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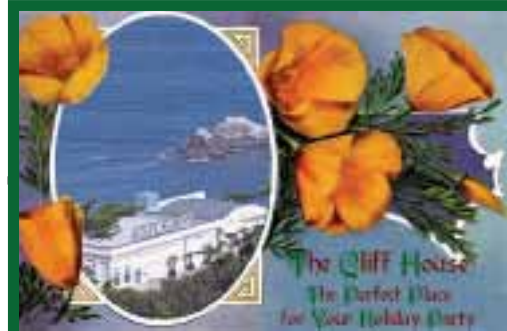
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Building business

Owner of Rolling Out Cafe plans to construct first parklet in Parkside to attract customers in neighborhood that lacks foot traffic **PAGE 4**



MIKE KOOZMIN/S.F. EXAMINER



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Baker builds parklet to revitalize business

Cafe to create the first sidewalk extension in Parkside neighborhood

By Antoinette Siu
S.F. Examiner Staff Writer

Construction on the first parklet in The City's Parkside neighborhood is set to begin next month.

One Sunset baker is behind the project, which is geared toward revitalizing Taraval Street businesses.

Bruno Tse, owner of Rolling Out Cafe, blends his travel and chemistry background to produce specialties like Hawaiian sticky rolls, homestyle meatloaf and Portuguese egg tarts.

When the previous owner at 1722 Taraval St. listed the place for sale, Tse saw the potential of foot traffic coming from the L-Taraval Muni stop outside. He says he wasn't entirely wrong about the location, but business could stand to be better. According to Tse, that location had seen five turnovers in the last 10 years.

"This is one of the reasons I want to build the parklet to benefit local merchants," Tse said.

Parklets are sidewalk extensions that provide greenery, seating, tables or bike parking. Made out of wood and sometimes combined with metal, parklets have been sprouting up in various downtown spots, on Judah Street near busy Ocean Beach restaurants and around Valencia Street in the Mission — as well as around the country in urban locales like Boston and Brooklyn.

Tse, who grew up in Hong Kong, has resided in Richmond since moving to San Francisco about seven



cover
story



ALL: MIKE KOZMIN/S.F. EXAMINER

Rolling Out Cafe owner Bruno Tse, behind counter, plans to begin construction in January of a curbside parklet, the first of its kind in the Parkside neighborhood, to encourage customers to gather in an area that has historically struggled with foot traffic.

years ago. After college in Cambridge, England, and then obtaining his Ph.D. in the U.S., he worked as a medicinal chemist in drug discovery for seven years before deciding to enter the food business.

"A lot of the analytical thinking can really translate from my chemistry days in experimenting," he said. "A lot of things you can fine tune, like ingredients and temperature, except I was working with chemicals, and now I'm working with food ingredients."

In 2012, Tse called a community meeting to discuss a parklet idea to promote vibrancy and education, garnering support from customers and

residents to start the \$50,000 project.

Through collaboration with the city planning department, Mayor's Office on Disability, Supervisor Katy Tang's office and neighborhood association, Tse was able to get the plan approved in July. Combined with fundraising, he has raised about \$40,000 to date.

"I think Taraval has always been struggling with foot traffic," Tang said. "We thought that Bruno's idea was great in trying to generate [a] gathering space for people after they've had some of their baked goods or eaten at the restaurant across the street, that they can go there and

spend some time and hopefully draw a little more of a crowd to certain parts of Taraval corridor."

To keep the donation process engaging, Tse returned to his chemistry roots and envisioned a periodic table of elements design to distinguish his parklet space, which will run about two parking spaces long.

The periodic table will be built into the parklet, with elements signifying three different tiers of donors: \$100, \$200 and \$500 level donations.

Supporters can choose a name to dedicate their element to, and four top-level donors at \$2,500 will occupy the Ta, Ra, V and Al elements, spell-

ing out Taraval for the location of the bakery.

"A lot of families want to put their children's names so that when they grow up they see their names on the elements," Tse said.

Five years ago, an initiative called Pavement to Parks led by San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, the planning department and Department of Public Works formed to create more natural spaces on unused city land.

According to Pavement to Parks, the city's public streets and roads make up 25 percent of the land, which is more than all public park areas combined.

Working with five part-time staff and filling catering orders on the side, Tse hopes to keep growing his business, take on more orders and possibly consider a second location down the line.

"If people comment to me that my meatloaf [or my croissants] remind them of their mother's or grandmother's ... it means a lot to me," Tse said.

"That means that I'm making a little impact on people's lives."

To support the project and contribute to the remaining \$10,000 needed to build the parklet, stop by Rolling Out Cafe on 1722 Taraval St. or email rollingoutcafe@gmail.com.

asiu@sfxaminer.com

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