After over three months of negotiations and associations reaching out to their members, we voted overwhelmingly to accept the sponsorship and financial support from Airbnb.

We look forward to working with Airbnb on future events and merchants walks, and are thrilled to know that Airbnb hosts will be involved in recommending local businesses for visitors to our gem of a city!

We also voted to hire a paid Executive Administrator. The committee appointed to craft the job description has met and the Executive Committee will review the job description prior to our next meeting.

October has been a busy month with our secretary, Vas Kiniris and I meeting and participating in many meetings and events.

Tasers

The Police Commission met on Friday, November 3 to hear testimony from experts and from the public about equipping San Francisco police officers with Tasers. It turned into a raucous affair when an opponent of tasers continued to speak beyond the allotted two minutes, egged on by her vocal supporters. At that point the meeting was halted and I and a few others walked out. Outside of the Supervisors chamber, people in line, having heard about the disturbance by their colleagues inside, began screaming “Let us in!”. It was certainly disheartening that the opposition had no respect for the decorum of the meeting and did not allow everyone to have the opportunity to speak. The meeting reconvened about an hour later and the matter was taken into consideration by the Commission.

I applaud the Police Commission for voting to support equipping the San Francisco Police with tasers next year. While it is true that tasers can be lethal, they are nowhere as lethal as firearms. In June this year Scotland Yard in London, England, announced the devices will be issued to 1,867 extra front line personnel, bringing the total number trained and able to carry the equipment to more than 6,400. Metropolitan Police commissioner Cressida Dick stated: “We know that the mere presence of a taser is often enough to defuse a dangerous situation and often get a suspect to drop their weapon if they’re armed.”

Construction Mitigation

The committee met with Joaquin Torres, Managing Deputy Director, and Jorge Rivas from the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD).
It was a very productive meeting with assurances that at future meetings there will be representatives, from OEWD, PUC, DPW and MTA.

We are confident that we will be provided with information about when and where construction will occur that will impact small businesses, as well as what will be done to mitigate the loss of income due to the construction.

Robots

District 7 Supervisor Norman Yee revised a proposal to ban autonomous delivery robots from San Francisco sidewalks. His proposal requires companies obtain permits for using robots, limiting their use to light industrial areas. Under Yee’s proposal, robots must be accompanied by a human no more than 15 feet away who can take control of the device. The city could ask companies for GPS location data, and robots would be prohibited from traveling faster than two miles per hour. Additionally, he wants to require a public notice process.

Supervisors Yee’s amendments have been sent back to Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee which will be heard on Wednesday, November 8, 2017 10:00 AM City Hall, Committee Room 263.

The following is the text of Supervisor Yee’s proposal: Item 2. 170599 [Public Works, Police Codes - Requiring a Permit for Testing of Autonomous Delivery Devices on Sidewalks] Ordinance amending the Public Works Code to require a permit for the testing of autonomous delivery devices on sidewalks; amending the Police Code to provide for administrative, civil, or criminal penalties for unlawful operation of autonomous delivery devices; and affirming the Planning Department’s determination under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Cannabis

Cannabis will be permitted for recreational use commencing January 2018 and there has been a task force created to determine what regulations should be implemented. City Hall has also created an Office of Cannabis with Ms. Nicole Elliott as the Director, which she says will allow San Francisco to bring its social credos to the commercial trade in marijuana, when it becomes legal for sale throughout the state. “Now we have the opportunity to regulate commercial cannabis activity in a way that fulfills many of the city’s goals,” Elliott wrote. She said those goals include “equity and restorative justice, protecting our youth, ensuring product safety and continued access to medicinal cannabis for patients, integrating cannabis businesses into neighborhoods thoughtfully and generating revenue for the city.”

On Thursday, October 19, 2017 there was a hearing at the planning commission on an amendment to the Planning Code introduced by Mayor Lee to establish a local regulatory framework for the cultivation, sale, and use and update regulations relating to Medical Cannabis Dispensaries (MCDs) including regulations on allowed locations and conversions. After lengthy testimony and discussion, the Planning Commission determined that there should be a restriction placed on distances for such businesses from a school:

On Monday, November 6, 2017 1:30 PM City Hall, Legislative Chamber, Room 250, there will be a hearing at the BOS Land Use and Transportation Committee on an ordinance amending the Planning Code to regulate cannabis land uses, including, Among other things, adult use cannabis retail, Medical Cannabis Dispensaries etc. For more on this visit: http://sfbos.org/sites/default/files/lut110617_agenda.pdf
The following are some of the fun events we attended in October

People Of Parkside Sunset — Movies at McCoppin Park

This extremely popular event began in 2011 thanks to then-Supervisor, Carmen Chu, who helped set up the event for Taraval. Her staff taught POPS how to do it and after two seasons handed it off to them. They got a five year funding through OEWD. Every year POPS votes which movies to show and each year, because of its popularity and the hard work of Albert Chow, Yumi Sam and the POPS board members, companies are clamoring to sponsor the event. This year there were many booths, free popcorn, free food from local merchants, hand-out leaflets and coupons to guests, all in an effort to promote Taraval businesses. The attendance was phenomenal with 200-300 attendees, and for Moana on October 6 there were over 400! Congratulations POPS!

Balboa Village Merchants Walk

This was a wonderful event for Balboa Merchants in collaboration with SF Travel and Airbnb. The walk focused on the Balboa Street Corridor. Guests included Airbnb hosts, tour guides, and social media influencers. The merchant walk commenced at the wonderful Cassava restaurant and ended at the Le Promenade Café. Along the way among the businesses visited were Eat Americana, Butter Love Bakeshop, Noise, Marla Bakery Restaurant, Simple Pleasures Cafe, Creative IQ Art Studio, and Custom Optometry!

Balboa Village is certainly a hidden treasure that should not be missed.
Fillmore Merchants Association — Shop OUT Day

The San Francisco Fillmore Merchants Association hosted the second annual Shop OUT Day - a day-long fundraising event to benefit the SF LGBT Center. Ten percent of all sales on that day at participating stores funded critical services for the LGBTQ community. The event was also a chance for merchants to recognize and celebrate the rich history of the LGBTQ community in San Francisco while giving back to those most in need.

There was live jazz on Fillmore and California from 1 - 4 pm and Zinc Details had a Whisky Tasting hosted by The Macallan.

I applaud and commend Vas Kiniris, Executive Director of the Fillmore Merchants Association and the FMA board for organizing this worthwhile event, which raised $7,500!

Lower Haight Merchant and Neighborhood Association — Legacy Businesses

Vas Kiniris and I were honored to represent San Francisco Council of District Merchants Associations and Fillmore Street for the celebration of three amazing Legacy Businesses in the Lower Haight! Congratulations and ‘thank you’ to Nikki Cooper, owner of Two Jack’s Nik’s Place, for hosting and serving the delicious chicken and sea food. Congratulations also to Cafe International & Rocky Ricardo’s! Thank you Supervisor London Breed for supporting our neighborhood merchant corridors! We are truly blessed with a supervisor who cares so much about small business!

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

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