

The Yerba Buena Neighborhood Consortium

c/o 230 Fourth St. San Francisco, CA 94107

A Council of the Yerba Buena Neighborhood's Residents and Community Organizations

Stephen T. Hearst
Vice President and General Manager
Western Properties
Hearst Corporation
5 Third Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

December 17, 2014

RE: Appeal of Annie Alley Improvement Project Permits

Mr. Hearst:

We are appalled by the gigantic Hearst Corporation's blindside attack on this tiny but heartfelt Yerba Buena community improvement project. What in the world do you think you are doing, and who in the world do you think you are?

The Yerba Buena Community Benefit District built this very, very modest Neighborhood public space at its own cost as a new amenity for all of us that live, work, or visit our Yerba Buena Neighborhood. The project went through a very public and open community design process over two years. Representatives of the Hearst Corporation, as adjacent property owners, were specifically included in that process. Then it went through a rigorous City permitting process without objection by the Hearst Corporation.

But now that Annie Alley Plaza is open, completed in November, suddenly the Hearst Corporation has filed an appeal with the City Board of Permit Appeals seeking to invalidate those permits and **force its immediate demolition!**

And what makes this appeal even more brutish in nature is the fact that Annie Alley Plaza is specifically a temporary project with only a one-year permit. In order for it to remain beyond that period, the Community Benefit District must reapply for a second one-year permit in August. And to become permanent, a third permit application for that purpose would be required in 2016.

In view of these upcoming opportunities for the Hearst Corporation to state its objections or opposition to continuation of Annie Alley Plaza in the standard City permit review procedures this coming year and afterward, why in world is it instead launching a sudden assault on it?

Correct me if I am wrong, but the first answer that comes to mind is these are the **naked intimidation tactics of a gigantic corporate bully** against our small Yerba Buena/ SOMA community. How do you think we feel about that?

Stephen T. Hearst

December 17, 2014

Bear in mind, then, that we are well aware of the Hearst Corporation's pending and future proposals to develop its two large SOMA properties with very substantial new development – The 5M Project at Fifth and Mission in partnership with Forest City Development Co., slated for City approval of its special spot upzoning in the Spring, and the former Chronicle truck yard at Fifth and Brannan Streets, which may come to the City for approval in 2016.

Our intent up to now has been to **work in good faith** to achieve outstanding new community-building developments at both these very important SOMA sites that are also economically successful for the Hearst Corporation and the developers. But **that will be impossible** if the senior partner – the projects' landowner – instead is an organization that utilizes thuggish “hardball” tactics such as this Appeal against our Community rather than work respectfully with all concerned to resolve its issues constructively.

So to answer our question above, the Hearst Corporation needs to decide whether or not it is and wants to be a member of our YBC/SOMA Community. Right now it is not acting like one.

Please withdraw the Appeal of Annie Alley Plaza.

Sincerely,

John Elberling
Chair
johne@todco.org

cc: Yerba Buena Community Benefit District