Unruly fliers made a flier of Downtown Berkeley Association CEO’s email about fliers and posted themselves on the fifth floor of City Hall.

“It was terrifying,” confided one City Hall staffer. “They were suddenly everywhere - conveying public information.”

“No one could control them,” added another staff member on condition of anonymity. “We couldn’t stop them assembling together and we couldn’t control what they had to say.”

The fliers were unapologetic, explaining that they had suffered abuse at the DBA’s hands for years.

“Flier removal is not in their contract,” stated one flier flatly. “That’s a direct quote from the City Manager and we’re still being treated like garbage.”

DBA Director John Caner demurred. “We don’t treat fliers like garbage. We treat fliers like feces. There’s a difference.”

Caner went on to clarify that his cleaning crews remove feces and that feces removal was not specifically mentioned in his contract with the City of Berkeley, either. “We don’t have to remove feces or fliers,” he pointed out. “We do it because we care.”

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ASK THE EXPERTS

LENA DEETER knows the answers to everything forwards and backwards.

Dear Lena, I think you shouldn’t defend fliers and posters. They really scare me because they might jump off a pole and obscure my windshield or my vision while I’m walking so I might get in a traffic accident or get hit by a car. You should really think more about these things.

Dear Lena, Thank you so much for writing in. You’re correct that this never crossed my mind. I may never sleep again.

Dear Lena, was former Mayor Shirley Dean correct when she quoted current Mayor Jesse Arreguin as saying “we must consider views” about a different matter before the council than the landmarking of Campanile Way, which was just about the roadway anyway, not the actual view? He seemed to think the view cancelled any consideration of the landmark status.

Dear reader, yes. But let’s be fair. That was a different issue. When you have a roomful of painted-on polyester suits you just see things differently.

Dear Lena, so can we put up posters or not? I’m confused.

Dear reader, your personal, selfish confusion is nothing compared to the confusion of the poor DBA greenshirts, who have to change their perspective depending on what DBA CEO Caner thinks he can get away with. Fliers are either the equivalent of a “public safety” issue, a “garbage” issue, or a “feces” issue depending on which sliver of arcane ancient commentary from various musings of city staff or even previous city staff are cited. Opportunism is celebrated in this town, as any visit to a city council meeting proves. So consider the ambiguity in whether or not legally posting fliers, is tolerated in this peculiar city a personal, creative challenge and quit whining. Nobody likes a whiner.

Ask Lena about exotic pets, dubious references, and aimless wastes of copious amounts of city resources at cdennery@igc.org.

City Council Decides the Best Way to Appreciate Campanile Way Is With Your Eyes Closed

By Fred Knot

A majority of the Berkeley City Council agreed at a recent hearing that despite Campanile Way being on the National Register of Historic Places, the idea from the Landmarks Preservation Commission that it should also be on the City of Berkeley’s list of landmarks was an “ambiguous” and “confusing” effort to circumvent public processes including the California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA and confound the lives of developers who wish to enhance the town and this scenic area in particular with high-end condos leavened with a few “affordable” condos for the sad, relatively poor $100,000-a-year crowd.

“I’m concerned about this idea of the ‘view’” stated one councilmember shortly after a lengthy ZAB hearing about a neighborhood squabble over views being blocked by construction. “We are not supposed to have anything to do with views.”

The landmark applicant clarified that the landmark designation was for a roadway, which is exempt usually from CEQA, but concerns remained with the council majority that pedestrians on Campanile Way’s passageway might look up and accidentally see the considerable view which sweeps from the hills to the bay.

The council majority swiftly dispensed with the original landmark applicant’s concern that some of the appeal petition’s signatures were clearly from fake addresses.

“Circumventing public processes is a concern we are only applying to the landmark application side of this issue,” explained the City Attorney.

A STUDENT PETITION WITH 3,788 SUPPORTERS shouldn’t stand in the way of the profitability of any developers wishing to contribute their own elements to this lovely landscape.

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BART Plaza Renovations Celebrate Traditional Berkeley Values of Wealth Disparity, Exclusion

By Bella Ringing

The latest BART plaza renovation is a monument to the ambiguity and confusion the Berkeley City Council recently claimed to experience regarding the apparently baffling issue of Campanile Way’s landmark status.

Most common areas are open to the public, a public which includes both rich and poor, buskers, vendors, picnickers, and people just hanging out enjoying the weather. But under the careful planning of the Downtown Berkeley Association and the new Chief Cultural Affairs Officer, Jennifer Lovvorn, the City of Berkeley is trying to simultaneously argue that the plaza’s sidewalks are “obstructed” by unpermitted objects while at the same time being “underutilized” and in need of “activation.”

“It’s a tough needle to thread,” smiled Lovvorn about the anti-busking/no-live-music segment of the “activation.”

“We’ll have eight poles on the plaza, with very high-tech speakers, and we have commissioned a series of artists to create sound compositions...running for two months.”

The speakers on poles controlled by the DBA avert problematic, unpredictable music from taking place in public and eliminates the issue of needing to have any pesky artists or musicians actually interacting or being physically present on the plaza.

“Artists are dangerous,” explained one City Hall insider. “They’re demanding and challenging. Our design will eliminate any public participation and carefully vet anyone interested through a lengthy application and point process which then gets a recommendation and then approved by our commission, then sent to council.

Critics objected that spontaneous music and community events are precluded by such a process, but were dismissed.

“Wealthy people like predictability,” explained the DBA’s John Caner. “And they don’t like being panhandled. Oh, and those photographs of ambassadors tearing down fliers are not really real, they are photo-shopped and it is all fake news.”

*   *   *   *   *

FREE SPEECH is important unless, of course it says things like this.

THE DBA’S CEO JOHN CANER says stuff like this “ambassador” tearing down a legally posted community flier is just fake news and isn’t really happening.

THE DOLLAR SIGN WAS CAREFULLY CHOSEN from among a diverse local group of artists who submitted their designs in a public process carefully shielded from the general public so that problematic suggestions like public toilets could be carefully controlled, unlike human needs.

We Can’t Draw Comics

by Franz Toast
Innovative Ways to Clear Public Spaces of the Public

By Everett Peace

Theater-goers walking from the Powell Street BART Station to the Exit Theater for the San Francisco Fringe shows had to scurry past the rain-making machine on the side of the Bijou Hotel on Eddy Street, which soaked cast members, musicians, and attendees with an unexpected shower of mechanically induced rain.

“It’s not so bad,” stated Baby G, who just stretched out in the rain on the puddle-pocked sidewalk. “It’s a bright sunny day, so it kind of evens out.”

The Hotel Bijou offered to let others know the manufacturer of the mist machine in case they have a wish to discourage the public from using public sidewalks as well.

“We aspire to public-free public spaces,” explained one Hotel Bijou staffer, in concurrence with the spokespeople for the business improvement district. “People are fine once they’re customers, but until then we like keeping them somewhat damp.”

*   *   *   *   *

THANK HEAVENS the DBA greenshirts will tear down stickers like this one just as soon as they can so our downtown can be orderly.

I Want My Present Now

By Juan Nathan Undergod

I was holding my cell phone and I sneezed!

I lost all my friends and accidentally bought a car.

Show me how! I wish I could!

Pepper Spray Times is made possible by the natural comedy inherent in the local political landscape and all its inhabitants, best exemplified by (see below)...Want to help distribute? Contact us for copies.

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*Love’s Labour’s Lost

We appreciate those who understand that satire is serious business.