



London N. Breed
Mayor

Health Commission

Public Comment Regarding Project 180



UNITE HERE!

February 21, 2020

Via email (Mark.Morewitz@SFDPH.org)

To: San Francisco Health Commission
Dan Bernal, President
Edward A. Chow, M.D., Commissioner
Cellia Chung, Commissioner
Suzanne Giraudo ED.D, Commissioner
Laurie Green, M.D., Commissioner
Tessie M. Guillermo, Commissioner

RE: March 3, 2020 vote on the proposed Meth Sobering Center at 180 Jones Street

Dear President Bernal and Commissioners,

We strongly urge you to postpone any vote on the Meth Sobering Center proposed for 180 Jones Street until community concerns regarding the proposed site are specifically addressed. These concerns include:

- Demonstrated lack of ANY knowledge of the community (e.g. the number of child-serving facilities) that immediately surrounds the site by DPH or Healthright360 staff;
- Lack of any SPECIFIC plan for “prioritizing” the Tenderloin neighborhood meth addiction disorder sufferers (or identification of the specific geographic area the pilot will serve);
- Lack of any commitment for an ongoing community voice in the operation of the facility;
- Lack of ANY commitment for (or acknowledgement of any need for) additional resources (e.g. additional SFPD Problem Solving Beat Officers) to address and/or mitigate the health and safety impacts of this facility on the existing community.

We are not opposed to this type of facility in our neighborhood. But the site you’ve chosen and the disrespect with which you have treated our community is really appalling and unacceptable. Community concerns must be heard and addressed.

UNITE HERE Local 2 represents hotel, food service and other hospitality workers in San Francisco and San Mateo Counties. Our union hall has been on the southwest corner of Golden Gate and Leavenworth for 42 years. Our members are majority women, people of color and immigrants. No group of people is more acutely aware the importance of street safety to the health of our economy and industry. Our livelihoods depend on people wanting to visit San

Anand Singh
President

Chito Cuéllar
Vice-President

Tina Chen
Secretary-Treasurer



PROPOSED TENDERLOIN METH CENTER MUST BE STOPPED ([HTTP://BEYONDCHRON.ORG/PROPOSED-TENDERLOIN-METH-CENTER-MUST-BE-STOPPED/](http://beyondchron.org/proposed-tenderloin-meth-center-must-be-stopped/))

by Randy Shaw (<http://beyondchron.org/author/randy/>) on February 25, 2020



180 Jones, free of drug dealers when SF bought the site

*The city plans to turn 180 Jones into a 24-hour sobering center for meth — across the street from the Boys & Girls Club and affordable family housing. Can you imagine the city placing such a facility at such a kid-centered area in any other neighborhood? —Randy Shaw, “After 40 years, the Tenderloin at another crossroads (<https://www.sfchronicle.com/opinion/article/After-40-years-the-Tenderloin-at-another-15066015.php>),” *SF Chronicle*, Feb.23, 2020*

I described in Sunday's *SF Chronicle* how San Francisco city policies threaten to reverse the Tenderloin's progress. Nowhere are the city's misguided and destructive plans clearer than in its moving to open a meth center at 180 Jones.

That site is directly across the street from an affordable family housing project at 201 Turk and the offices of the Tenderloin Boys & Girls Club. Such a project would never be considered in a kid-centered part of another city neighborhood.

The city's role in preparing the site for a Meth Center is best understood from Naomi Klein's classic book, *The Shock Doctrine*. It describes how neoliberal economics created financial crises, which were then used to justify austerity policies. We have a similar situation at 180 Jones.

For decades that site was a privately owned parking lot with no drug dealers (see photo above from 2017 just after the city bought the site). That changed after the city bought the site. The city, as with other neighborhood properties I discuss (<https://www.sfchronicle.com/opinion/article/After-40-years-the-Tenderloin-at-another-15066015.php>) in the Chronicle, allowed its property to degenerate into a drug dealer haven. City Attorney Dennis Herrera often sues landlords allowing drug activities on their property but that would have required San Francisco to sue itself.

The city now claims that its negative transformation of the site justifies a meth center. It says it will make **Translate »** safer.

When it comes to the Tenderloin the city takes a heads I win, tails you lose approach. If it helps their case to argue that the client base is already there, that's what it argues. If the client base isn't there, they proceed anyway.

The Tenderloin already has a Methodone Clinic on the 400 block of Turk. But the city wouldn't care if there were a Methodone or Meth Center on every block of the Tenderloin—it was so confident about its plans that it moved forward at 180 Jones without speaking to anyone in the community. The Health Department has done the same thing with plans for a “Mobile Crisis Center” on the 500 block of Eddy Street. The announcement was posted on the street without the city having talked to property owners on that block (or anyone else).

What does it say about San Francisco that it treats a low-income, ethnically diverse neighborhood with such contempt?

Enough is enough. Tell City Hall to find a permanent site for the Meth Center in a more appropriate location. The Tenderloin deserves better.

Randy Shaw (<http://beyondchron.org/author/randy/>)

Randy Shaw is the Editor of Beyond Chron and the Director of San Francisco's Tenderloin Housing Clinic, which publishes Beyond Chron. Shaw latest book is Generation Priced Out: Who Gets to Live in the New Urban America. He is the author of four prior books on activism, including The Activist's Handbook: Winning Social Change in the 21st Century, and Beyond the Fields: Cesar Chavez, the UFW and the Struggle for Justice in the 21st Century. He is also the author of The Tenderloin: Sex, Crime and Resistance in the Heart of San Francisco

[More Posts \(http://beyondchron.org/author/randy/\)](http://beyondchron.org/author/randy/)

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February 26, 2020

The Honorable Mayor London Breed
City Hall, Room 200
1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: The Proposed Meth Sobering Center at 180 Jones

Dear Mayor Breed:

A Climate of Containment

Over the past year, City decisions—and most recently the process surrounding the 180 Jones Meth Sobering Center—have reinforced a narrative that the Tenderloin is a containment zone. Whether or not the City has acted intentionally to create a containment zone is irrelevant. People living here feel this narrative as a truth of their existence, and the impacts of this narrative on community health are real. In particular, the most vulnerable among us—children, seniors, low income people of color and residents experiencing homelessness—are confronted with persistent traumatic stress resulting in detrimental impacts to community health, social connectedness, and individual health outcomes including risk of high Adverse Childhood Experience Scores (ACES) and a startling ten-year reduction in life expectancy.

We ask the City to work in collaboration with Tenderloin residents, community-based organizations, and business leaders to mitigate negative impacts on community health. We are confident that the City can readily address the concerns associated with the 180 Jones proposal and work with the community toward a permanent Tenderloin Meth Sobering Center.

Position on a Tenderloin Meth Sobering Center

The Tenderloin Community Benefit District (TLCBD) represents property owners, residents, and merchants in the Tenderloin. We offer our support, advocacy and partnership to create a permanent and successful Tenderloin Sobering Center. However, we cannot condone the current 180 Jones project as it stands, which has many unanswered questions and unidentified mechanisms for operations, and moreover has shown little regard for the concerns of and impacts on the neighboring community.

The following position has been formulated after our engagement with residents, merchants, property owners, people with lived experience of addiction, community-based organizations, as well as several conversations with City staff, members of the Meth Task Force and potential program operators at HealthRIGHT 360.

1. We support a 24-Hour, Trauma-informed Tenderloin Sobering Center in a permanent structure to serve people suffering with addiction in the Tenderloin.

- a. TLCBD commits to partnering with the City to identify and advocate for a permanent site immediately.

2. **The decision to locate the service at 180 Jones deserves further scrutiny.** Any decision should be postponed until the Tenderloin's concerns can be addressed in a public meeting. This request is supported by the following points:
 - a. Health professionals involved with the project were not consulted in the siting of the sobering center.
 - b. City officials have referenced a broad analysis of City-owned land for this purpose, but it has not been shared with the community.
 - c. 180 Jones is one block northeast of De Marillac Academy, one block south of City Academy and Boeddeker Park. It sits across the street from Boys & Girls Club Tenderloin Clubhouse, two housing sites that are home to over 500 children, a Salvation Army youth program site, and an early childhood daycare center. We do not believe a site like this would have been chosen with such disregard for a concentration of children in any other neighborhood in San Francisco.
 - d. The sole community meeting was cut short and did not provide adequate interpretation services.
 - e. Basic operational questions still need to be answered so that the City and HealthRIGHT 360 can ensure adequate resources and mitigations are in place to support a successful Sobering Center.
3. **The Sobering Center should hold a written agreement with specific commitments to the neighborhood:**
 - a. Four newly-added, Problem-Solving Beat Officers assigned only to the area north of McAllister Street, west of Mason Street, east of Polk Street and south of O'Farrell Street.
 - b. Client access to the center should be prioritized by the geographic boundary listed above (3a) and limited to that area for a period of at least one year. We propose only four modes of client access:
 - i. Entering on their own.
 - ii. Engaged by walking health workers from HealthRIGHT 360, DPH, or other qualified partners trained in de-escalation, addiction treatment, harm reduction, crisis intervention, and conflict resolution. These teams should engage with potential program participants while supporting health on Tenderloin sidewalks.
 - iii. Via Tenderloin Police Station officers and EMS personnel working within the boundaries listed above (3a).
 - iv. As reported by community members to Sobering Center staff via a hotline.
 - c. We request clearly-defined methods for 'warm handoffs' including linkage to navigation centers, shelters, HSH access point, and other partners. It should state what happens when clients are released when other agencies are closed.
 - d. Clear baseline measures and success metrics with regular reporting of progress.
 - e. Research extending to the surrounding environment to better understand impacts of the service and overall community health.
 - f. A Community Advisory Committee (CAC) established to hold these agreements and to regularly assess progress through formal reporting and bi-weekly meetings. The CAC should have a method of accountability and authority.

Thank you so much for being open to listening to our concerns, and we look forward to partnering with you and your staff to make a Tenderloin Meth Sobering Center a resounding success and an asset to the community.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon Bertrang". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Simon Bertrang
Executive Director

Cc: Andres Power, Policy Director
Shalini Rana, Health Policy Advisor
Dr. Grant Colfax, Director of Public Health
Dr. Anton Nigusse Bland, Director of Mental Health Reform
Supervisor Matt Haney
Supervisor Rafael Mandelman
Health Commission
HealthRIGHT 360
TL Property Owners