First and foremost I want to thank Captain Daryl Fong of SFPD Southern Station and Captain Bill Griffin of Mission Station for their departments’ prompt response in moving homeless encampments away from our businesses.

Throughout the month of September I attended and participated in many meetings. Of those meetings the ones that I felt required our closest attention were the round table meeting with the SFPD regarding tasers, the meeting of the Board of Supervisors re. construction mitigation and the hearing at the CTA (County Transit Authority) regarding robots.

**Tasers**

The round table meeting with the police regarding tasers was held at the Billy Graham Auditorium. There were three tables set up with roughly thirty people at each table, including police moderators. David Heller, The President of Greater Geary Boulevard Merchants and Property Owners Association, joined me at our table along with a member of the Police Commission.

The majority of those present were activists who were vehemently opposed to tasers. Statistics from Amnesty International state that from 2001 to 2012 some 500 people died from taser use. Most of the deaths have been attributed to other causes. Medical examiners have listed tasers as a cause or contributing factor in some 60 deaths, and in a number of other cases the exact cause of death was unknown. Deaths directly from taser shocks are relatively rare. In other words the worst case scenario points to only 6 taser deaths per year, whereas in the first 24 days of 2015 fifty-nine people were killed by guns fired by law enforcement officers in the US.

Surely tasers make sense. If someone I know went off the deep end and had to be restrained by police, I would rather that person be tasered than shot with a gun. The police are who we frequently call on to protect us. I am of the opinion that we need to support our brethren in blue.

**Construction Mitigation**

After much noise made by many, including Albert Chow, the Secretary of POPS (People Of Parkside Sunset) in the media, the City has decided to contribute over $1.4 million to compensate businesses impacted by the construction of the Central Subway.

Three supervisors - Aaron Peskin, Norman Yee and Jane Kim - called for a hearing. Amongst those who testified were our Vice President, Maryo Mogannam, our legislative representative, Stephen Cornell, our member and President of the Small Business Commission, Mark Dwight and Vice President of the Golden Gate Business Association, Paul Pendergast.

Numerous times we have asked for an economic Impact report. Controller Ben Rosenfield presented the report which highlights the economic impact by the reduction in sales. [CLICK HERE](#) to view and download that report (Powerpoint File).
I have appointed Albert Chow, Secretary of POPS, Nikki Cooper, board member of LoHaMNA (Lower Haight Merchants and Neighbors Association) and Fady Zoubi, President of the North Beach Business Association, to head a Construction Mitigation Committee charged to meet bi-monthly with representatives of OEWD, PUC, DPW and MTA.

Robots

A number of companies have started to utilize robots to pick up and deliver goods along Bay Area sidewalks. Currently there are pilot robot schemes in Walnut Creek, Concord, Sunnyvale and Redwood City. Supervisor Norman Yee called me a couple of weeks ago and gave a presentation at the Small Business Commission in which he voiced his opposition to these robots. He has since drawn up an ordinance to ban them, which the Small Business Commission voted not to support.

Vas Kiniris, Stephen Cornell, Maryo Mogannam and I met with Supervisor Yee. We suggested that, instead of banning the robots, he should consider drafting an ordinance that imposes regulations regarding where, and at what times they may be deployed, along with other conditions. He was adamant that they should be banned altogether from our sidewalks. A hearing of the CTA (County Transit Authority) was held regarding the robot issue, with Commissioners Ahsha Safai, Aaron Peskin and Norman Yee. After public testimony and discussion, Commissioner Peskin made the motion to forward this matter to the full board without recommendation.

Highlights from September’s events

West Portal Merchants Centennial Celebration

As part of the West Portal Merchants Centennial Celebration, I attended a pre-Centennial event. The actual Centennial is next April - so this was just a warm up. The entertainment included a DJ and a performance by a kids ballet troop. Amongst the many in attendance was the District 7 Supervisor Norman Yee.

Outer Sunset Merchants Walk
**Chinatown Autumn Moon Festival**

This was the best Chinatown Autumn Moon Festival I have ever been to! One week prior I was honored to speak at the event launch press conference.

There was a huge crowd at the Festival with Grant Avenue and the side streets jam packed with revelers. Eva Lee, Festival Coordinator of the Autumn Moon Festival, along with her sister Betty, were the stars of the show. There was a parade that included Supervisors Aaron Peskin and Sandra Lee Fewer, the Emperor and Empress, traditional music and dancers, martial arts displays and many booths selling Chinese food, arts and crafts and other items.

Thank you again to everyone who helps us promote small business in San Francisco. I will keep you - our Membership - in touch with my October schedule of meetings and events in my next monthly newsletter - “from the President’s Desk”.

---

**Henry Karnilowicz**

**President**

San Francisco Council of District Merchants Associations

henry@sfcDMA.org