

Big rebuild at Alice Griffith housing project gets OK

By John Wildermuth on January 8, 2014 at 2:27 PM



The dilapidated Alice Griffith housing project, across the way from the soon-to-be-demolished Candlestick Park, is ready for its makeover.

Underground utility work and other street and surface preparation work is expected to begin by March now that the city’s Community Investment and Infrastructure Commission has given its OK to the long-awaited rebuilding plan for the 256 public housing units.

“Rebuilding Alice Griffith Public Housing and redeveloping Candlestick Point is helping us deliver on our promise to make sure San Francisco remains a city for the 100 percent,” Mayor **Ed Lee** said in a statement Wednesday. The effort is part of a 30-year plan to development the area around the stadium and the long-closed Hunters Point Shipyard into a new city neighborhood with over 12,000 new homes, retail and office space and parks and entertainment areas.

The plans call for the first of the new units to be built on publicly owned land at the intersection of Arelious Walker Drive and Egbert Avenue, which is next to the existing housing project. Another 248 units of affordable housing will be included in that new construction. Residents of Alice Griffith will stay in their current homes until they can move directly into the new flats and townhomes of the mixed-income development.

There’s a tight deadline for much of the work. The Alice Griffith development received a \$30.5 million federal grant in 2011 that required that units built with that money be certified for occupancy

by Sept. 20, 2016. Plans now call for construction of the first 184 units to begin next January, with work on another 122 slated to start by August 2015. The final 198 units have a December 2016 start date.

Sometime after 2016, work is expected to start of the final 706 units at the Alice Griffith site, which will include 382 market-rate homes and 324 units at below market-rate affordability.

“This is great news,” said Kofi Bonner, regional vice president of Lennar Urban, the overall developer of the shipyard project. “The city has told us they like our plan and we can move forward.”

Lennar selected McCormack Baron Salazar, a company with national experience building affordable and mixed income housing, to do the Alice Griffith replacement work, although Lennar will be involved in the market rate construction on the site.

Plans now call for Lennar to take over the Candlestick Park site from the city later this year and then demolish the stadium to clear the site for development.

While there has been talk of building a 3,000- to 4,000-seat arena on the site as part of the development, no final decision has been announced.

“Within the next month or two, we’ll have a much clearer idea of not only how we’ll be moving on the Candlestick site, but who will be involved,” Bonner said.

Construction already is under way on an 88-home market-rate residential development at Innes Avenue and Donahue Street at the edge of the shipyard. Although it will be decades before the approximately 780 acre site is completely built out, nearly 1,500 housing units and 26 acres of parks are expected to be completed in the next five years.

The commission also gave conceptual approval for a plan for 1.1 million square feet of mixed-use retail, entertainment and housing on the Candlestick Park site, although details are still to come.

— **John Wildermuth**