisadero, which has languished in development limbo for more than a dozen years. The proposed venture would be the first West Coast outpost for a Chicago family that runs a couple of classic game arcade and live-event venues.

Danny Marks grew up in the movie theater business. His family owned a handful of theaters in the Chicago area for nearly 30 years, until multiplexes started to take over in the early 1990s. Danny and his brother, Doug, ventured back into the entertainment business in 2012 to open their first Emporium, followed by a second, larger location last year. Both are in historic, landmarked buildings in lively neighborhoods, similar to the Divisadero Corridor.

After visiting friends on several trips to San Francisco, Danny walked by the Harding Theater and "was captivated by its historic nature, and it became evident why the building is such a cherished part of the Divisadero architectural (Continued on page 3)

#### NOPNA MEETING

#### Thursday, Sept. 17

7 p.m.: Informal get-together 7:30 p.m.: General Meeting

**OASIS CAFE** 901 Divisadero St. @ McAllister

# Calendar of **Events**

#### **Sunday Streets: Western Addition**

Sunday, Sept. 13, 11am-4pm Fillmore and Fulton streets

#### **SFPD Park Station Community Meeting**

Tuesday, Sept. 8, 6 p.m. Park Station, 1899 Waller St.

#### SFPD Northern Station **Community Meeting**

Thursday, Sept. 10, 6 p.m. Northern Station, 1125 Fillmore St.

#### **Panhandle Park Community Work Day** Saturday, Sept. 12, 9-11 a.m. Meet near the playground.

# NOPNA Stands Up for Affordable Housing

By Tim Hickey



Housing demands are extremely high in San Francisco, and affordable options are limited for those who don't fall either below the poverty level or well above the median household income.

Many people want to live here, but planning for supply has not kept up. The lack of Below Market

Rate (BMR) housing for moderate income households is limiting diversity and creating an apparent vacuum of the middle class. According to results from the Proposition K ballot initiative in 2014, 76 percent of voters in NoPa's 10 precincts show support allocating a third of new housing to BMR units.

The NOPNA board is acutely aware of the affordable housing shortage and has joined the Duboce Triangle Neighborhood Association, Lower Haight Merchants and Neighbors Association, Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association and Eureka Valley Neighborhood Association to create the "Policy on Affordable Housing Units in New Residential Developments."

This policy mandates a greater percentage of BMR housing for proposed developments. We believe that keeping San Francisco neighborhoods accessible to a broader section of the community is important and vital in allowing the neighborhood to thrive. Visit NONPA. org to read the policy.

Tim Hickey is president of the NOPNA board. He has lived in NoPa since 2010.



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**North Panhandle News** is published for the residents, businesses, and friends of our neighborhood, which is bounded by Masonic Avenue and Turk. Divisadero and Fell Streets.

Publisher: NOPNA Board of Directors Managing Editor: Libby Estell Production Editor: Mimi Sparrow Graphic Designer: Lisa Eastlack Advertising: Angela Alvarado Distribution: Will Valentine

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**NOPNA's mission:** The purpose of this association shall be to establish neighborhood unity, maintain multi-ethnic and multi-cultural diversity, foster a sense of neighborhood pride, promote a safe and clean community, and improve the quality of life for all residents of the neighborhood.

# CONTACT NOPNA by email: board@nopna.org www.nopna.org

**GET the NEWS?—PAY your DUES!** 

Your NOPNA membership gives us a stronger voice at City Hall and supports our efforts to create a clean, safe, and friendly neighborhood.

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#### **Harding Theater** (from page 1)

landscape." As with his other ventures, the brothers intend to maintain the historic elements of the theater in their design plans.

The arcade will feature many classic games—video games, pinball, pool, foosball, air hockey and shuffleboard—to provide nostalgia for the over-40 crowd and retro-cool for the Millennials. The stage area will remain, and they hope to bring in live music, dance and theater. The brothers also intend to serve local and regional craft beers (and maybe a few from Chicago), and host popup restaurants out of a fixed kitchen and dining area. They also think the balcony upstairs is both large and intimate enough for private parties.

Danny intends to move with his family to San Francisco to open and run the arcade. The brothers take great pride in being involved in the neighborhoods where they live and operate. Danny says he and Doug have worked to be good neighbors, and they claim to have developed good relationships with the local police and politicians in Chicago. He intends to do the same at the Harding.

"I love San Francisco and I am beyond excited to try to get this project off the ground in such a cool neighborhood," Danny said. In May, he presented his proposal to our neighbors at the Alamo Square Neighborhood Association meeting, where the turnout and response was healthy. The brothers have so far been unable to attend a NOPNA General Meeting, but Danny hopes to present at one in the coming months.

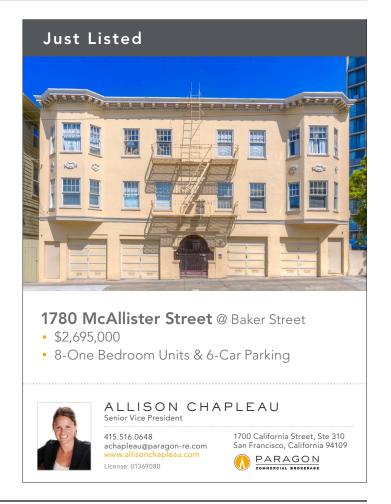
On a related note, Michael Klestoff, owner of the Harding Theater, and local architect Mark Topetcher, of TOPetcher Architecture, have drawn up plans for a nine-unit development in the vacant portion of the L-shaped parcel that faces Hayes Street. The five-story development will include one-bedroom units from 705 to 755 square feet in size, a shared roof deck, bike storage, and parking for up to three vehicles.

In order to accommodate both developments, the small mechanical room in the Harding will need to be demolished and egress paths for the theater will be built into the condo development. Topetcher attended the NOPNA General Meeting in May and presented an overview of the proposal.

The condo proposal is now under environmental review with the city planning department.

J.J. Strahle has lived in NoPa for 10 years and is a past president of the NOPNA board.





# NoPa Residential Parking Permits Now Available

By Mimi Sparrow

NoPa residents are now able to apply for Residential Parking Permits (RPP) from the SFMTA.

Car owners who live between Fell Street, Masonic Avenue, Fulton Street and Divisadero Street can apply for a permit within the new parking Area Q. Those who live between Fulton and Golden Gate Avenue, between Masonic and Divisadero, can apply for a permit within the recently expanded Area P. Area Q also extends east of Divisadero, encompassing Alamo Square.

The permits exempt vehicles from RPP time limit restrictions only. Street cleaning, red zone, white zone and all other parking restrictions, including parking meters, still apply. Vehicles parked in the same space for more than 72 hours are subject to citation and towing.

Business establishments in the RPP areas are eligible for one permit per independent office space. Permits are also available for schools, fire stations, medical and child caregivers, students and active military personnel.

Permit fees for Areas P and Q are \$111. Delinquent parking citations must be paid prior to a permit being issued. Applications for a RPP require:

- a) Copy of California DMV vehicle registration at the permit address and in the applicant's name.
- b) Copy of vehicle insurance policy documents with the applicant named as the insured at the permit address (such as the policy declarations page).

- c) A check made payable to the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency for \$111.
  - d) The completed RPP application.

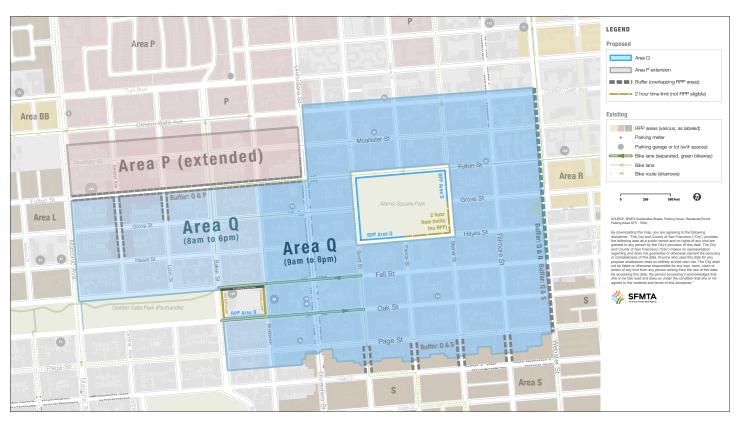
For Area Q residents, the annual RPP fee covers the first 18 months and is valid through December 2016. Thereafter, permits will be renewable for one year. Enforcement for Area Q will begin on September 1.

For Area P residents, the annual RPP fee is valid through March 2016. After March 2016, permits will be renewable for one year. Renewal notices will automatically be mailed to all existing permit holders.

The SFMTA has mailed RPP Permit Applications to all residents of Area Q and the expanded Area P. If you are a resident of Area Q or the expanded Area P and did not receive an application, you can find the application online at SFMTA.com.

The SFMTA requests that residents apply for permits by mail and allow up to three weeks for processing. In-person applications will be accepted at the SFMTA Customer Service Center at 11 South Van Ness Ave. from 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Mimi Sparrow is a member of the NOPNA board. She first moved to NoPa in 2000.





# Make your mark with a landmark home.

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# Get to Know Heart of Gold Boutique

By Sydney Leto

On Sunday, May 10, the former 97 Cent Store at 777 Divisadero St. reopened under new ownership as Heart of Gold, a boutique offering vintage and designer clothing, furnishings and accessories.

Heart of Gold is the passion project of NoPa resident Gene Barnes, 32. Barnes has lived in the neighborhood for nearly a decade and had noticed its lack of retail. He had a vision for a boutique, but the project came to life sooner than expected when he passed a handwritten "For Rent" sign in January while walking his dog.

Barnes called on his friends to help get the project moving on a short deadline and tight budget. Rather than call in professionals to redo the floors, Barnes repurposed barn wood from the North Bay and drove around the city collecting bricks from ads on Craigslist.

The boutique's name comes from the stories Barnes heard about his late mother and "her heart of gold." Her memory has served as inspiration throughout his life, Barnes said, and is why he worked to finish the store in time for a soft opening on Mother's Day.

Inside, Heart of Gold is filled with bright vanity lights, leather couches and subtle touches of gold paint.

"I feel like when I come in here it's warm and vital, like you're shopping in someone's home," said Gino Ross, an old friend of Barnes who was visiting from Southern California.

On either side of the store, tall built-in shelves are filled with a curated collection of denim vests, wool cardigans, sequined tops and sun hats that Barnes has hand-picked from vintage stores and flea markets. On tables made from repurposed doors, the store also offers a shoe collection ranging from white converse sneakers to patent leather Prada heels. Heart



of Gold currently sells mostly secondhand clothing, but Barnes plans to carry other well-known brands like RRL by Ralph Lauren and Levi's Made & Crafted, as well as local labels like John Elliot & Co.

"My vision for the store was to have people feel as if they were being transported to another time when they walk in," said Barnes as Ray Charles's "I Got a Woman" played in the background. "I want this store, and the lifestyle brand that is Heart of Gold, to represent timelessness and a feeling that what you find here offers a kind of value that can't be bought."

A former basketball player at UCLA, Barnes now works as a life coach and youth mentor. His long term plan is to link Heart of Gold with his nonprofit, Ideal Futures, which aims to help kids get to college with mentorship, community and hard work.

Sydney Leto is a recent graduate of Wake Forest University and a new resident of NoPa.



Top: The retail space has been completely renovated. Bottom: Gene Barnes, owner of Heart of Gold. Photos: Heart of Gold

# Meet Capt. Greg McEachern of Northern Station

By Libby Estell

The citywide police redistricting that took effect July 19 redrew the boundaries of many police districts. Although nearly all of NoPa remains within Park District, both sides of Divisadero Street—from the Marina down to Waller Street—are now part of Northern District.

That means it's time to get to know Capt. Greg McEachern, the commanding officer at Northern Station for almost three years.

"We've picked up quite a bit of territory and housing developments, another hospital and at least seven additional schools," McEachern said. "The good thing for us, I believe, is that the area is very close to our station, so our response time should be improved."

Northern Station, at Turk and Fillmore streets, is also a larger facility than Park Station, with double the officers, more cars, and additional personnel. McEachern said his station is growing, with plans to reach a total of just over 120 officers in the coming months.

"Now that we have additional staffing, I'd like to have foot beats on the commercial corridors, including Divisadero."

"Now that we have additional staffing, I'd like to have foot beats on the commercial corridors, including Divisadero," McEachern said. "It's going to take time for the patrol officers to get to know the community and the businesses that are there."

McEachern, a 25-year veteran and second-generation SFPD officer with a brother and son on the force as well, is no stranger to patrol. "In my career, I've spent a majority of my time on patrol, so I'm comfortable with that."

Before taking command of Northern in December 2012, McEachern served there twice as a lieutenant. "What I like about Northern is the diversity of the community groups and



Capt. Greg McEachern commands the SFPD's Northern Station. Photo: SFPD

concerns and the variety of criminal activity that we work with," he said. "It's one of the ideal stations to work at as a commanding officer."

McEachern is a fourth-generation native San Franciscan and a believer in the power of community. "Growing up in the city and knowing this area since childhood has helped me build our community relations so that when there are challenges we can have a constructive dialogue."

Two of McEachern's lieutenants attended the July 16 NOPNA General Meeting, and he encourages neighbors to attend the community meets at Northern Station on the second Thursday of every month. "I know I can't be successful without the community's input and support."

Libby Estell is the managing editor of this newsletter. She has lived in NoPa since 2011.

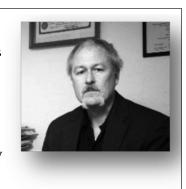


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# **Bootcamps Educate and Empower Renters**

By Dean Preston

The faucet in Barbara's apartment started leaking, but she was hesitant to ask for a repair. After Garrett's apartment was sold, the new property manager came with a series of questionnaires, and he wasn't sure whether he needed to fill them out. Jane paid rent a few days late, and her landlord responded with a \$100 penalty. They all wanted to know, "What are my rights as a tenant in San Francisco?"

It's a question on many minds, as eviction rates continue to rise and the threat of displacement looms. Although it's true that tenants have tools to protect themselves, it can be difficult to navigate the legal landscape alone.

That's why my organization, Tenants Together, partnered with the San Francisco Tenants Union to conduct Tenant Rights Bootcamps this summer. We took tenant rights trainings to the neighborhood level—at cafes, community centers, and churches—so San Franciscans could learn their rights and how to fight displacement.

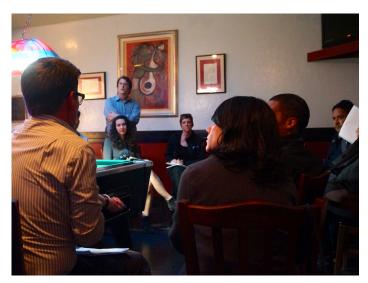
"Although it's true that tenants have tools to protect themselves, it can be difficult to navigate the legal landscape alone."

What these bootcamps showed is that there is an incredible demand among tenants to learn their rights. When we launched the project in May, we planned to hold weekly bootcamps. But when they turned out to be standing-room only, with nearly twice as many attendees as expected, we decided to double down and host two bootcamps a week through July.

In addition to the high demand, we also saw how the bootcamps brought our community together. Part of the program involved group breakout sessions with tenant counselors, where attendees can get basic information and referrals to legal aid groups. We found that often a tenant would ask a question in their small group and find that a neighbor is going through the same experience. There's tremendous value in tenants knowing they're not fighting these battles alone.

If you have questions about your rights as a tenant or would like more information, visit www.tenantbootcamp.org.

Dean Preston is the founder and executive director of Tenants Together, California's statewide organization for renters' rights.



Neighbors gathered May 6 for a Tenant Rights Bootcamp at Club Waziema on Divisadero. Photo: Tenant Rights Bootcamp



### Vision Zero

#### **Putting Pedestrians First**

By Tim Hickey



Masonic Avenue has been the site of numerous pedestrian injuries. Photo: Aaron Bialick/Streetsblog SF

As an early signer of Vision Zero, NOPNA has worked to reduce pedestrian and cyclist injuries in our neighborhood and throughout the city. The number of serious injuries that pedestrians continue to sustain indicates that much more work needs to be done. This month, we focus on a means of travel everyone has used: sidewalks and crosswalks.

#### **Pedestrians**

Though it has been proven that the majority of collisions are caused by drivers, it is critical that pedestrians remain aware of their surroundings at all times. Bear in mind that 41% of collisions between vehicles and pedestrians occur in a crosswalk. The San Francisco Department of Public Health lists the key precautions to take when making your way around our city on foot:

- Don't assume that drivers see you.
   Make eye contact with drivers so they see you and understand your intention.
- Look left, right, and left again. If it's clear, begin crossing.
- Continue to check for traffic in all directions, especially for vehicles turning right on red.
- Don't use cell phones and other electronics while crossing the street.
- Pedestrians are not allowed in bicycle lanes, even while jogging or skating.
- Don't step into the street from between parked cars.

#### **Drivers**

It's important to remember that in many traffic scenarios, pedestrians have the right of way. By keeping an eye out for pedestrians and adhering to right-of-way laws, you can help reduce the number of incidents and make San Francisco safe for everyone. Here's a refresher of our city's right-of-way laws and the fines associated with violating them—plus administrative fees, one point on your license and possible injury or death.

- Turning right on a red light without yielding to pedestrians, \$238
- Failing to yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk, \$238
- Not allowing a pedestrian to clear the street before driving through a green light, \$238
- Passing a standing streetcar or cable car, \$238
- Passing a car which has stopped for a pedestrian, \$490

Tim Hickey is president of the NOPNA board. He has lived in NoPa since 2010.

#### What's the 4-1-1?

By Kandace Kaylor

New restaurants, community meetings, block parties, parking permits, surveys—with so many things happening in NoPa, it's sometimes challenging to stay informed.

The first time I organized a community event, I walked around the neighborhood passing out flyers to strangers on the street. Armed with a stapler and roll of tape, I hung posters in coffee shops and laundromats. I hoped word would spread and at least a few people would attend.

Around that time, I discovered the Neighborhoods app on Facebook and created an account. Little did I know, that would start a new way of engaging with our community.

Today NOPNA is active on Facebook (nopnasf), Twitter (@nopna) and Instagram (@nopna\_org). Visit our website, www.nopna.org, to see our calendar of events and be added to our email distribution list. You can also find great information on Nextdoor and Hoodline. If you prefer to

use a little less tech to get the scoop, you can find copies of our bi-monthly newsletter stacked in local businesses and apartment buildings. And yes, we still take advantage of the bulletin boards around the neighborhood.

So, whether you'd like to pose a question to your neighbors, find out about events or new places to visit, you'll have the 4-1-1.

Kandace Kaylor is a 12-year resident of NoPa and has served on the NOPNA board since 2008.







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#### **Just Sold in NOPA**

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#### Personal Chef Puts Nutrition on the Table

By Libby Estell



Left: Chef Stacey Ellis of Herb'n Vegan. Photos: Stacey Ellis

Ten years after going vegan, NoPa resident Stacey Ellis left a career in hospitality PR last December to launch Herb'n Vegan, her personal chef business. "I was looking for my work to be personal and meaningful. My happy place is the kitchen," Ellis says. "I did a lot of soul-searching and settled on personal cheffing as a way to combine my passions for vegan food, the planet, the environment, and public health."

Herb'n Vegan offers four basic services: personal chef, dinner parties, cooking classes and pantry makeovers.

As a personal chef Ellis provides clients with weekly in-home planning and preparation of family dinners, so they come home to a fridge full of heat-and-serve vegan meals.

"Most of my clients say they have five meals

they make every week in rotation, and that leaves lots of room for improvement in nutrition and variety," Ellis says, adding that clients can feed a family of four for about what they would spend eating out or doing takeout that often.

Ellis also offers small-group cooking classes and dinner parties in clients' homes. "Dinner parties are sort of my passion. It's an expression of my hospitality and my creativity."

In May, Ellis used CookApp to host two pop-up dinners in her McAllister Street home. Both of the six-person seatings sold out, and there are more in the works. "I do them when I have a menu I feel really confident about and proud of," she says.

You don't have to be vegan to enjoy Ellis's cooking. "None of the people I cook for are vegan," Ellis says. "They just want to do better. And better is good by me. If everyone did that, it would cause a paradigm shift that would improve global health and the environment."

To learn more about Chef Stacey's food or services, visit herbnvegan.com or email Stacey@herbnvegan.com.

Libby Estell is the managing editor of this newsletter. She has lived in NoPa since 2011.





#### Roasted Tomato Soup

- 2 lbs. ripe red tomatoes, quartered
- 1 sweet or yellow onion, peeled and quartered
- 3 cloves of garlic, skin on
- 1 Tbs. fresh thyme
- 2-3 Tbs. fresh basil (about 4-6 large basil leaves), coarsely chopped
- ¼ c. extra virgin olive oil, plus more for roasting vegetables
- 1 tsp. agave syrup
- 2 tsps. balsamic vinegar

Pinch of cayenne pepper

Salt and black pepper to taste

Preheat oven 450 degrees. On a large roasting pan, toss the tomatoes, onion, and garlic with just enough olive oil to lightly coat. Sprinkle with a little kosher or sea salt and a few grinds of black pepper. Roast for 35-40 minutes or until the vegetables are soft and beginning to caramelize. Remove from oven, discard outer skin on the garlic and transfer the roasted veggies to a blender. Blend on high until the mixture begins to come together. Slow the blender to low, and add the fresh basil, thyme, ¼ cup olive oil, agave, cayenne pepper and vinegar. Increase speed to high and blend until completely smooth. Taste and adjust seasoning. Pour and enjoy or store in an airtight container for up to three days.

# MOLLIE POE

#### Top Producer & NOPA Specialist



As a long-term resident of North Panhandle, a Mom with kids in local schools, and a strong supporter and advocate of everything NOPA (including the neighborhood association as a business member and avid sponsor), I regularly represent Buyers and Sellers within our wonderful neighborhood.

Please visit my website for further information on past sales and property presentations, or call me directly with any Real Estate inquiries.

If you are thinking of selling, I'd love to help with a market analysis of your property. Low inventory continues to drive our market and you maybe very surprised to find the 'hidden equity' in your home, given these market conditions. I have good insight into NOPA's Buyer pool, and I frequently have access to pocket listings and a proven strategy to get you the best results within NOPA's borders or other neighborhoods in our 7x7.

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