

City pushing new priorities for benefits from tax cuts

Rift opens between CAO, panel serving as voice of public

By MARK HEDIN

EVER SINCE the first community benefit agreements (CBAs) between the city and the Twitter tax break tech companies were signed in 2012, there's been a hue and cry to begin the negotiation process earlier in the year, to produce deals that better help the community mitigate the effects of the tech influx.

With the clock fast winding down on time to negotiate the 2015 agreements with the six firms, a rift has opened up between the community's representatives in the process and the city officials who actually control it.

The community's only voice here, the Central Market and Tenderloin Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), in 2012 suggested a mitigation framework for the agreements. It produced mixed results in terms of the specifics the city administrator ultimately agreed to and the fulfillment of those deals' promises, even though 80% completion of the benefits listed is considered acceptable.

But the city administrator's office (CAO) recently took over the process of setting priorities by inviting 70 representatives from "the resident, non-profit, business and government communities" to a Sept. 24 meeting at City Hall to discuss "opportunities to increase safety and cleanliness in nine 'Action Zones' in the CT/TL," according to a new Website that premiered that month.

In a memo from City Administrator Naomi Kelly distributed at the CAC's Oct. 2 meeting, committee members were informed that the new Website, centralmarketcba.com, had been launched "to increase the transparency of the CBA process and provide real-time information to the public."

Transparency has certainly been a long-standing point of contention in the CBA process, on issues ranging from the value of the tax breaks to the companies,

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"You're not only cutting out the CAC, you're cutting out the community."

Peter Masiak
CAC CHAIRMAN

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THE EXTRA ATTAINS A MILESTONE

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DIGNITY OF ELDERLY ON DISPLAY

Photo exhibit at Faithful Fools

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A MOM TO MANY AT HAMLIN

Crowded memorial for Stephani Santana

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CENTRAL CITY



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WILSON BUILDING



PHOTO RAINTREE PARTNERS

A "junior one-bedroom" at the Wilson Building — at 531 square feet and \$1,022 monthly, it's 102 square feet larger and \$123 more per month than the five affordable studios.

Cheapest rent: \$899

5 Market Street units area's lowest private housing

By JONATHAN NEWMAN

IMAGINE, amid San Francisco's housing crisis, you could rent a studio apartment in a refurbished historic building in the tech-booming center of the city for \$899 a month. Your brand-new home has a modern bathroom, a kitchen sporting quartz countertops and stainless steel appliances. And you get access to a rooftop lounge with an outdoor barbecue and dog run, free WiFi, a yoga studio and a well-equipped fitness center that never closes.

You would have the cheapest privately developed housing in the central city at the newest address, one of the seven affordable units — five studios and two one-bedroom — among 67 apartments at 973 Market St., the Wilson Building. If you qualified for the city's below market rate (BMR) housing program, the lottery gods smiled upon you and your rental application passed Wilson vetting, that is.

To stand a chance for one of the affordable studios at the Wilson — rented at below market rate under the aegis of the city's inclusionary housing programs administered by the mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development — you have to make at least \$26,970 a year. The median annual income in the Tenderloin is \$30,000, according to a 2012 Department of Public Health report. At market rates, the Wilson studios rent from \$2,500 to \$3,700 a month, the one-bedrooms from \$3,400 to \$5,500, the new norms in the city with the highest median rent in the country. The Wilson's below-market rent one-bed-

rooms go for \$1,022.

Nonprofits have long provided inexpensive housing in the city center, in some instances for little and even no rent. Plus, the nonprofits provide supportive services to targeted groups — the recently homeless, youths transitioning out of foster care, the disabled and the infirm — though no dog run or fitness center.

Community Housing Partnership houses tenants referred from service providers and city agencies. Depending on the scope of supportive services, tenants' rent is a percent of their monthly income — typically 30% to 50%, and that can mean paying as little as \$300 a month.

Unlike at the Wilson, however, CHP's rentals aren't designed to be permanent homes for the tenants. The 44 housing units CHP opened last year at Fifth and Harrison streets for 18- to 25-year-olds who are homeless or a paycheck away, is a prime example of housing with a purpose, says Bridget Holian, director of fund development and communications.

"Tenants share bathrooms and a community kitchen. There are rules on visitors and guests. We provide employment training and we try to address the challenges tenants face," Holian said. "It's designed to help the youth become self-sufficient and to move into the competitive marketplace of the world at large."

At less than \$900 a month, a new apartment in the central city would be an endless dream, particularly when the median monthly rent for a one-bedroom in the Civic Center is \$3,400 — higher than Nob Hill or Pacific Heights. HUD sets the maximum annual income for applicants of below-market rental housing. This year the one-person household max is \$37,350, for two, it's \$42,750.

Affordable housing legislation was state-mandated in 1985 when the Legislature recognized a shortage of housing for low- and moderate-income families and ordered each

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Image from the city's new Website pitching cleanliness and safety as neighborhood priorities.