



February 5, 2018

from The President's Desk

by Henry Karnilowicz

January was a very busy month as SFCDMA prepares for an exciting year ahead with new partnerships and initiatives to better serve our Members.

Homeless Encampments

No matter how many times the police and DPW move the homeless they keep returning, with little consideration of the impact they are having on businesses in San Francisco. I am compassionate and understand that homelessness is a pressing and difficult issue. However, being homeless should not be an excuse for behaving in a way that demonstrates a lack of respect for businesses and communities. It's not fair that businesses have to put up with this behavior, which by the way, has a deleterious effect also on the quality of life. Kudos to Mission Station Police Captain Gaetano Caltagirone who at a community meeting at Mission Station recently said he will be working with the District Attorney on issuing warrants to arrest homeless people who have been repeatedly cited for nuisance activities and who refuse services. He said that while there are fewer tent encampments, there are still individuals who are not accepting services. "It gets tiresome for the officers who get on scene and they tell the individual to move and they say, 'No, we're not moving,'" Caltagirone said. I extend our appreciation and gratitude to Police Captain Gaetano Caltagirone, Police Officer Miguel Cortez and DPW Supervisor Darryl Dilworth for their dedication and quick response for each request that has been made to have homeless encampments moved.

People Of Parkside Sunset Installation



I was honored to be at the installation dinner for the Officers of POPS (People Of Parkside Sunset) at the Gold Mirror on Taraval Street. I am truly proud of all that they have done for the small business community, with events such as Movie Nights in McCoppin Square now attracting over 400 people. They have become so good at it that other associations are using their model! I was also impressed to see District Supervisor Katy Tang Swearing in the officers. Assessor Recorder Carmen Chu was present to bestow Certificates of Honor. Congratulations to President Albert Chow, Co-Vice President Dallas Udovch, Co-Vice President Jen Lee, Secretary Robert Dittler, Treasurer Led Ong and Sargent at Arms Beaumont Udovch.

Saving street car stop on Taraval

No matter how much small business pleads with SFMTA the response seems to be a deaf ear. Their Vision Zero initiative is in place to prevent people getting hit by cars. What SFMTA does not seem to want to acknowledge is that new cars that are rolling out now have sensors that cause them to brake automatically. In the very near future cars will be autonomous.

What I see frequently in SOMA, such as on 6th Street between Market and Mission and on Mission between 6th and 10th Streets, is pedestrians sauntering across the street oblivious to traffic lights and many times even standing in the middle of the road and stopping traffic.

POPS has been battling SFMTA to put a stop to the removal of parking spaces, particularly in front of Safeway.

Thanks to an orchestrated community campaign, including a letter of support from SFCDMA and support from Supervisor Norman Yee, SFMTA has backed down! Thank you Supervisor Yee!

GGRA 2018 Restaurant Week Kick-off



Where else would GGRA want to meet, vote in the new board slate, celebrate the new year and kick off SF Restaurant Week 2018 but at Open Table Headquarters! Executive Director Gwyneth Borden is an outstanding and stellar leader. It was encouraging to hear of GGRA's concern for the environment as they offer support to programs such as replacing plastic straws with paper straws in restaurants.

On a sad note the restaurant industry lost a champion with the passing of Donnalyn Murphy, Associate Director of the Golden Gate Restaurant Association. Donnalyn battled cancer the past year and had just returned enthusiastically to work full time after Thanksgiving, feeling recovered from her second cancer-related surgery and being declared cancer-free. Unfortunately, she succumbed to an infection. Chhavi Sahni has stepped into her shoes and I am confident she will do an excellent job.

The Recology Cioppino Feast



Okay so Recology collects our garbage and recyclables - but what else are they good at? Throwing delicious feasts in the banquet room at their headquarters, including venison, crab, salmon and Cioppino! Of course we are always invited and not only is the food mouthwatering but the evening is always festive and fun, with people from all segments of the community.

Meeting at Airbnb



Our new Executive Director, Vas Kiniris and I met with representatives from Airbnb, SF Travel, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and the Golden Gate Restaurant Association at the beautiful new Airbnb San Francisco office at 999 Brannan. The purpose of the meeting was to decide how to work collaboratively on events such as merchant walks, mixers, workshops etc. that will draw customers to small businesses.

Airbnb has leased the **entire 150,000 square feet property at 999 Brannan Street**. The building offers some fabulous amenities - including a quiet room! The new office is close to the vacation rental listing company's existing offices in 888 Brannan and 99 Rhode Island. There is definitely the feel of a cool urban campus.

Election of Officers and Executive Administrator



I am truly proud of the San Francisco Council of District Merchants Association, after witnessing a packed conference room for our January meeting. I thank all the delegates for voting me in for another term as President and Keith Goldstein as Treasurer. Albert Chow, President of POPS was voted in as Vice President and Yuka Ioroi, board member of Balboa Village Merchants Association is the new Secretary. Vas Kiniris, the Executive Director of Fillmore Merchants Association, was voted in as our new Executive Administrator! Congratulations to everyone! I am really excited and look forward to working with my team!

Thank you to all those who continue to promote small business in San Francisco. I will keep you - our Membership - in touch with my February schedule of meetings and events in my next monthly newsletter - "from the President's Desk".

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