

**PRESS RELEASE**

June 14, 2010

**For Immediate Release**

Contact:

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- WHAT:** Press Conference RE: **Sale of Children's Village to Speculators Leaves Young Children Out in the Cold**
- WHEN:** Monday, June 14, 2010, 8:30 a.m.
- WHERE:** Children's Village Child Development Center (front sidewalk on 10th St.)  
250 10th Street (between Howard/Folsom)  
San Francisco, CA
- WHO:** Children's Village parents, SEED (Supporting Early Experience and Development - nonprofit group formed to save Children's Village)
- WHY:** **Children's Village, an award-winning child development center serving children 3 months to 5 years, facing imminent closure - Catholic Charities discontinues program as San Francisco Archdiocese sells property to developers. Displaced families receive no support and children have no place to go.**

In a city where less than half the need for child-care services is met, Catholic Charities is closing its award-winning Child Development Center in SOMA so the Archdiocese can hand the facility over to speculators who are purchasing the property to develop the site.

Children's Village provides vital day care, early childhood education and family support services to 110 children from 100 families, over half low-income and all reflecting the city's cultural and socioeconomic diversity. Young children are the hardest to place in care facilities where in San Francisco only 49% of child care needs for children of all ages is met. Waiting lists of eighteen months to two years are the norm, putting extreme hardships on families struggling to stay and raise children in the City.

The San Francisco Archdiocese owns the St. Joseph's campus where Children's Village is located. Catholic Charities, the charitable arm of the Archdiocese, oversees Children's Village as one of its programs. **The Archdiocese is giving Catholic Charities one million dollars to close the program down and deliver the facility vacant. Catholic Charities has announced it will close the Center by end of August 2010 with reduced staffing through the summer. No transition plan or child care slots have been provided for the children Children's Village serves.** Catholic Charities plans to put toys and fixtures into storage while families are left without care. Although Catholic Charities recently announced it will open another facility near-by, it won't be available for at least another year, with no guaranteed slots for displaced Children's Village families even then. Therefore the Children's Village families have been left to fend for themselves.

**In addition, the property has just been sold to real estate broker Chris Harney of HC&M and Tom Murphy of SFRents who have also been unwilling to work out a transition plan for the parents, and declined to lease the property to them at market rates, even though the site's future is uncertain.** Adjacent St. Joseph's Church, a historic vacant landmark, is in need of extensive seismic retrofitting.

In order to save Children's Village, parents have formed SEED (Supporting Early Experience and Development), an independent non-profit organization, and created a sustainable plan to continue the Center at its current location, but that plan has been ignored by the current and future property owners.

"We prefer to stay here and have worked the financials out for that, or would alternatively rent the space in the interim given time to transition elsewhere, but they're not interested in either," said Megan Laurance, a mother of two children in the program. "At this point it looks like their plan is to kick these kids to the curb with no transition and no alternatives."

"Children's Village is a critical resource for San Francisco's working families. A lease would allow the program to continue to operate, enabling families to work, and also gives time for a proper transition to an alternative location without impeding the investors' plan for the site...we should be working towards that end." explained Mardi Lucich, Citywide Child Care Administrator at the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families.

**In fact, San Francisco has invested nearly \$2 million dollars into Children's Village's state-of-the-art child care facility - a facility that supports a thriving community with a long waiting list of parents eager to enroll their young children.** The City's investment, in a time of economic hardship and huge budget deficits, will be squandered as developers take over the site and families are left to wonder if it's finally time to leave the City and raise their children elsewhere.

Is this consistent with Catholic Charities' mission of "supporting, stabilizing and strengthening families in our community"? Is it right for the Archdiocese to allow our city's youngest children, many our most vulnerable, to be left with no one to care for them? Should the city's investments be squandered and 110 needed child-care slots be lost to speculators?

The parents, children and supporters of Children's Village say a resounding "NO". We urge you to attend our press conference (details above) to learn more about Children's Village and to hear from parents and civic leaders supporting our cause.

Questions can be directed to Dee Dee Workman, contact info above.

Children's Village Website: <http://www.cccyo.org/childrensvillage/index.htm>

Save Children's Village Website: <http://savechildrensvillage.com/>

## **Contact Information for Speakers & Experts**

### **Issue Experts**

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### **Further Questions**

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## **Timeline of Key Events in the Children's Village Story**

### **1999:**

- CCCYO received a \$1Mil loan from the Low Income Investment Fund to be paid back by the Human Services Agency over 10 years.
  - The loan funded conversion of the elementary school building on Saint Joseph's Campus for use as Child Development Center.
    - 7 classrooms with bathrooms and kitchenettes.
    - 3 offices Lobby and reception, conference room,
    - Laundry and storage, food distribution kitchen.
    - 3 play yards.
    - Parking lot with 10 spots .

### **February 2000:**

- Children's Village opens as a program of Catholic Charities CYO to serve working families of all faiths in San Francisco with 50% or more families served qualifying as low income.

### **November 2004:**

- CCCYO notifies parents and staff that Children's Village operating deficit was too great and that they would seek a replacement Child Care Provider through a Request For Proposal process. They committed to keeping open through June 2005.

### **January 2005:**

- Director resigns

### **February 2005:**

- Parents, Staff and Union present plan to satisfy CCCYO's budget requirements.
- Current Program Director promoted from administrative position.

### **March 2005 to November 2007**

- Children's Village highlights
  - Focus on program quality and the addition of formal arts curriculum
  - Work with volunteers to green play yards and enhance outdoor learning opportunities
  - Receive 2 Parent Action Grants to further enhance garden and science curriculum
  - Children and families work with resident artist to complete mural with funding from SF Beautiful
  - Win City Search "Best Of" award
  - Receive commendation for Outstanding Quality from Board of Supervisors
  - Win Best of the Bay Best Preschool Award
  - Partner with St. Josephs Family Center which occupied convent and rectory of Saint Joseph's Campus to develop shared program space. Create art studio, therapeutic classroom, Gross motor Studio and large community room in Saint Joseph's Parrish Hall.
  - Work with Gateway to Quality to conduct \$20k facility upgrades with funding from Low Income Investment Fund
  - Awarded Infant Toddler Sustaining Grant ongoing funding
  - Awarded DCYF 3 year grant to fund General Child Care

- Became a Preschool For All site
- Archdiocese exhausts all time extensions and city requires they retrofit the Saint Josephs Church which had been decommissioned prior to the 1989 Leoma Prieta earth quake where it was damaged and deemed unsafe.
  - Archdiocese negotiates with Mercy Housing and Bridge Housing to sell the campus. Both developers did not choose to complete the deals because their Boards of Directors would not accept liability for the time between site acquisition and building construction. The Archdiocese would not agree to carry this liability.
    - If Mercy Housing had been the developer of the Saint Joseph's campus they would have left Children's Village as is.
    - If Bridge Housing had been the developer they would have recreated Children's Village as part of new construction.
- Having failed to complete a deal with nonprofit developers the Archdiocese decided to pursue private developers

**December 2007:**

- CCCYO notifies Parents and Staff that the Archdiocese would not renew Children's Village lease which was to expire 9/30/08.

**January 2008**

- Children's Village Community learns that a developer called Republic was in conversation with the Diocese regarding the Saint Joseph's Campus.
- An Advocacy group of parents, staff and community members conduct outreach and engage political stakeholders to preserve Children's Village.
- Republic quickly disengages after meeting with the Western SOMA Citizen's Task Force and hearing from city allies.

**February 2008**

- The Archdiocese offers CCCYO \$1Mil to relocate Children's Village
- The Archdiocese shows CCCYO an alternative location for Children's Village at Immaculate Conception in Bernal Heights.
- CCCYO determines that it will cost \$3Mil to rehabilitate Immaculate Conception site and declines.
- Developer Chris Foley expresses interest in purchasing the Saint Joseph's Campus and meets with CCCYO Executive Director Brian Cahill.
- Chris Foley promises to include Children's Village in his development plans for the Saint Joseph's Campus. He expressed plans to relocate Children's Village to the Howard Street frontage of the Saint Joseph's Campus and raise Children's Village current site to build market rate condos.
- The Archdiocese commits to paying for 2 years rent to Chris Foley for Children's Village upon completion of replicated site.
- Children's Village is informed that after 2 years they would be responsible for market rate rent which was estimated to be \$8,000 monthly.

**March 2008**

- CCCYO ED Brian Cahill issues a memo to staff and parents that said: "It is with great pleasure we announce that Children's Village will be able to remain in place for at least the next few years, with the possibility of a long term lease in the future."

### **Summer 2008**

- Chris Foley is not successful in securing funding and his escrow expires.
- Chris Foley purchases the church for \$1 to extend his option to purchase the entire Saint Joseph's Campus.
- Saint Joseph's Family Shelter is relocated from the Saint Joseph's Campus. The relocation resulted in a 40% reduction of available shelter beds.

### **December 2008**

- Chris Foley time frame elapses and he no longer has an exclusive option to purchase the Saint Joseph's Campus. He is stuck with the Church.

### **January 2009**

- CCCYO Executive Director Brian Cahill retires and Jeff Bialik is hired to serve as CCCYO Executive Director.

### **June 2009:**

- June 22<sup>nd</sup> : Parents and staff of Children's Village are informed by a letter from CCCYO that Children's Village will close in June 2010 (with 3 months left to go in the school year). They are given 12 months notice. Reasons cited for closing the program:
  - CV program is not financially sustainable
  - CV program is outside the core mission of CCCYO
  - Archdiocese intends to sell the property and CCCYO has agreed to help deliver a vacant property
    - From letter to parents from CCCYO: "Children's Village is not sustainable in its present form and at its current location. The costs of operating Children's Village exceed the revenue and, with the downturn in the economy and loss of revenue agency wide, we can no longer afford to make of the difference. In addition, The Archdiocese of San Francisco, which has provided free rent to Children's Village for the past nine years, intends to sell the property and we have agreed to move from the site no later than December 2010."

### **September 2009:**

- Parents learn that CCCYO intends to collect on the Archdiocese' offer to pay CCCYO \$1 M if they vacate Children's Village from the property by Dec. 2010.
- Parents launch letter campaign to CCCYO Board of Directors, urging them to include parents in a dialog, requesting an in person meeting, pointing out the contradictions/inequities in the transition period they are offered:
  - As key stakeholders in the program, parents were offended that they were completely left out of the decision making process, and asked CCCYO to include them in a dialog about this crisis.
  - On average it takes 18-24 months to find child care in San Francisco. CV parents were given 12 months.
  - CCCYO stated that CV was not part of their core mission any longer because a small % of its families were low income. Parents corrected that misstatement clarifying that in it's 10 year history Children's Village family population only dipped below 50% low income for one school year beginning August 2008 as a result of loss of program space Children's Village shared with Saint Joseph's Family Shelter. Stats clearly indicate that 57% of CV families are low income.
    - Parents group forms Friends of Children's Village (eventually becomes non-profit SEED) and holds first meeting: begin developing a plan of

self-sustainability to address CCCYO's financial concerns about the program.

**October 2009:**

- SEED holds first meeting with Mardi Lucich, SF childcare administrator
- As a result of directly lobbying CCCYO Board of Directors, CCCYO agrees to meet CV community, parents in person. Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> Meeting with Jeff Bialik, Cecilia Herbert (CCCYO Board President) and Tere Brown (Director of Programs and Services, CCCYO) and Children's Village community. CV Parents present Sustainability Plan, request response from CCCYO by November 7<sup>th</sup>.
  - SEED requests that CCCYO endorse and support the continuation of Children's Village under a new nonprofit by:
    - Acting as a fiscal agent for new entity's early fundraising efforts
    - Allowing Children's Village staff to participate in securing a future for Children's Village as part of their work
    - and by facilitating a conversation with the Archdiocese regarding extending the time line

**November 2009:**

- Meet with supporters including Jim Meko, Cristal Java, Gabriel (Robert) Haaland, who help secure a meeting with Supervisor Chris Daly.
  - Meet with Chris Daly, reps from SEIU Local 1021, Friends of Children's Village, April Veneracion (Legislative Aide to Daly). Daly encourages group to get the Archdiocese to the table, find out what they want, are they willing to lease, sell, what is the price, etc.. Suggests that only legislative tool he could help with would be a Development Agreement with the buyer, should one emerge.
- Nov 18<sup>th</sup> Meet with SoMA Leadership Council – Chris Daly in attendance, offers to broker meeting with the Archdiocese.
- Jeff Bialik, Executive Director of CCCYO responds to Friends of Children's Village (SEED's) proposal presented on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. Jeff informs Rafael Parra of the following:
  - CCCYO reiterated that the dates of closure will not change.
    - CCCYO is not interesting in helping secure a lease for the property, or brokering any such conversation with the Archdiocese, and if the parents wish to continue operating the child care they will need to form a new, separate entity and negotiate directly with the Archdiocese.
    - CCCYO is looking at possible locations for CV, but acknowledges that there is no confirmed commitment to or plans to relocation Children's Village. There is no transition plan for families/staff.
    - However, as CCCYO continues this plan for an alternative site – they plan on moving all of their furniture, equipment, books, chairs, etc. to this new location. None of the existing classroom equipment will be available for use if the new entity (SEED) secures a lease. All existing furniture will be taken and put into storage, regardless of whether SEED is able to continue offering child care services for existing families.
    - SEED learns that CCCYO will serve as new operator of Child Development Services on Treasure Island
    - SEED learns about CCCYO daycare operations being started at 10<sup>th</sup> and Mission; with plans to open child development services in 2012.

**December 2009:**

- Outreach to Tom Carter, reporter for Central City Extra
- Dec 1<sup>st</sup>, article in SF Weekly by Peter Jamison
- SEED requests to meet with Archdiocese. Chris Daly's office also continues to request a meeting with them.
- Shortly after publication of SF Weekly article, Jeff Bialik brokers meeting with Les McDonald of the Real Estate Office of the Archdiocese.
- December 2<sup>3rd</sup> : Meeting between SEED Board Members and Archdiocese of San Francisco (Les McDonald and Harry Schlitt), and Jeff Bialik CCCYO.
  - Archdiocese confirms asking price for the property (\$4.75 million), states that leasing the property is out of the question, reiterates firmly the closing dates (school closing in June, property cleared by December, property up for sale in July). Does state that they would consider any financially viable offer for the property, including one from the new non-profit SEED. Encouraged SEED to work with Mercy and Bridge Housing as potential partners in purchase.

**January 2010:**

- SEED finalizes Business Plans (reorganization of Program to achieve financial viability within a year)
- SEED creates site plans for St. Joseph's Campus that outline partnerships with other non-profits, and/or with the City of San Francisco to ensure the Campus is purchased/developed with the greatest community benefit in mind (Open Space, Parks, Community Center, etc.)
- SEED presents site plans, business plans to potential purchase partners, community minded investment banks.

**February 2010:**

- Meeting between SEED board members and Speaker Pelosi's Office
  - Pelosi's representatives state that this issue is outside of her jurisdiction, offers to engage Hydra Mendoza (Mayor's Education Advisor), and wishes us luck.
- Feb 23<sup>rd</sup> : Meeting between SEED board members and key stakeholders from the Mayor's Office including Mike Farrah (MONS), Hydra Mendoza (Mayor's Advisor on Education), Michele Rutherford (HAS), Lisa Ang (District 6 Liason MONS), Mardi Lucich (DCYF), Laurel Kloomok (Executive Director First 5)
  - Elaine Zamora was helpful in getting this meeting.
  - Discuss strategies for gaining site control, extending the time line given to Children's Village, as all are in agreement that this is a vital service to the city, that the City's investment in the program should not be lost, that staff jobs need to be preserved
  - Also discuss the possibility of some kind of settlement involving the St. Joseph's campus as part of the ongoing litigation between Assessor Ting's Office and the Archdiocese (Ting is suing the Archdiocese for \$15 million for unpaid taxes on property transfers.)
  - Michele Rutherford and Mardi Lucich are point persons within the City to help resolve this issue.
- Town Hall meeting with broader Children's Village community

### March 2010:

- SEED in discussion with potential investors and partners to buy the property Mercy Housing, Bridge Housing, Presidio Knolls Preschool, First Place for Youth, Homeless Prenatal, Episcopal Community Services, The Ark of San Francisco, Global Exchange, and private entrepreneurs.

### April 2010:

- CCCYO agrees to extend services at Children's Village through August 27<sup>th</sup>.
- Work with Brad Paul, community-minded lenders, potential partners in purchasing St. James Campus.
- Through various contacts (e-mail campaigns, letters) to Board of Supervisors, it is clear that many sups think "we are being taken care of" and are unaware that CV is still very much at risk of closing.
- Mike Farrah continues dialogue with Archdiocese of San Francisco (via George Wesolek, Les McDonald) and CCCYO (via Jeff Bialik) regarding a more equitable plan for Children's Village. Families have not been successful in finding alternate child care within the short time frame allotted by CCCYO – 12 months. Mike succeeds in opening the door to the Archdiocese having a discussion about potentially leasing the property to SEED to continue operating Children's Village program.
  - April 28<sup>th</sup>, SEED meets with CCCYO in an attempt to identify a more equitable transition plan for Children's Village and present a specific proposal for leasing the property with specific contingencies. Basic premise is to enable SEED to continue operating CV at least until CCCYO new program is opened at 10<sup>th</sup> and Mission (18 months away). In attendance, SEED Board Members, Jeff Bialik (CCCYO), Michelle Rutherford (HSA) and Mardi Lucich (DCYF).
- Mike Farrah, Mardi Lucich deliver revised transition proposal (including lease proposal) to Archdiocese. SEED clearly indicates willingness to relocate to another property, should a buyer emerge.
  - As part of a parallel strategy – should SEED be granted a short term lease and need to relocate as financing to purchase the property not materialize in time - SEED talks to Chris Harney regarding a potential relocation site he was representing. Chris is made aware of Children's Village dire situation and asks many questions about Children's Village's current site. Within 2 weeks of that meeting, Harney and his group of investors had opened escrow on St. Joseph's, with a specific contingency that the property be delivered vacant.

### May 2010:

- First wave of layoff notices sent to 26 employees of Children's Village
- **1 week after receiving SEED's proposal to lease the property, the Archdiocese of San Francisco sells St. Joseph's Campus to investor group which includes Chris Harney (HC & M Properties) and Tom Murphy. (Reminder....Chris Harney learned about the Saint Joseph campus from SEED.)**
- May 27<sup>th</sup> Meeting with Dan Dillon (Platinum Advisors) who is representing the investors who have are purchasing the property. Meeting is held at City Hall, attendees include SEED board members, Mike Farrah (MONS), April Veneracion, Michelle Rutherford (HSA), Jim Meko (Western SoMa Citizens Task Force, Candidate for Board Of Supervisor District 6.), Kate Sofis (Eastern Neighborhoods Citizens Advisory Committee.)
  - SEED has proposed leasing the property from the new owners (Harney, Murphy et al) until a new location for CV can be identified.

- When asked if he would move forward with purchasing the property if the clause that its delivered empty be struck, stated, “no, we wouldn’t”. SEED asked for 18 months with rent to be determined
- Dan Dillon notifies SEED that the investors have rejected their proposal to lease the property in order to transition CV – stating that the investors have already leased the property, and that CCCYO gave families ample time to find alternate child care services.
- SEED Begins to work on press conference.

**June 2010**

- SEED engages Dee Dee Workman
- SEED schedules press conference for June 14<sup>th</sup>



## Suffer the children: Catholic Church prepares to boot SOMA preschool off its land

By Peter Jamison

published: December 02, 2009

• Josh Edelson



Glen Park resident Arwa Kaddoura and 2-year-old daughter Maya are among those who stand to be affected by the planned closure of Children's Village in 2010.

Subject(s):

[Peter Jamison on Children's Village Child Development Center](#)

Arwa Kaddoura, a financial services worker who treks to an office downtown every day from her home in Glen Park, considers herself lucky. In a city with a chronic shortage of preschools — only 43 percent of kids with working parents have access to licensed child-care slots, according to a 2007 survey from the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network — she has found what she considers a gem of a place to send her 2-year-old daughter, Maya, during business hours. "I remember calling one place after another and being told, 'We have a wait list of 18 to 24 months,'" Kaddoura recalls of her early search for preschools.

Then she found Children's Village Child Development Center, a prekindergarten that sits on 10th Street in the shadow of the abandoned St. Joseph's parish hall. Children's Village is the kind of well-run social kaleidoscope of a school where many San Franciscans would love to send their kids. Roughly half the center's 106 children come from low-income families. Languages spoken by this eclectic bunch of tots include Cantonese, Hindi, Spanish, Tagalog, and Russian. The kids have access to cool developmental tools, such as giant stuffed building blocks, and a courtyard garden where they pick guavas in the winter.

The high caliber of Children's Village is no accident. Starting about 10 years ago, the preschool was targeted for investment by city officials seeking to expand child-care opportunities. It has benefited from roughly \$1.3 million in government grants to upgrade its facilities, according to Candace Wong, director of the Child Care Facilities Fund at the Low Income Investment Fund, which partnered with the city to finance the improvements. That money helped bring the preschool up to building codes and into compliance with modern child-care standards. Now, it appears that this investment might come to naught.

That's because Catholic Charities CYO, the nonprofit that runs the program, is preparing to shut it down in 2010, citing demands from the Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco — owner of the land Children's Village sits on — that the kids clear out. (Catholic Charities, while technically an arm of the archdiocese, operates as an independent organization.) In June, pointing to financial pressures and the church's determination to put the property up for sale, Catholic Charities

politely informed families that Children's Village would soon become a ghost town. While Catholic Charities executive director Jeff Bialik says his agency would like to open another child-care center nearby, no property has been secured.

While it's far from clear that the church will be walking away with a windfall from taxpayers' investment — there's a good chance that developers would raze the current buildings, so the improved facilities wouldn't necessarily lead to a higher sale price — news of the closure has displeased the officials who poured cash into Children's Village in the hope that it would permanently expand the city's meager preschool offerings. "The city subsidized 80 percent of the buildout of the site," Wong said, noting that the lion's share of a loan from her organization to Catholic Charities had been repaid out of city coffers. "These investments are intended to be long-term, and we obviously hoped the child-care center would be there for many more years."

Nor has the closure announcement gone over well with the working parents who will soon be out of a place to send their kids. Some of them have formed a coalition, Friends of Children's Village, and are seeking certification as a charitable organization so they can start raising money to keep the center open. Megan Laurance, a Mission District resident with two children at the center, says a team of real estate, finance, and public relations professionals have come together to draft a plan for saving Children's Village — restoring the program to fiscal health and potentially negotiating a new lease with the archdiocese or a future developer, or even buying the property outright. "We have absolutely no doubt that, in time, we could do this on our own," she said. "There's got to be something we can do to prevent a really strongly needed service like child-care from being booted off the property."

But the parents say they've been stymied in their efforts by lack of cooperation from the archdiocese. In fact, according to Rafael Parra, a Children's Village parent who works as a building consultant to school districts, the group hasn't even been able to sit down with church officials to get a sense of their vision for the property's future, or how much they would want to sell for. The parents have appealed to Supervisor Chris Daly, in whose district Children's Village sits, and he has reached out to the archbishop — with nothing to show for it as *SF Weekly* went to press. "Our office is concerned about the potential loss of child-care slots," Daly aide April Veneracion said. "We have called the archdiocese, and they have not returned our calls."

The church's stated intention to sell the property isn't the only challenge facing Children's Village. Bialik, the Catholic Charities director, says the center has simply been unable to pay its bills in the face of rising labor costs. Another problem, he asserts, is that the center has drifted toward serving a more affluent group of families. "It's been difficult to fundraise for a program serving families that could theoretically pay more," he said. Tuition rates at Children's Village range from \$1,120 per month for prekindergarteners to \$1,450 for infants — on the low end of the scale for S.F. preschools, which can charge up to \$2,000 per month. (As part of their plan to make the center solvent, Laurance says the better-off parents are willing to accept tuition hikes.)

Archdiocese spokesman Maurice Healy says the Catholic Church has done its share over the years to keep Children's Village open. Since 2000, when the center opened, the archdiocese has rented Catholic Charities the land and buildings at a nominal rent of \$1, he notes: "We've done everything we can to accommodate that facility." Yet parents still complain that the most

important accommodation they're now seeking — a direct line of communication to the archdiocese in order to better understand how they can save Children's Village — isn't forthcoming. Healy says church real-estate officials would like to negotiate directly with Catholic Charities, rather than an independent group of parents. But this stance has put the parents at an impasse. "We really need to have the archdiocese sit at the other side of the table," Parra said.

Whether that will happen, even with nudging from Daly, remains to be seen. In the meantime, one of Daly's would-be successors, SOMA activist and entertainment commissioner Jim Meko, takes a sour view of church officials' unwillingness to meet with parents. "It's really funny. This comes up right at Christmastime," Meko said. "Goddamn. They are cold-hearted businessmen. There's no getting around that."