

NEIGHBORHOOD VIEWS

April '05 • www.csfn.net • XXXIII No. 4

A SAN FRANCISCO PIER FOR THE USS IOWA

As an item of special interest, we have invited Ms Merylin Wong, President & Director of the Historic Ships Memorial at Pacific Square (HSMPS) to speak at our April meeting to bring us up to date on the final plans for the transfer of the USS Iowa to the City of San Francisco. The Iowa, often referred to as "FDR's battleship" is one of our nations most historic ships. The HSMPS has been working for the past 10 years to bring this great ship to San Francisco as a naval memorial and museum. The navy is prepared to release the USS Iowa to San Francisco as soon as the city designates a pier for the ship. Hopefully, the Mayor and the Port of San Francisco will soon announce a pier assignment for the Iowa to avoid any further delay. The acquisition of the Iowa will not cost the city in any way; in fact, it would bring needed money to San Francisco as a major tourist attraction. In addition, the ship would pay the city berthing fees and it could serve as an alternate command center for the City Office of Emergency Services & Homeland Security in case of a disaster. The City of San Francisco would be most fortunate to become the new and permanent home of the USS Iowa.

...Submitted by: Bud Wilson, GWPNA

Nominating Committee Nominates

It is the job of the Nominating Committee to recommend candidates for election to office after receiving and considering recommendations from member organizations. This committee talked to many members and consulted together to work on a slate that is unbiased and objective while representing the CSFN's members. To be eligible for office, a candidate must be a delegate or alternate of member organizations in good standing. The member organization must have attended at least 6 meetings in the year prior to nomination. Below are our Committee results: President: Judith Berkowitz, EMIA, First Vice President: Steve Gruel, GGHIA, Second Vice President: Richard Shadoian, CVIA, Recording Secretary: Dick Millet, PBNA, Corresponding Secretary: Lionel Brazil, EDIA, Treasurer: Barbara Meskunus, BANG, Members-at-Large: Bud Wilson: GWPNA., Joan Girardot: MCIPOA, Eileen Boken: SPEAK

The above slate of recommended candidates should not discourage other nominations from the floor. We urge all members to consider running for office to contribute your expertise and energies to keep CSFN strong and vital.

Nominating Committee: George Zaback, Mary Helen Briscoe, Ramona Albright

... Submitted by Mary Helen Briscoe, PROSF

GARBAGE RATES GOING UP AGAIN!

It is hard to believe that 5 years have gone by already, but indeed they have and Norcal wants to raise our garbage rates again. The prior increase of 43% began July 2001 to last to 2006. The new rate preparation, review and negotiation process will take about a year to complete. The ratepayers need a public advocate to be at the table along with the City and Norcal from the beginning of these deliberations.

How the process works: The established garbage rates are in effect until such time that the Norcal Companies (Sunset Scavenger, Golden Gate Disposal & Recycling, etc.) want to increase them. They prepare documentation to support the proposed new rates and the Dept. of Public Works evaluates the appropriateness and validity of this data. There will be two rounds of open workshops to examine the request publicly, before the City's Rate Board is formally convened (consisting of the City Administrator, the Controller, and the GM of the PUC) to determine the new garbage rates.

Why ratepayers need to be concerned: We write the checks, but we are not part of the negotiations. No one interprets the facts for us. We can only write letters and speak at public comment during the hearings. The Board of Supervisors has no authority to approve or disapprove of the decisions of the City's Rate Board. The 2001 Budget Analyst recognized that "this process can be extremely intimidating and difficult for the public and therefore inhibit the public's participation." He recommended that a temporary position paid by funds ratepayers give to the Impound Account be retained "that would act on behalf of the ratepayers and advocate the public's position." He noted that "Norcal used three attorneys during the 2001 rate review process."

In 2001, only 2 civic groups, SPEAK and Good Government Alliance, attended and spoke at all 4 days of the garbage rate hearings. Even the State has an "Office of Ratepayer Advocates" to represent the public utility customers to obtain the lowest possible rates. San Francisco needs a similar commitment to fairness by hiring a rate regulation specialist for the public from the money we have already paid. From the SPEAK resolution:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the CSFN urges the Mayor to require the hiring of a Public Advocate to represent the ratepayers' interests during the entirety of the next Refuse Rate Review Process to be paid from the funds collected in the Norcal Impound Account for the Solid Waste Management Program administered by the city and to be budgeted for the fiscal year 2005-06. (Full resolution on page 3.)

...Submitted by Evelyn Wilson, SPEAK

Cars



CSFN may revisit the Golden Gate Garage issue at its April meeting. SPEAK decided that the compromise substitute motion approved by CSFN opposing the southern entrance as currently planned was not sufficient. SPEAK wants CSFN to oppose any and all southern entrance proposals, even ones that haven't been written yet. SPEAK introduced its motion at the Executive Committee meeting instead of doing so before the membership, which is in order, so we will need to vote on it at our April meeting unless it is withdrawn or unless there is a successful motion to postpone consideration to allow for a reasonable debate at a future meeting.

The issue of the parking garage has been, and will continue to be, a divisive issue for CSFN. I support the position that CSFN should not take sides on such issues when to do so is meaningless in terms of effect, i.e. when the decision-makers cannot in any way be influenced by CSFN's position. That is the case here.

SPEAK's original motion called for CSFN to urge the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor to oppose the southern entrance, when the decision is in the hands of the courts and the Concourse Authority. SPEAK wanted us to oppose any southern entrance, as they will be doing again this month, when to do so exhibits an insensitive lack of regard for the neighborhoods north of the park who would have to absorb all of the extra traffic.



The imposing new deYoung Museum will soon be open to the public

few free parking places. It is also extremely shortsighted for neighbors not to understand that increased revenues generated by these museum visitors will translate into fewer cuts in city services. Realistically, the decision to build the museums has already been made, as has the decision to build the garage. The time for debate has passed.

Transit First continues to be misinterpreted as a city planning policy, lending credibility of sorts to otherwise irrational arguments. Transit First does not mean "transit only." The intense controversy over the last attempt at writing a Housing Element should have convinced our policy makers that we do not intend to accept less than 1 for 1 parking, except in extremely limited and special circumstances. Declaring one of our neighborhoods a "transit corridor" or "transit district" does not make it so.

There are more cars in San Francisco now than there used to be, even though our population is decreasing, because adults are replacing families with children. Adults have jobs, and they're not all downtown, or in other areas adequately served by public transportation. Instead of building public parking garages to accommodate the cars that congest our streets, we pretend that if we don't build garages, the cars will go away. We even tolerate the replacement of on street parking with bicycle lanes, as if bicycle transportation will ever become

When the Concourse Garage is finished, people will use it. The planning of details of its use is in the hands of the courts and the Concourse Authority.

It must be said that the true motivation behind this public outcry to ban a southern garage entrance, to which SPEAK has seemingly signed on, is hatred of cars. If there is no southern entrance, maybe people will think it's not worth the effort to circle the park and enter from the north, and will stay at home.

The public transportation argument is specious, discriminatory, and ideologically driven. Middle-aged and older people prefer to drive to the park because it is safer, and because physical limitations may prevent them from doing otherwise. Families with small children share the same concerns. Golden Gate Park will soon be home to two new, world-class museums that will attract visitors from around the Bay Area and around the world. It is astounding to me that some of the neighborhood merchants cannot see the economic benefits they will reap in exchange for more weekend street traffic and loss of a

a viable choice for most people over the age of 30. The result, of course, can be seen in Hayes Valley or the Haight any weekend evening, when thousands of cars spend hours circling the neighborhoods looking for parking that doesn't exist, to the detriment of neighbors that have to dodge the cars and breathe the exhaust fumes, and small businesses that lose those important visitor revenues.

When the Concourse Garage is finished, people will use it. The planning of details of its use is in the hands of the courts and the Concourse Authority. We have member neighborhoods on both sides of this issue and I join many others in the belief that this is not a battle worth fighting.

More importantly, I sincerely hope that San Francisco's next attempt at writing a Housing Element adequately reflects reality, rather than someone's twisted and discriminating vision of utopia.

...Submitted by Barbara Meskunas, CSFN President

Will the Widening of MLK Drive Affect You?

First, please recognize that the Inner Sunset Merchants Association takes no position on the Music Concourse garage itself, the de Young Museum, or Academy of Sciences construction. We are also no party to, and take no position on any of the pending lawsuits. Rather, we take issue with the proposal to widen Martin Luther King Drive to four moving lanes to create a perceived dedicated access to a southern garage entrance-and-exit within Golden Gate Park.

This plan threatens to destroy the delicate balance the Inner Sunset currently experiences with parking, traffic congestion and public transportation issues. The Inner Sunset is home to San Francisco's largest employer, UCSF, as well as a thriving business district; we flank Golden Gate Park's Strybing Arboretum and County Fair Building with its many events and attractions.

If the proposed widening of MLK Drive to four lanes is carried out, the Inner Sunset will become impacted by traffic gridlock due to the increase in traffic bound for the garage and the ripple effect will be felt well beyond 19th Avenue, affecting cross park traffic and delaying vehicles heading from the Sunset District towards downtown.

A few years back the voters of San Francisco, after much controversy, passed Prop J, allowing for the construction of the underground garage in the concourse, provided that it had dedicated entrances and exits outside Golden Gate Park. Now, contrary to what the voters approved, the Concourse Authority is placing a garage entrance/exit in the heart of the Park, and proposes to widen and remove all parking on Martin Luther King Drive to create dedicated express lanes to and from the garage.

Projection of traffic increase due to the reopening of Concourse drives will add 640,000 cars per year. That is 640,000 more cars than we have now with all the concourse attractions closed. In the last few years the Inner Sunset has faced traffic gridlock on a regular basis. Lincoln Way and Ninth Avenue currently have difficulty handling traffic at peak hours and on weekends.

Before moving forward with the widening of MLK Drive we have asked that the following issues be resolved:

- Development of a transportation master plan for the Sunset District, to facilitate traffic to and from the Concourse.
- Study the economic impact to businesses from increased congestion and loss of 85 parking spaces along MLK that serve the County Fair Building and businesses.
- Improvements for public transportation to the concourse as called for in SF's Transit First Policy.
- Protection for "Transit Preferential Streets" (Ninth Avenue, Lincoln and Irving) as called for in the SF Master Plan.

This is not a North vs. South issue but a question of survival. Without adequate solutions to the issues we have raised, this is clearly a threat to the existence of the Inner Sunset business community and will affect all western areas of San Francisco.

Other groups and organizations that have joined ISMA opposing the widening include: SF Council of District Merchants Association, Inner Sunset Park Neighbors, Cole

Valley Improvement Association, The Sunset District Neighborhood Coalition, The Sierra Club, SF League of Conservation Voters, San Francisco Tomorrow, Sunset-Parkside Education and Action Committee, Haight Ashbury Neighborhood Council, SF Bicycle Coalition, Rescue Muni, Walk SF, Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee, The SF Green Party, CA Outdoor Rollerskating Association.

..This article, written by Craig Dawson, President of the Inner Sunset Merchants Association, is submitted by Pinky Kushner, Board Member, SPEAK)

URGING THE MAYOR TO REQUIRE THE GARBAGE RATE BOARD TO CREATE A TEMPORARY POSITION AS AN ADVOCATE FOR THE CITY'S RATEPAYERS AT THE NEXT RATE INCREASE HEARINGS.

WHEREAS, The Budget Analyst in 2001 identified the highly complex nature of the garbage rate hearings including numerous consultant studies, financial reports and detailed staff analyses that make the entire Refuse Rate Process extremely technical, cumbersome, and difficult for the general public to review and comprehend, and

WHEREAS, The Budget Analyst recommended that NEXT Refuse Rate Review Process should have a person hired, such as a public interest attorney, who is familiar with the rate regulations and/or utility rate setting procedures and is able to work well with the public to advocate for the public's position in an articulate and comprehensive manner at the DPW Director's hearings and before the Rate Board, then

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the CSFN urges the Mayor to require the hiring of a Public Advocate to represent the ratepayers' interests during the entirety of the next Refuse Rate Review Process to be paid from the funds collected in the Norcal Impound Account for the Solid Waste Management Program administered by the city and to be budgeted for the fiscal year 2005-06.

...Adopted by the SPEAK Board on March 14, 2005, and forwarded to CSFN.

Friends of City Planning Present Their Annual Dinner

This year's event, "Revitalizing Our Historic Resources," will be held in the historic Julia Morgan Ballroom of the Merchant's Exchange Building, 465 California St on May 3, 2005 from 5:30 to 8:30 PM. The reception-format event will feature food from well-known San Francisco restaurants throughout the ballroom.

Space is limited and may sell out again. Tickets may be purchased at the special "community rate" of \$60.00 per person from Ron Wong & Associates, 3608 16th St., SF 94114 or directly from CSFN delegate Karen Crommie, kcrommie@aol.com or 431-1414.

MARCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

The CSFN ExComm was called to order at 6:20PM at its regularly scheduled meeting on March 30 at Northern Police Station by Chair Berkowitz. Present were: Judith Berkowitz, Eileen Boken, Doug Comstock, Steve Gruel, Barbara Meskunas, Dick Millet, Bud Wilson, Evelyn Wilson, and George Zaback. Absent: Sharon Eberhart.

President's Report: Barbara Meskunas reported on the March 22 meeting with Mayor Newsom. A new procedure for the meetings will entail that the items be submitted well before the meeting so that the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services can begin to work on the issues before the actual meeting with the Mayor takes place. •Karen Crommie will send invitations to CSFN delegates for the Friends of Planning's annual dinner. Ramona arranged for CSFN to have two tables at the dinner for City Administrator Bill Lee on March. Barbara spoke and presented him a certificate designed by Doug Comstock and written by Ramona. •Dennis Herrera will be at the June meeting to swear in new officers.

1st Vice President's Report: Judith Berkowitz reported that Rincon Point NA's application is still in limbo. She will send David Osgood another note to remind him to get his group's bylaws in.

2nd Vice President's Report: Eileen Boken reported that the SPEAK resolution concerning dedicated lanes for the Concourse garage will be resubmitted.

Treasurer: Doug Comstock listed the member organizations that have not yet paid their dues. He will phone them to remind them that 2005 dues are past due. New member orgs have not yet been added to the mailing list, so Chair Berkowitz will resend him their contact info, as well as give him the applications.

Recording Secretary: As per Nominating Cmte procedures Steve Gruel will send out an email with the attendance records of each organization.

Program: ExComm Chair Berkowitz said that she had contacted DJ Canepa, aide to Tony Hall, Treasure Island Development Authority about Hall's wish to speak to CSFN. Canepa said he would email her the topic(s) for the April meeting. He still has not responded. Bud Wilson asked that we hear about the battleship Iowa, which may be berthed in SF. It will be a valuable tourist attraction if SF gets it. The Bus Rapid Transit Plan for Van Ness will be heard at another time. This type of plan will be considered for several SF streets.

Unfinished Business: 2nd VP Boken made a motion that CSFN allot \$80 to send two representatives to the League of California Cities' Legislative Action Day in Sacramento on Wednesday May 11. This will cover the bus ride, door-to-door at the legislative offices, and lunch. The motion passed unanimously. As Land Use Cmte Chair, Judith Berkowitz will attend. As many people who want to attend may do so whether they are CSFN delegates or not.

Please let Judy know: 824-0617.

Announcements: The California Assn of Parliamentarians will hold a training day on Saturday May 21. Please contact Evelyn Wilson to attend: 566-7826.

The next ExComm meeting will be April 27.

Adjournment at 6:55.

...Submitted by Judith Berkowitz, 1st Vice President

APRIL LAND USE & HOUSING COMMITTEE REPORT

The CSFN Land Use & Housing Committee held its rescheduled meeting in the Community Room of the Northern Police Station on Monday April 11. Present were Dick Millet, Marilyn Amini, Ellen Kernaghan, Molly Hopp, Charley Marsteller, Hiroshi Fukuda, and Judith Berkowitz.

Marilyn Amini introduced attorney Mary Miles, who with Rob Anderson, presented her Appeal of the General Rule Exclusion from CEQA of the Bike Plan. The Bike Plan itself states there will be significant environmental impacts. There should be at the very least an initial study; when the General Plan is amended, there must be an initial study. A motion was made and unanimously passed to ask for a Continuance of the Appeal. The Notice is inaccurate. A motion was made and passed unanimously to refer the following resolution to the General Assembly for adoption: **Resolved:** CSFN endorses the Appeal of the Bike Plan to require initial review/EIR because it amends the General Plan and will create significant impacts on the environment.

Charley Marsteller distributed copies of an SF BizTimes article discussing a planned change in the Planning Dept's parking requirements from the current minimum 1:1 to a maximum 2 units/1 parking space. Charley characterized this as the biggest land use change in the history of the city. The article states that owners of new condos built without any parking lease off-site parking. No matter how transit-rich an area, residents still own cars. <http://sanfrancisco.bizjournals.com/sanfrancisco/2005/04/04/story9.html>

Charley made a motion an item in the upcoming Planning Commission hearing which passed unanimously: **Resolved:** the Land Use Cmte supports the traditional right if the Planning Commission to rehear any matters previously acted upon and on which conditions have been imposed which have subsequently been substantially modified.

SF Tomorrow's annual dinner is May 18. Charley is giving the keynote which he has spoken of to us: seismic issues and the future planning of SF. There is new and much more alarming data. He said that the big picture is land use and density; if SF is freed from the 1:1 parking requirement, it will become more dense and congested. (Please see March Newsletter LU&H Report for a synopsis of seismic issues and density.)

The Bus Rapid Transit Plan for Van Ness will not be on the Program at the upcoming CSFN meeting. This type of plan will be considered for several SF streets and so is pertinent to the city as a whole.

Other items discussed were the cannabis moratorium and the better neighborhoods community planning process.

The May LU&H Committee meeting will meet on Monday May 2 at the new earlier time of 6:00PM.

...Submitted by Judith Berkowitz, Chair, LU&H Committee

Due to technical difficulties the March Minutes are not available as of this printing. They will be provided at the April meeting.

They will also be available on the Coalition's website: www.csfn.net

How To Reach Us

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Member at Large: Bud Wilson, ewilson981@msn.com
Member at Large: George Zaback, 564-5223

Parliamentarian: Evelyn Wilson,
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262-0440



MEMBERSHIP DUES MUST BE PAID IN ORDER FOR DELEGATES TO VOTE IN APRIL.

Bring checks to the next meeting if you are in arrears!

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<i>Kelly Pascal & David Pascal</i>	<i>Patricia Vaughney</i>
<i>New Mission Terrace Improvement Assn.</i>	
<i>Leland Yee, Speaker Pro Tem, Assembly, 12th District.</i>	

THANK YOU!



Committee Meetings

Land Use & Housing • Monday, 7:00, May 2nd at Northern Police Stn. • Judith Berkowitz 824-0617 • sfjberk@mac.com

Bylaws Committee Chair: Evelyn Wilson: evelynwilsregparl@earthlink.net 566-7826

Government and Elections Committee Chair: Barbara Meskunas sfmeskunas@aol.com

Newsletter Comm. Chair: Ramona Albright 621-9621

Open Space Task Force Chair: Tys Sniffen: tys@ideamountain.com 929-7746

Transportation Committee Chair: John Barry: jackbarry99@earthlink.net 564-0225

Water Task Force Chair: Joan Girardot: 346-5525

COALITION FOR SAN FRANCISCO NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhood Views is published monthly, the official voice of the Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods, Inc., a 501(c)4 Organization.

To Submit Articles: email articles by the fifth of the month to: dougcoms@aol.com or call 386-4934.

Articles reflect the opinions of the submitter, not necessarily the opinion of the CSFN. We invite material from member organizations as well as rebuttal to articles already printed. Articles are written by the editor unless otherwise designated. We reserve the right to edit where necessary. Member organizations receive the newsletter without charge. Copies: Members/\$10, Non-members/\$15.

General Assembly Meeting • April 19, 2005

- 6:30 I. Sign In and Refreshments
- 7:00 II. Call to Order/Ascertain Quorum
 - A. Introduction of Delegates and Guests
 - B. Presentation of Host Organizations:
 - 1. Greater West Portal Neighborhood Assn – GWPNA
 - 2. Inner Sunset Action Committee – ISAC
- 7:15 III. Approval of March Minutes
- 7:20 IV. Officers' Reports
 - A. President
 - B. Vice Presidents
 - C. Secretaries
 - D. Treasurer
- 7:30 Program:
 - Treasure Island: Future Development, Current State/Tony Hall, Director (30 minutes)
 - Battleship Iowa/Marilyn Wong, Executive Director of Historic Memorial Ships (30 minutes)
- 8:30 V. Committee Reports
 - A. Land Use & Housing
 - B. Media Relations
 - C. Nominating
 - D. Open Space
 - E. Water Task Force
- 9:00 VI. Unfinished Business
 - A. Resolution concerning hiring of temporary Public Advocate during next garbage rate increase hearings. (SPEAK)
- 9:15 VII. New Business
- 9:30 VIII. Announcements
- 9:45 IX. Adjournment

Visitors Please Sign the Visitors Roster

Location: Northern Police Station, Fillmore & Turk Streets (Parking in Rear)
 Public Transit: MUNI #22 Fillmore, 31 Balboa & 38 Geary Lines



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PROGRAM:
 Treasure Island Development
 Battleship Iowa

ACTION ITEMS: Resolution on
 GARBAGE RATES (SPEAK) P. 3

Next Meeting
TUESDAY
APRIL
19th

First Class Mail

Inside

- Pier for Battleship Iowa? 1
- Nominating Committee Report 1
- Garbage Rates Going Up Again 1
- Editorial: Cars 2
- Widening MLK Drive 3
- Garbage Rate Resolution 3
- March ExCom Report 4
- Land Use & Housing Report 4
- Due to Technical Difficulties the March Gen. Assembly Minutes only on www.csfn.net

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