

Excelsior & Outer Mission Neighborhood Strategy
Working Group
Corridor Commerce & Service Provider Support Subgroup

Date: Wednesday September 13, 2017

Staff Facilitators: Rachael Tanner, San Francisco Planning Department

Notes taken by: Rachael Tanner, San Francisco Planning Department

Attendance:

Working Group Participants

Anton Jaber
Sean Ingram
Andrea Ferucci
David Hooper
David Latterman
Allyson Ritger

Partner Agencies & Organizations

Stephanie Cajina, Excelsior Action Group
Cathy Mulky Meyer, Aide to Supervisor Ahsha Safai

Members of the Public

Karolyn Wong, Main Street Launch

Notes

Public Safety

- *The Working Group agenda began with a discussion of public safety prompted by recent events that occurred nearby. This item was not planned on the agenda.*
- Incident: A Working Group member reported that a person high on meth was threatening passersby on Geneva Avenue. He continued this behavior, went into a nearby taqueria and was then beaten badly there.
 - The incident happened and was regrettable. Worse, the working group member reported, was the lack of response from the City; there was no enforcement at the taqueria and no City pressure to shape up.
 - It was alleged that the establishment has lots of issues, drugs, gambling, prostitution.
 - The response to this incident and others has been inadequate.
- There has been an increase in garbage, homelessness, and violence.
- Beat cops – what are there beat cops on Cortland instead of on Mission and Geneva?
- What are other subgroups proposing that might overlap this issues?
 - Some types of improvements discussed previously in this working group and in others include:
 - Fixed Assets that can be deterrents

- Lighting
- Security cameras
 - A desire for new lights and camera at Mission and Geneva was expressed. There was discussion that these improvements were slated to be installed, though there had been some challenges securing approval from the property owners.
- Personnel
 - Beat cops
 - Coordination amongst many public agencies: California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, Department of Building & Inspection, and others.
 - A feeling was expressed that these agencies are not taking responsibility
- There was a discussion about how to deter crime in the first place.
- Frustration was expressed. Frustration that there are walks, reports, multiagency response but “nothing ever happens.” Attention seems to happen, but there seems to be no impact.
 - Some working group members expressed a desire to have the City “come down hard” and sweep the corridor by fining all violations.
- The need was articulated for immediate attention from a coordinated set of City & County agencies for illegal/criminal activities (such as gambling, drugs, converting commercial spaces into dwelling units, and other violations).
 - Some articulated a desire to have the City make investments first and then to engage property and business owners in making investments.
 - A potential example that could become an intervention model was provided: 5 Persia, the laundromat where folks were being housed illegally in the basement. In this instance, a multi-agency task force developed to address the issues.
 - An accountability structure is important. This could be monthly reports on the problems and what has been done to address them.
 - The response must be sustained and consistent.
 - There must be accountability back to the community stakeholders.
 - An idea was posed: Can we impose restrictions on bad actors?

Bus Stops & the Mission + Geneva Intersection

- Bus stops
 - Can we engage MTA around safety and security at the MUNI stops? Especially at Mission and Geneva?
 - One person present reported telling their child to avoid getting off the bus at Mission and Geneva on the way home from school.
 - Could the bus stop be moved?
 - Part of the location of the stops is to allow buses to move through a stoplight and stop on the other side and not snarl traffic further.
 - Whether the stop is moved or not, the issues will remain.

- At the southeast side of the Geneva & Mission corridor the building by the stop does not have eyes on the street. This creates more acute challenges here.
- Perhaps MTA can explore a different design for the shelters themselves; perhaps push the shelters up against the buildings.
 - One reason MTA has cited for not doing this is that there are issues with liability
- In the long-term, we need to consider total reconfiguration of the Mission & Geneva intersection.

Additional Discussion Items

- A working group member emphasized that, in his experience, cleaning and security cameras could go a long way toward making the street safer.
- Budget – can there be dedicated staff to D11? In DBI perhaps? This dedicated staff person could deal with other agencies and lead efforts to enforce.
 - This could be a budget ask.
 - A member suggested DBI might not be the best location; perhaps a position that is able to compel other agencies to work together.
 - Departments would need to cooperate and direct their personnel to work together.
 - There could be regular monitoring/reporting on input, outcomes, and impacts.
 - This task force could work with the community members too.
- Community Benefits District (CBD)
 - The idea of starting a community benefits district in the Excelsior & Outer Mission Neighborhood Commercial District.
 - The explanation of a CBD was given: It is a voluntary assessment that the property owners vote to create. The assessment generates annual revenue that can be used for a range of items, including cleaning, greening, security, and other uses.
 - Some subgroups have talked about starting one.
 - Some comments from the subgroup included
 - It would be great; can we get one started?
 - Some questions to ask about CBDs
 - How many people need to agree? Is it 51%?
 - How are non-votes counted?
 - Is the structure always land owners and business owners?
 - Let's get more information.
 - Need incentives for property owners to join.
 - To start, be strategic and choose an area where the idea would have lots of support.
- Nodes
 - General support for the idea of nodes, breaking the corridor into smaller units
 - Suggestion to look at several major intersections: (1) Mission & Geneva, (2) Persia & Mission, (3) Mission & Silver.
- Interim Controls
 - Idea of interim controls was explained: Though interim controls can vary greatly in terms of design, the overall idea is that there are temporary restrictions in a given area on certain land uses.

- For example, we could require a conditional use permit for a nail or hair salon to open in the commercial corridor.
- A conditional use permit creates a higher bar for that use to open.
- Discussion
 - On one hand, a conditional use for hair and nail salons could encourage commercial property owners to look for different tenants. Instead of just renting to the first nail salon to approach, they would have to be open to different uses.
 - On the other hand, this would be saying no and being more restrictive.
 - One member suggested that the district wants to be saying yes more often; not no. That this same argument of interim controls has been used in other neighborhoods to keep businesses out and has not been a help to the neighborhood. It might seem positive, but could also backfire.
 - Concern was expressed this could increase the number of vacancies on the corridor.
 - This could also be a tool that could be used for the positive.
 - Perhaps we can learn more about interim controls as well as other land use tools.
- Ultimately, the group expressed a desire to be more open, to be more permissive. The subgroup is open to learning more, but not very supportive of interim controls.