

Temescal News & Views

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Temescal News & Views is published bimonthly and distributed to 3,000 households, schools and businesses.

Our Mission

The mission of TNT is to enhance the quality of life in our diverse community through revitalization of our homes, businesses, schools and public services by providing an ongoing forum for community education, interaction and empowerment.

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Friends Seek Furnishings for Studio One

With the 18 month renovation of Temescal's historic Studio One Art Center now past the halfway point, the community advocacy group Friends of Studio One continues their effort to re-equip the new facility. A quarter-million dollars for new furniture and equipment has been secured by Councilperson Jane Brunner. But much is still needed. Opportunities for support include the purchase of photographic equipment, kilns, worktables, lighting, and park benches for an outside performance space. Contributors will be recognized on a public donor wall or with individual plaques mounted on equipment. One way to help is to host a neighborhood house party. For more information, call Beth Maher at 420-5852.

Completion of work at the construction site is expected by mid-summer. To learn more, visit www.friendsofstudioone.org. We are seeking a local attorney and CPA or bookkeeper to join our board. If interested, contact Patrick Daughton at 652-1052 or pdaughton@earthlink.net.

— Patrick Daughton, Friends of Studio One

Spring in the Median on April 21

Have you seen the buds on our maple, pear, and plane trees in the 40th Street median? Thanks to drip irrigation and timely help from Mother Nature, our 400+ plants are thriving! But weeds are edging in, and we need your help.

Mark your calendars for 9 AM Saturday, April 21, when we'll weed, mulch, repair irrigation lines, and give our median the beauty treatment it deserves! Watch for news about this in the TemescalFamilies Yahoo Group list. We plan two maintenance days per year: one in spring, another in fall.

Heartfelt thanks to the business leaders who have supported us. Roy Alper and Patrick Ellwood donated cash to start the project. Bakesale Betty, Peet's, Milano Pizza, Pizza Pazza, and Longs made food donations. Our friends at Thunder Road were critical to the project's success. Thanks to the City of Oakland for the initial grant. Spread the word—we'll see you April 21! — Rick Mead, Resident

Access Sought for Fields at Closed School

Led by north Oakland school board member Kerry Hamill, a group of parents, students and staff at Oakland Technical High School have initiated an effort to rehabilitate and open to community use the large but currently closed fields attached to Carter Middle School. The site occupies much of the area between 45th and 48th Sts. bounded by Telegraph Ave. and Webster St.

The planners envision ball fields dedicated to Tech student use as well as community fields for the Temescal neighborhood. The inclusion of a tot lot may be possible.

The effort has the endorsement of the Oakland Schools' State Administrator's office and Jane Brunner, who is helping in the search for funding sources. It is estimated that a full renovation, including the correction of severe drainage problems, would cost about \$500,000.

Staff are studying the proposed arrangement and will report back to the district's Governing Board on the feasibility of the planned changes. The Carter campus was closed in 2006 due in part to declining enrollment across the district. No plans have been announced for a future use for the middle school buildings. — Patrick Daughton, Temescal Resident

Budding Experiences on Telegraph

Have you noticed new planters adorning Telegraph Ave from 40th St. to the Berkeley border? On February 10, over 30 volunteers showed up in rain gear to dig up and plant assorted foliage. The Temescal Telegraph Business Improvement District made the 48 planters possible through a grant obtained from the City of Oakland's Redevelopment and CEDA agencies.

Phornium yellow waves, bacopa white, and verbena suberbenas will eventually drape over the planters and discourage graffiti. Now comes the task of maintaining the plant life for maximum potential. Fortunately the same crew that sweeps the sidewalks, will provide watering service and debris removal twice a week.

Temescal News and Views Editorial Policy

TNV publishes submissions from community members. We do not fact-check, although we correct inaccuracies if we know about them. We strive to achieve a neutral tone and may edit articles accordingly, but ultimately TNV reflects the point of view of the authors and not that of the editors.

We are working with the City to spiff up the Avenue prompting sidewalk repairs, tree trimmings, quicker graffiti removal, upgrading unkempt news racks, fresh paint and other maintenance. Please help our efforts—call 615-5566 to report any maintenance problems. To learn more about the BID and/or get involved on a committee, contact us at 860-7327 or ttbid@california.com.

—Darlene Rios Drapkin, BID

Temporary Home Doesn't Stop Studio One Classes

Classes for both adults and children 5 and up are still being held at the downtown location from Mon–Thurs. 9AM–8PM, Fri./Sat. 10 AM–4PM and include: black and white photography, jewelry, drawing, painting, stained glass, fused glass, glass bead, ceramics, and yoga. The eight-week spring session will begin Monday, March 19 and launch two new Zoo and Boating Center collaboration classes. Go to <http://www.oaklandnet.com/parks/registration/default.asp> or call 597-5027 to register.

Free community Family Play Days and art exhibits generated by Studio One are also held at the Matilda Brown House. Call 658-5565. —Tomye Neal-Madison, Studio One

Temescal Library News

We hope people remember all the resources that are available at your branch library. We have a wide variety of books, with new ones coming in all the time. And if the book you want isn't available here, we can get it from another branch. We also have CDs and movies in DVD and VHS format for children, teens and adults. We have computers as well as encyclopedias and other reference materials. Our special resource here at Temescal is the Tool Lending Library, located downstairs in the building, entrance on 52nd St.

The library is also planning programs for March and April. Visit www.oaklandlibrary.org for details. Currently, we have the tax assistance program from February to April, with a group of volunteers from AARP to help people fill out their federal and state forms. Call the library for an appointment.

—Sally Bean, Branch Manager

Temescal Creek Cleanup

Celebrate Earth Day helping to clean up Temescal Creek on April 21 between 9 and 11 AM. We'll meet at the DMV parking lot at

the corner of Cavour and Redondo at 9AM for coffee and snacks. At 12:15 we'll have a potluck at the corner of Redondo and Cavour complete with Colombo Club pasta and garlic bread. Tools will be provided, but you can also bring your own (please mark them). We can always use wheelbarrows. The clean-up will consist of litter removal, weed-pulling and ivy-clearing. Sponsored by the DMV Neighbors Association and the City of Oakland Environmental Services Department. Call 655-1767 for more information.

—Margaret Pinter, DMV Neighbors Assn.

Temescal NCPCC Town Hall Meeting

It's time again for the Temescal Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council's semi-annual Town Hall Meeting. It will be held on March 17 at Faith Presbyterian Church at the corner of 49th and Webster Street. Come at 9:30 to meet your neighbors over coffee, tea, juice and pastries. From 10–12 we will discuss neighborhood issues with Jane Brunner and Lt. Meeks. We will also hold elections for Council positions. We need volunteers who are willing to give one night a month as secretary, treasurer, and at-large members.

—Jennifer Oberholzer, NCPCC

Development in Temescal has become a huge issue in the neighborhood, eliciting strong feelings both from those who support and oppose the proposals. TNV has received several articles for this issue from both sides. Please be aware that the views expressed are those of the authors. Temescal News and Views does not fact-check. —Editors

Centrada Temescal Development Approved

Last summer, the proposed mixed-use development project, "Centrada Temescal" at 48th and Telegraph, was approved 5-0 at the City's Planning Commission. The same group that appealed "Project CiviQ" at 51st and Telegraph appealed this project. On December 19, the Oakland City Council approved the project unanimously.

At the request of Councilmember Jane Brunner, the developers agreed to make several changes to the project. The southern portion of the Telegraph façade of the building will be reduced from four to three stories and this fourth floor will be stepped back

eight feet from the façade. Other components of the building will be reduced by two to four feet. The corner design element at 48th St., the tallest part of the project, is now planned to be 56 feet. Solid deck enclosures will be replaced with open railings to soften the appearance of the height of the building. The number of units in the project was reduced from 51 to 48, but the 5,000 sq ft of commercial space on the ground floor will remain.

The developer has committed to following the existing regulations regarding the treatment of older buildings and has agreed to ensure that best efforts are made to relocate at least one of the buildings. Actions are under way to comply with these terms, including placing signs on the buildings announcing their availability for relocation and developing a website, www.ThisHouseIsFree.com, to advertise the price of the buildings (\$1.00) and to answer frequently asked questions by potential buyers about moving the buildings, etc.

Three of the units in "Centrada Temescal" will be reserved for first time homebuyers with incomes not exceeding 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) and two more units for first time homebuyers at or below 100% of the AMI. These units will be marketed through non-profit housing agencies and standard marketing channels; a lottery system will be established. Households that purchase these affordable units will be restricted in reselling their units to households below 80% or 100% of AMI, respectively, for five years. If any of these units remains unsold after three months from the time the first market rate unit sells, then the developer can sell the units at market prices. The City Council approved the project with these conditions.

—Bill Lambert, Shasta Pros, developers of Centrada Temescal, Gate 48, Temescal Place, and Project CiviQ

Just the Facts, Please

Telegraph could be one of the grand streets of Oakland; it is a major transit corridor and it was once bustling with activity. Today low-use buildings, fast food outlets and vacant lots dominate Telegraph. Many of us in the community feel it should be a more vibrant commercial street with more dense housing above the businesses. That's what the City's 1998 General Plan calls for and that's what

many of our neighbors and merchants would like to see. Other neighbors fear that change.

Claims are being made that the proposed developments, "...will cause severe traffic and parking issues." Councilmember Jane Brunner invited experts to community meetings to talk about this and there have been two recent professional studies of local traffic conditions. Here are the facts: almost all the traffic on Telegraph is passing through the neighborhood. A new mixed-use project will add about one car per minute to Telegraph during peak hours, which will not even be noticed on such a busy street. The projects I know about all meet or exceed City parking space requirements and have more than any of the older buildings in the neighborhood.

"Out of scale buildings?" Certainly the proposed projects are larger than the fast food stores, parking lots and single story commercial buildings along Telegraph. Will they be "oppressive" or "create a canyon effect" as some have claimed? Consider walking down a boulevard in Paris or Rome where buildings five and six stories line the street and create a warm, welcoming pedestrian atmosphere.

Is development really threatening the historic character of Temescal? Most people think of Telegraph between 49th and 51st Streets as the historic heart of Temescal and the City recognizes that as an area of historical interest. No new developments are proposed there.

Outside of this area, however, there are only a few buildings of historic merit on Telegraph. Many people find Telegraph to be very uninviting, even dangerous at night. Seventy-five percent of the linear footage along Telegraph between 40th and 55th Sts is devoted to fast food restaurants, parking lots, vacant lots and buildings, and stores that don't attract a lot of pedestrians. Many people want to change this character for the better.

Are "developers" really threatening our neighborhood? The facts: most of the projects proposed for Telegraph are being developed by your neighbors—people who live in the community and who have spent countless hours working to improve the neighborhood and to develop projects that make sense. I'm one of them. I live at 43rd and Webster and have lived in or near Temescal since 1965. I've seen a lot of change on Telegraph, and until recently most of it was not very good. I think we can do better for our neighborhood.

Several local groups have formed the Coalition for More Housing and Retail on Telegraph (CHART) to work for a better Telegraph, including the East Bay Workforce Housing Coalition, Urbanists for a Livable Temescal and Rockridge Area (ULTRA), the Temescal/Telegraph Business Improvement District, the Temescal Merchants' Association and the Better Housing Coalition. They are circulating a petition asking neighbors to support the vision of building more dense housing above retail on Telegraph. They invite you to join many hundreds of your neighbors in signing the petition.

— Roy Alper, Shasta Pros (Centrada Temescal, Gate 48, Temescal Place, and Project CivQ)

Community Members Form Stand

STAND is a coalition of North Oakland residents, merchants, and neighborhood groups, formed to give a voice to those concerned by the number, size, and density of development projects proposed in the area.

We support new development in our community! However, we believe the surge in the number of projects (26 proposed for North Oakland), the number of variances granted to these projects, the inadequate study of their impacts, the lack of truly affordable housing in these proposals, and the demolition of well-maintained rental properties to make way for market rate condo projects, all threaten to undermine the economically and culturally diverse character and livability of North Oakland.

Simply building new condos does not create better public transit or parking. Temescal residents have told us they'll drive to Berkeley shops instead patronizing our own because of scarce parking.

STAND seeks to work with developers and the City to allow greater density while maintaining the established character, human scale, and livability of our neighborhoods through height, bulk, and density controls, and by preserving historic buildings.

Since a public record must be established to serve as the basis for appeals to the Planning Commission and the City Council, and in lawsuits where the City has violated its own zoning code, legal guidance is essential to our efforts. We ask for your help by donating to our legal fund.

We welcome questions, and hope you can volunteer time or help and continue to spread the word to the wider community about the drastic changes to our neighborhoods sought

by developers and the City. Contact us at 654-8925 or standnorthoakland@gmail.com.

—Virginia Browning & Richard Weimer, STAND

Developments Proposed for Claremont-Telegraph Intersection

On February 15, developers presented their plans for two high-density mixed-use developments at a meeting convened by Councilmember Jane Brunner. Over 100 people heard details of a 33-unit cohousing project proposed for the Kingfish Pub site on Claremont and adjacent properties, and a 115-unit condo project proposed for the Global Video site across the street. Both projects include commercial space on the ground floor as required by the city.

The cohousing proposal, which is being developed by North Oakland Cohousing (NOCO), extends from Claremont to Telegraph, an area now occupied by the Kingfish Pub, a duplex, a garage, and two Victorians.

According to the NOCO spokesperson, the five-story building would house 33 condos. The price of the units is anticipated to be about \$392,000. The project architect described the design of the 59-ft. high structure as Craftsman style.

According to planning staff, a variance would be required for the additional 19 ft. over the 40 ft. height maximum currently allowed by zoning. A variance would also be needed for the 30 parking spaces proposed—three fewer than zoning mandates. The developer would be required to identify new locations for the Victorians classified by the city as historical resources. Plans also call for the façade and possibly portions of the interior of the Kingfish to be integrated into the project.

Nearly all of the community members who publicly commented on this project supported the cohousing concept, yet many were critical of the project's height, density and their impacts on the surrounding neighborhood.

The 115 condo complex proposed for the Global Video property is San Francisco-based Hauser Architects' first project in Oakland. Designed in the same modernist style of the live-work projects the firm built south of Market in San Francisco, the proposal calls for replacing the Global building with two six-story and one four-story structure(s). Studios and one-bedrooms would make up about 75% of the units, with the median price set at \$385,000.

Temescal Calendar

Mondays (Ongoing), 7 PM. East Bay Toastmasters Club. An opportunity to develop confidence in public speaking and leadership skills. East Bay Church, 4130 Telegraph. 652-5912.

Monday Mar. 5 and 19, 7 PM. STAND meeting. Contact 654-8925 or standnorthoakland@gmail.com to confirm location.

Thursday, Mar. 8, 7 PM. Temescal Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) Steering Committee meeting. Everyone welcome. Faith Presbyterian Church, 49th and Webster. 420-6974.

Friday, Mar. 9, 7:30 PM. Poetry Saloon. Bring a poem that you have written and one by someone else to share, or come to enjoy. 472 44th Street. 654-6495.

Wednesday, Mar. 14, 6 PM. Temescal Merchants Association monthly meeting. All are welcome. Temescal Library, 5205 Telegraph. 653-7196.

Wednesday, Mar. 14, 6 PM. Hauser Architects' community meeting to obtain input on proposal for a development at Global Video site on Telegraph. Global Video Building, second floor, 5132 Telegraph.

Thursday, Mar. 15, 7:30 PM. The League of Women Voters of Oakland hosts a discussion of our Sunshine Ordinance. Hearing Room 1, Oakland City Hall, 1 Frank Ogawa Plaza., 834-7540.

Saturday, Mar. 17, 9 AM. Temescal Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) Town Hall meeting. Everyone welcome. Faith Presbyterian Church, 49th and Webster. 420-6974.

Saturday, Mar. 17, 10 AM. Help monitor water quality in Temescal Creek. Lake Temescal inlet near the Broadway Terrace park entrance. 459-3967 or temcrk@mountaincurrent.net.

Saturday, Mar. 17, 10 AM. ULTRA (Urbanists for a Livable Temescal Rockridge Area) hosts a forum on developing livable communities and defining urban growth in Oakland. North Oakland Senior Center, 5714 Martin Luther King Jr. Way (entrance on 58th Street). www.ultraoakland.org.

Monday April 2 and 16, 7 PM. STAND meeting. Contact 654-8925 or standnorthoakland@gmail.com to confirm location.

Wednesday, April 11, 6 PM. Temescal Merchants Association monthly meeting. All are welcome. Temescal Library, 5205 Telegraph. 653-7196.

Thursday, April 12, 8, 7 PM. Temescal Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) Steering Committee meeting. Everyone welcome. Faith Presbyterian Church, 49th and Webster. 420-6974.

Friday, April 13, 7:30 PM. Poetry Saloon. Bring a poem that you have written and one by someone else to share, or come to enjoy. 472 44th Street. 654-6495.

Saturday, April 21, 9 AM. 40th Street Median Clean-up. Meet at 40th St. Median. 652-7795.

Saturday, April 21, 9 AM. Temescal Creek Clean-up. Meet at the DMV at Cavour and Redondo. 655-1767.

Saturday, April 21, 10 AM. Help monitor water quality in Temescal Creek. Lake Temescal inlet near the Broadway Terrace park entrance. 459-3967 or temcrk@mountaincurrent.net.

A variance would be required for the project's proposed 65-ft. height, 25 feet over the zoning allowance. Another variance would be needed to allow 100 on-site parking spaces where zoning now mandates 115 for residents alone.

In addition to the promise of outdoor plazas and arcades, public art, a water feature, and plenty of glass, the developer proposes adding ten feet to the width of the Rockridge Temescal Greenbelt.

The audience's response to the proposal was overwhelmingly critical. While a few persons spoke favorably about the proposal in general terms, many voiced a number of concerns, including impacts on street parking, increased traffic congestion at the intersection of Telegraph, Claremont, and 51st St., the building's overwhelming scale and bulk, a design that bore no relationship to the neighborhood, and a Greenbelt that, enclosed by multi-story buildings, would be dark and uninviting.

To learn more about the cohousing proposal, visit www.northoaklandcohousing.org or contact city planner, Pete Vollman, at 238-6167; pvollman@oaklandnet.com. For information about the proposal for the Global site, go to www.baumeistercollective.com, or contact city planner, Darin Ranelletti, at 238-3663; dranelletti@oaklandnet.com. For a list of developments proposed for Temescal or to be informed of when these projects are scheduled to go before the Planning Commission, contact Zac Wald in Councilmember Jane Brunner's office at 238-7013; zwald@oaklandnet.com.

—Jeff Norman, STAND

City Council Approves 4700 Telegraph Proposal with Conditions

Over objections of numerous speakers, the City Council on December 19th voted to deny

the appeal brought by North Oakland residents of the five-story, 51-condo mixed-use project proposed for 4700 Telegraph Ave.

At the City Council meeting two weeks earlier, Councilmember Jane Brunner proposed a number of changes to the project in an effort to strike a compromise between the developer and community members seeking density and height reductions, an affordable housing component, and on-street parking mitigations.

Among Brunner's proposed changes were eliminating the fifth (top) story from a portion of the project and lowering the tower element at the corner of Telegraph and 48th St. In addition, she proposed requiring five units of affordable housing to replace the eleven existing rental units developers want to demolish or remove from the site.

After intense negotiations, the developer agreed to the changes Brunner had proposed, and the council approved the project and denied the citizen appeal. The approved conditions of note include reducing the number of condo units, trimming one story from a third of the project, adding more stringent requirements in identifying relocation sites for the three 100-year-old buildings on the site, and providing for three units of affordable housing at 80% AMI (Area Median Income) and two units of affordable housing at 100% AMI.

—Jeff Norman, STAND

Global Video Project Meeting

Hauser Architects is hosting a community meeting to obtain input on their proposal for a 115-unit, mixed-use development consisting of three buildings, two of six-stories and one of four-stories at the Global Video site on Telegraph. The developer has presented the project at a February 15 meeting facilitated by Councilwoman Jane Brunner. That presentation is available on the website, www.baumeistercollective.com. The next meeting will be held Wednesday, March 14 from 6-8PM, at the Global Video building, second floor.

—William Mollard, Hauser Architects

Help Support This Newsletter and TNT. Volunteers are doing the work of getting out this newsletter (and occasional fliers)—but we still need to pay the printer! If you value our community efforts, please consider making a donation. Any amount will help. Make your check payable to TNT, and send it with this form to: TNT, c/o 479 44th St., Oakland, CA 94609. —Thank You!

Yes, I want to help.

Enclosed is my contribution in the amount of:

\$10 \$25 \$50 Other \$ _____

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Phone _____

I'd like to volunteer. Please call me.

