

S U M M E R 2 0 1 2

Your MTHOA

Newsletter

Published twice yearly by the Midtown Terrace Home Owners Association

Message From the Board President

As I sat down to compose this message I wanted to say something about our neighborhood's uniqueness and sense of community, but I wasn't exactly sure how to phrase it. Then a simple thought came to mind and things fell into place from there.

I love our neighborhood. It has a uniqueness like no other. It's located in the geographic heart of a densely populated World Class city, and yet it has the atmosphere of a small town. We have in our immediate vicinity some of the most beautiful natural areas in San Francisco – Twin Peaks, Sutro Forest, Laguna Honda Reservoir, Glen Canyon, and Mt. Davidson. We're within walking distance of miles of hiking trails and are located close to great shopping and dining areas in West Portal, Inner Sunset, Cole Valley, and the Castro.

Yet we're "off the beaten path". Our streets, although public, are used primarily by neighborhood residents and our guests. From the comfort of our homes, we have some of the most beautiful views The City has to offer. As far as neighborhoods go, we're one of SF's best kept secrets.

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MTHOA-Sponsored Easter Egg Hunt a Hopping Success

The Home Owners Association held the second annual Midtown Terrace Easter Egg Hunt on April 7, 2012 and once again it was a big success. The hunt took place at Midtown Terrace Playground and about 80 children and their families attended.

The clubhouse was open this year for art activities. Several children enjoyed decorating their own Easter egg bag with drawings, stickers, and cut-out pictures. Outside activities included

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Save These Dates – MTHOA Sponsored Events

Block Party Sunday, Sept. 30

Join your neighbors on September 30th for a cookout, drinks, games and activities for the whole family. The MTHOA Annual Block Party, located at the end of Dellbrook Avenue at Olympia Way, is a great way to connect with fellow Midtown residents!

Garage Sale Saturday, Oct. 20

Once again we will hold our neighborhood-wide Midtown Terrace garage sale this fall. Sign up to participate via our web page or Yahoo! Group. Just set up in front of your home. And the HOA will take care of online ads, maps of participating homes, and signs to promote it.

Trick or Treat Wednesday, Oct. 31

Celebrate Halloween with your children in the safety of your own neighborhood. Head to the the Dellbrook Olympia Way loop from 6pm to 8pm for the MTHOA sponsored Trick or Treat Night, filled with decorated homes and treats for the little ones.

Simple Steps to Managing Trees and Shrubbery in Midtown Terrace

Just after Midtown Terrace was built in the 1950s, a landscaping plan was developed to enhance the neighborhood's appearance. The plan consisted of 3 phases – planting of trees (mostly pines and Monterey cypress), bushes and hedges, and groundcover (ivy and ice plant).

The trees were provided by the city, originally obtained from the Golden Gate Park nursery, and were provided to home owners at nominal cost. Today, over 50 years later, the landscaping has fully matured creating our beautiful greenbelts and park-like setting. In some cases however, the trees have become so large as to block views, send large branches over neighboring houses, and present hazards if they should fall.

Trees within the greenbelt are the responsibility of home owners within whose property boundary they exist. Now is a good time to evaluate the condition of trees on your property. While view blockage is a matter of aesthetics, safety concerns are not. We ask that home owners take the time to evaluate the condition of trees located on your property to see if they present hazards to you or your neighbors. If they do, take action to have the trees trimmed or even removed if necessary.

Keeping Up Appearances. And Our Home Values!

In our last newsletter we ran an article about the importance of maintaining the condition and appearance of your property. We're very pleased that either as a result of the article, or on their own initiative, several home owners have taken steps to make property improvements including new exterior paint and landscaping.

When a group of neighbors takes steps to improve the appearance of their homes, the positive action inspires others to do the same and the entire neighborhood benefits. If you are one of those home owners who regularly maintain your property, or have recently taken action to paint your house or landscape your front yard, the Board thanks you! If your property is in need of exterior maintenance, we ask that you take what steps you can to make improvements – even if it's as simple as keeping your front yard free of weeds. Such action has obvious benefits to you, your neighbors, and our entire community including protecting our property values, preventing blight, and even warding off crime by showing that we're a neighborhood that cares. Pitching in benefits all of us.



Have you noticed the improved appearance of Twin Peaks Blvd. between Panorama and Portola? Weeds, litter, and debris were removed by neighborhood volunteers on June 16. In addition, calls to the City by concerned residents got the dead overhanging trees that blocked the sidewalk removed as well. A big thanks to all who helped!



CC&Rs: Supporting Midtown Terrace as a High Quality Neighborhood For Over 60 Years

When Midtown Terrace was developed in the mid-1950s, the developers recorded in the property records of San Francisco a number of conditions, covenants, and restrictions (“CC&Rs”) intended to assure that the purchasers of these lots could have confidence that Midtown Terrace would retain its character as a high quality residential neighborhood. Some of these rules were specifically included in the individual property deeds issued to the original purchasers (such as a prohibition against any fences on the steeply sloping parts of rear yards). Other rules were set out in a general document covering Midtown Terrace as a whole. The general restriction document requires that all purchasers (both original and subsequent) will be members of the home owners association and subject to its by-laws, including any amendments. The by-laws, as most recently amended in 1965, set out a number of rules designed to protect our neighborhood and establish an Architectural Committee to monitor compliance with those rules. At the present time, the MTHOA

Architectural Committee consists of the full membership of the home owners association board.

The by-laws require that all front-yard landscaping (including the sidewalk area) must be maintained “in good and husband-like manner” and authorize the association to remedy violations at the expense of the lot owner. All exterior building alterations, additions or extensions of fences, walls, and other permanent structural changes have to be submitted to the Architectural Committee for its approval as to “conformity and harmony of design and as not interfering with the reasonable enjoyment of any other lot.”

The existence of a set of covenants, conditions, and restrictions with a home owners association charged with monitoring them is an important protection to assure that our neighborhood continues to have the qualities which influenced our decision to make this area our home.

A Tiny Peek Inside Our CC&Rs

Some of the main features of our conditions, covenants, and restrictions (“CC&Rs”)

The full text of the CC&R's including the association by-laws can be viewed on the website: midtownterrace.org. Some of the main features, however, are briefly described below.

Lots in Midtown Terrace are limited to “one detached single family private residence.” Without the express approval of the Architectural committee:

- No additions to the original structures may be made to extend the height to more than two stories above street level;
- All structures must be at least 6 feet distant from the buildings on the next-door lots;
- No “fence, hedge, or other enclosure” is permitted between the front of the home and the street;
- Rear fences cannot be more than 5 feet tall and must conform to the design of the original subdivision.

Update on Laguna Honda Hospital Noise Issue

Terry Thompson continues to lead the effort on dealing with the Laguna Honda Hospital (LHH) noise issue. The nuisance noise is emanating from the chillers associated with the air conditioning equipment located on the hospital's roof. The noise is particularly loud on warm days when sound carries and when the equipment is in full operation. At times the vacuum-cleaner-like noise can be heard as far away as Knollview. Thanks to Terry's perseverance on this matter, some progress has been made. In addition, LHH hired a sound engineering firm that studied the noise and recommended acoustic baffles. Unfortunately, at the last meeting with LHH management, Terry was told that Chief Operating Officer Mike Llewelyn estimated it would cost one million dollars to install them, which is prohibitively expensive, so no further actions are planned. Upper management at the hospital schedules meetings regularly for home owners to address concerns like the noise and issues associated with the planned future demolition of two wings. If you're affected by the noise from LHH or would like to add your support, please contact Terry Thompson at terry@terrythompsonart.com.

Easter Egg Hunt a Hopping Success, continued.

(...continued from front page) story-reading and the traditional Easter egg rolls (a race to the finish line while rolling an egg with a wooden spoon). The Easter Bunny arrived in time to pose for pictures with awestruck children before the hunt began. This year we expanded the hunt area to include the entire playing field and the hillside area, making for an adventurous scramble. A separate area was set aside for pre-schoolers so every child had opportunity to find some eggs.

Afterwards families sat on the grass and enjoyed homemade cupcakes, Easter eggs, gummy bunnies and fruit drinks while they watched a magic show. Grown-ups lingered to visit with neighbors and children lined up to watch Perry the Magician make each one an amazing balloon creature.

The Board of Directors is proud to have started this new neighborhood tradition that brings neighbors and families together. Thanks to all the Board members and volunteers who helped: Evernease McKnight, Mary Lu Christie, Alex Grossman, Guyler and Doris Lee, Nancy Wu, Lance Tomasu, John Shispinski, George Wooding, Joe and Joan Humphreys, Gertrude Kin, Keri and Chris Donohue, and Terry and Tyler Thompson.

Database Technology Enables More Effective HOA Dues Collection.

Over the past 2 years the HOA has developed a database to track dues payments received by home owners. We developed this technology to make our record keeping more accurate and to ensure everyone pays their fair share.

As of June 30th, 60% of the home owners have paid their 2012 dues. Those who have not yet paid will be receiving a follow up letter in the next few weeks as a reminder to quickly send in their \$18 yearly payment. If you have made no payment for the past two years, then you owe \$36 for 2011 and 2012 and you will receive a letter to this effect. If you own multiple properties in Midtown Terrace, the by-laws established under the Midtown Terrace covenants require payment of yearly dues on each of those properties – one payment of \$18 does not cover all properties.

In the past, we were not able to accurately complete requests concerning outstanding dues. Now that we have this ability, we will be better able to respond to the requests we receive from financial institutions and title companies about unpaid dues assessments. These requests are made in connection with home sales and refinancing of mortgages.

Seismic Upgrades to Close Sutro Reservoir for 3 Years

The Sutro Reservoir will be seismically upgraded starting in late Summer, as part of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission's (SFPUC) water system improvement program. The reservoir will be closed to public access and the project is expected to be completed in approximately three years.

Built in 1952, the reservoir contains approximately 32 million gallons of potable drinking water for the city of San Francisco. The reservoir is built into the side of Mount Sutro and is essentially a buried tank consisting of a concrete liner, forty foot high walls, a sloped floor which conforms to the grade of the mountain and a dividing wall which creates two separate compartments of equal size within the structure.

The Sutro Reservoir was closed to the public from 2003 -2006 after the PUC was cited by the Department of Public Health for having cracks on the reservoir roof which would allow seepage of outside substances into the reservoir. Although the neighborhoods were promised by the PUC,

the basketball and tennis courts located on the reservoir roof were never replaced.

The upcoming project will strengthen the reservoir roof and supporting structure to withstand a major earthquake, thereby improving the reliability of the city's drinking water supply. The project includes seismically upgrading the roof structure, repairing spalled-cracked concrete, upgrading the floor liner, restoring the rim road, drainage system, ventilation, hatches, outlet piping, and landscaping.

The PUC is currently planning to build a construction road near the intersection of lower Dellbrook Avenue and Olympia. The road will intersect the existing valley between Olympia and the reservoir. Some noise and dust should be expected and two or three trees may need to be cut down. Regular site working hours will be Monday - Friday, 7:00 am - 6:00pm.

A neighborhood meeting with PUC project director Lolita Sweet (415 551-4394 / L.Sweet@sfgwater.org) will be planned for early September.

Message From the Board President, continued.

(...continued from front page) You might think, “It doesn’t get any better than that!” But it does. What really makes Midtown Terrace so special is our people. It’s you, the residents and home owners. In addition to our fantastic location in the heart of The City, we are a true “community” of neighbors who have taken the time to get to know one another, who say or wave “hello” when we see each other on the street, who communicate with one another about neighborhood issues, who work together to settle our differences, who lend a hand to one another out of kindness, who watch out for each other, who take the time to get involved in preserving our neighborhood’s charm and character, and who join together not only in times of need but also in celebration.

That reflects some of the best qualities of human nature and upholds the vision of what our neighborhood’s original developers intended Midtown Terrace to be. I’m proud that we’re still carrying on that vision today, nearly 60 years after our community was built.

Those are the things that make Midtown Terrace unique and are the reasons why I love our neighborhood. As you read through this edition of the MTHOA Newsletter, you’ll see some specific examples of our sense of community that makes our neighborhood such a special place.

–Rex Bell, HOA Board President

How MTHOA Serves You

Your HOA has been very busy lately earning your annual \$18 dues assessment.

In addition to working with Laguna Honda Hospital on noise abatement (see update in this issue) the MTHOA Board has worked with the Principal of Clarendon school to reduce traffic impacts on the 700 block of Panorama Drive; coordinated neighborhood cleanups; organized our free annual block party, our Easter Egg Hunt, the Trick-Or-Treat event for neighborhood children, and the Holiday Dinner for our residents. We continue to work with residents to organize our annual neighborhood-wide Garage Sale; publish and distribute our neighborhood newsletter; and maintain our Yahoo! Group and Midtown Terrace Website.

Also, through direct communication with the Captain of SFPD's Park Station, the MTHOA Board has taken steps to help improve neighborhood safety and security. In that regard, you may have noticed additional police presence throughout the neighborhood and the speed monitor on the 400 block of Panorama Drive. The increase in police patrols was requested following a series of break-ins that occurred last Fall and Winter that were reported through the Midtown Terrace Yahoo! Group. The speed monitor was requested in response to speeding along Panorama Drive. As a reminder, please observe the neighborhood maximum speed limit of 25 mph at all times!

The Board has also recently taken steps to preserve and share neighborhood history through amazing color photographs taken by the late Earl Martin. Earl's photos document the construction of our neighborhood and are available at www.MidtownTerrace.org. (You might just see your house as it appeared when it was brand new or even under construction!). Earl and his wife Connie were original Midtown Terrace home owners and have always been very active in our neighborhood. The Board notes his recent passing with sorrow.

In summary, the Board is an advocate for preserving the character and appearance of our charming neighborhood, enhances the quality of life for our residents through social activities and safety initiatives, and serves as a forum to express and settle neighborhood issues. If you're interested in joining us in these efforts, please contact the Board through our website at www.MidtownTerrace.org or by phone at (415) 675-5864.

**The 2011-2012
Midtown Terrace
Home Owners
Association board:**

- Niall Baxter
(Sergeant-at-Arms)
- Rex Bell
(President)
- Alex Grossman
- Joe Humphreys
- Gertrude Kin
- Guyler Lee
- Evernease McKnight
(Vice President)
- Terry Thompson
- George Wooding
(Treasurer)

Support Volunteers

- Mary Lu Christie
- Brian McDermott

***Have you paid your
2012 HOA dues of \$18
yet? If not, please put it
on your To Do list today!***

The Midtown Terrace Home Owners Association

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Midtown Terrace Resident