

From: [Patti Cary](#)
To: [Lois Butler](#); [Amanda Gehrke](#); [Economic Development](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter to the PAC
Date: Wednesday, July 01, 2020 9:18:50 AM
Attachments: [PAC Letter.pdf](#)
[Food Bank thanks.pdf](#)

Lois and Amanda:

I ask you please have this letter read into the minutes at the upcoming PAC meeting on July 9th in relation to the Alameda-Haunt Your House! grant application. I have also attached some supporting documents that I would also like included, along with all outside letters of support for the contest you have received.

Thank you,
Patti Cary

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Been to FunAmeda lately?



July 1, 2020

Members of the Public Art Commission:

Thank you for the opportunity to address the objections to the Alameda-Haunt Your House! 2020 grant award made by one of the members at the meeting in June.

- 1) In response to the notion that AHYH! is not a cultural art event:
 - a) Cultural: I was born at the Alameda Hospital in 1962, so I know first-hand Halloween has been an important part of Alameda culture, and my childhood, for as long as I can remember. When I returned to my hometown in 2000 after living in London and New Orleans, I was sad and disappointed to see Alameda's Halloween magic had faded to a few select streets in the Gold Coast and most of the décor, although appreciated, lacked the originality and imagination that captivated me in my youth. So, I saved my pennies and decided to sponsor and produce a city-wide house decorating contest to highlight the city's amazing architecture, celebrate creativity and revitalize and encourage the Halloween spirit - an endearing, unique aspect of Alameda culture.
 - b) Art: I can assure you, AHYH! contestants are not only Halloween enthusiasts, they are designers, makers, Burners, crafters, builders, engineers, photographers, tech professionals – yes, *artists* from all disciplines who see this contest as a way to showcase and share their unique talents for the entire city to enjoy. The amazing hard work, artistry, innovation and community pride the contestants pour into these Halloween installations is truly inspiring. See photos attached.
 - c. Event: For nine years, the contest and canned food drive was a popular, much-anticipated and successful community gathering. Not unlike a street fair or any art happening, it brought neighbors out to celebrate and enjoy our city. Not only was the contest featured in all the local papers, in 2009 our AHYH! event gained national attention when we were contacted by HGTV and a few of our contestants were featured on their Halloween cable t.v. special. Nice!

- 2) In response to the idea it is irresponsible to “use developers’ money to give rich people in their million-dollar homes award money when they decorate their houses for Halloween anyway”:
- a) Rich people in million dollar homes: Although we love the enthusiasm of Bay St. and the Gold Coast on Halloween night, AHYH! is a city-wide event on the two nights leading up to Halloween and our contestants represent nearly every neighborhood in Alameda, homes big and small, old and new, of all types of architecture, spanning east to west. In fact, the very first winner of the contest lived on Fitchburg Street on Bay Farm Island. AHYH! is actually likely one of the most all-inclusive events on the Island.
 - b) Cash awards: Prizes for AHYH! have included ribbons, gift certificates to local restaurants, two passes on Frontier Airlines (donated by a supporter), a personalized autographed copy of *Too Much Horror Business* by Kirk Hammett of Metallica and the coveted, Most Haunted House trophy. Never have we awarded cash (although the Kirk Hammett book is considered priceless!)
 - c) Developer’s money: I find it hard to believe any developer would not appreciate and want to capitalize on a city-wide contest that highlights the beauty of the city’s varied architecture and history, celebrates local creativity, and highlights a community who come together at a crucial time of year to help their neighbors in need. Sounds like a developer’s dream to me.
 - d) Finally - Is it still the “developer’s money” if they’ve handed it over to the city as part of a contractual obligation - or is it now actually the public’s money in the hands of the PAC to distribute with the best interests of the public in mind?

In closing, I hope, as members of the Alameda Public Art Commission, you will agree *Alameda-Haunt Your House!* does indeed constitute a cultural art event. Please see your way clear to approving this \$1500 grant to help FunAmeda Productions reboot the contest and canned food drive In 2020 – a year that does not have to go all the way down in infamy!

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Patti Cary
FunAmeda Productions



Serving the City of Alameda Since 1977

November 17, 2015

*Alameda Haunts Participants
Attn: Patti Cary
patti@alamedahaunts.com*

Dear Patti,

On behalf of the clients, volunteers, and Board of Directors of the Alameda Food Bank, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for the efforts of all who participated in the Alameda Haunt Your Ride decorating contest and food drive. The food drive element of the contest collected a fantastic 900 pounds of canned goods and \$310 for Food Bank programs! The Alameda Food Bank is grateful to be the beneficiary of such a fun and community-driven Halloween event.

Last year, the Food Bank served over 2,200 families, representing about 5,100 people. Over the last several years demand for our services has continued to grow as more and more of our neighbors struggle to make ends meet. It is only because of the generosity of donors such as those who participated in Alameda Haunt Your Ride that we have been able to meet the growing needs of our clientele.

Sincerely,

*Cindy Houts
Executive Director*