

YOU CAN'T ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU WANT

By Denise LaPointe

But if you try sometimes, you just may find, neighbors know what they need.

The West of Twin Peaks Central Council has kicked off 2008 with a bang. Our esteemed 70-year-old neighborhood organization, representing 18 homeowner groups and growing will have to keep our wits about us as wily developers, massage parlor operators, medicinal marijuana clubs and politicians try to tell us what we need.

At our January meeting we celebrated a rare victory with Ingleside Terrace, as we stood with them to deny extended hours to a massage parlor in a residential neighborhood. We weren't so lucky with the colossal, oversized Ardenwood project, which continues to slip and slide its way through the corridors of power. Republic Urban Properties and their ill-conceived plan for a high-rise tower at 18th Avenue and Wawona continues to give me a headache.

Most recently, we were all duped into signing up for a community meeting with a strict deadline for rsvps (five days before Christmas) only to receive a "got ya" e-mail back that the developer and his public relations team would keep us posted when they would have a meeting. Neighbors who are otherwise a quiet, peaceful bunch have joined together, almost 600 of us to sign a petition of opposition to this development, which threatens our neighborhood character.

In the upcoming year a lot is happening as Parkmerced unveils its plans for 6,000 more units, Summerhill Homes adds another 200, Ardenwood and San Francisco State adds 3,000 units on campus, and the Kragen Auto Parts site adds another 500 units. This doesn't even include the shameful development on Brotherhood Way - historically a corridor for religious and educational institutions - whose approval was stewarded through by our district supervisor.

Community involvement helps ensure these developments won't detract from our quality of life. Other issues at the Council include the ever complex Laguna Honda rebuild and elimination of skilled nursing beds, traffic, public safety and the annoying water rate increase that property owners only were slapped with this summer. I urge all neighbors to be vigilant and stay clued-up. The West of Twin Peaks Central Council will do our best to keep them honest and keep you informed.