



The Theft of Golden Gate Park, Part 1

The deal between the Recreation and Park Department (RPD) and the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to build a wastewater treatment plant in Golden Gate Park (GGP) does not comply with the City Charter and is probably illegal.

Section 4.113 of the City Charter states: “The [RPD] shall have the power to construct new parks, playgrounds, recreation centers, recreation facilities, squares, avenues and grounds, except as follows:

- 1.) No building or structure, except for nurseries, equipment storage facilities and comfort stations, shall be erected, enlarged, or expanded in Golden Gate Park or Union Square Park unless such action has been approved by a vote of two-thirds of the Board of Supervisors.
- 2.) No park land may be sold or leased for non-recreational purposes, nor shall any structure on park property be built, maintained or used for non-recreational purposes, unless approved by a vote of the electors.

The proposed new, \$109 million wastewater plant meets none of the City Charter requirements and has not been voted on by the people of San Francisco. This fact has been conveniently forgotten by both the PUC and the RPD, and both agencies are trying to avoid the issue. Let the people decide.

Section 4.113 was specifically written in 1995 because citizens had tried for years to remove the Richmond-Sunset Water Treatment Plant. This old sewage plant was located at the corner of Lincoln Avenue and the Great Highway, and was finally retired in 1994 after the opening of the Oceanside Treatment Plant.

The GGP Master Plan and the City’s General Plan also confirmed the importance of preserving GGP land as an open space, and called for the removal of the Richmond-Sunset Sewage Treatment Plant. San Franciscans fought for years to get the sewage plant out of GGP due to its “unique odor, noise, unsightly appearance and the commercialization of GGP’s open space.”

Voters were very clear in telling the City to stop adulterating park land when City Charter Section 4.113 was written into law. People who forget history are doomed to repeat it.

In late 2008, Interim RPD Director Jared Blumenfeld invited the PUC to relocate its proposed wastewater treatment plant in GGP. Blumenfeld was willing to give up GGP land if the PUC would provide financial compensation, water infrastructure, and a higher grade of wastewater called reverse osmosis.

Sadly, the new PUC wastewater treatment facility will be

located exactly where the old Richmond-Sunset Sewage Treatment plant was located.

Blumenfeld was an interim RPD Director appointed by Mayor Newsom on October 8, 2008. Blumenfeld sold off the park to the PUC by January 15, 2009; by July 4, 2009, he was gone.

Blumenfeld said at the January 15, 2009 Recreation and Park Commission meeting: “We will be asking (the PUC) for compensation and it’s a prerequisite before they’ll move forward, with extracting any groundwater, they need to compensate us for that and they’ll also have to compensate us for any detriment to recreational uses, and for the lease of the footprint of the recycled water facility. So I think there will be two streams of revenue that will help us in both the short and long term to close budget gaps.”

The PUC immediately jumped on this deal because the GGP land was so valuable. The Indians who sold Manhattan got a better deal than the RPD.

The new budget funding game in town is to have PUC ratepayers pay for as many General Fund expenses as possible. Ever since Proposition E was passed in 2002, the PUC has had the power to issue revenue bonds without public approval; the PUC simply raises consumer water and sewage rates, with the Board of Supervisors’ rubber stamp approval to pay for their expenses. The City is going broke, but the PUC is flush with consumer money.

Prior to this the PUC had already planned to build its new wastewater treatment plant right beside the Oceanside Treatment Plant located below the zoo. The PUC is now claiming that they did not have enough room at the Oceanside Treatment facility to add a reverse osmosis facility. Adding a reverse osmosis facility would turn a one acre facility into a 1.5 acre facility.

Overhead pictures of the Oceanside Treatment facility clearly show that the PUC had plenty of room to expand. However the PUC continues to claim that the only reason that they needed to build the wastewater plant in GGP is because they needed the extra room to add the reverse osmosis facility.

The wastewater plant located at the Oceanside Treatment facility was the PUC’s original first choice and could do everything that the plant located in GGP would do. Placing the facility in GGP will actually cost more because of all of the extra piping that will have to be installed and maintained between the Oceanside Treatment Plant and the GGP plant.

Rather than being side by side as originally planned, the two plants are almost 2.5 miles apart and four separate pipes will

(cont’d on p.4)

Land Use & Housing Committee Report

November 8, 2010

The Regular Meeting of the CSFN Land Use & Housing Committee was convened by Chair Hiroshi Fukuda on Monday, November 8, 2010 at 5:45 P.M. in the Community Room of the Northern Police Station at Turk and Fillmore Streets.

The Committee considered the following items

1. Housing Element Workshop *Conversation with the Director*
Wednesday December 8th 6:00 to 7:30PM 1650 Mission Street, fourth floor
Director John Rahaim will lead a two part discussion with interested community members.
Outstanding Issues around the Housing Element. The Planning Department and Planning Commission continue to receive comments on Draft 1 and Draft 2 of the 2009 Housing Element update. The Director will lead a focused discussion on key issues.
The Department's work program, related to the Housing Element. The Director will present ongoing and future Department work products that relate to issues the community has raised in relation to the Housing Element, including a discussion of the Department's work program.
Housing Element Website:
<http://housingelement2009.sfplanning.org/>
2. CPMC Update: from Linda Chapman
Supervisor Campos ordinance File 101057, to create a Master Plan for all health care institutions — ensuring evaluation of development for neighborhood/land use impacts, and health care access citywide.
BOS Land Use Committee continued the ordinance 2 weeks to 11/15. Master Plan approval is estimated to take about a year — delaying action on CPMC. Planning Commissioners, supporting this ordinance 5-1, voted not to exempt projects in the pipeline — because they need guidelines for projects like CPMC.
3. California Environmental Quality Act Procedures, Appeals, and Public Notice 100495 Sponsor: Alioto-Pier
Ordinance amending Administrative Code Chapter 31 to provide for appeals to the Board of Supervisors of certain environmental documents and determinations under the California Environmental Quality Act, to clarify procedures and to provide public notice of environmental documents and determinations. Continued to November 15 (?).
Bardis: Many projects presented without full EIR info and approved
4. Japantown Better Neighborhood Area Plan
Expanded Organizing Committee to have first meeting Nov. 10, 2010
5. Parkmerced Project Hearings: Aaron Goodman
The SF Planning Department has updated its website.
<http://www.sf-planning.org/index.aspx?page=2529>
A full copy of the documents will be made available at the leasing office of Parkmerced, SFSU Main Library, and/or the SF Public Library West Portal Branch. (Please do thank those responsible for the update on the website, for the quick assistance on this public information website access issue.)
Bernie Choden: Establish Limited Equity Co-Op to purchase from owner.
6. Cabrillo Street earthquake cottage DR

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 P.M.

The next regular meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, December 13, 2010 at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Northern Police Station located at Turk and Fillmore Streets.

...Hiroshi Fukuda (RCA) Chair

Executive Committee Report

October 27, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 5:40 PM by the committee chair, Penelope Clark. Those present were Judy Berkowitz, Penelope Clark, Angelique Mahan, Dick Millet, Rae Doyle and Evelyn Wilson. Not attending and excused were Demian Quesnel, Jim Lew, Sue Cauthen and Lorraine Lucas. There was a quorum.

The agenda of the upcoming meeting was approved. The program for the November 16 General Assembly meeting will be the annual election round-up and analysis from **Chris Bowman** and another political analyst. The agenda will also include Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association which is seeking to rejoin CSFN. The hosts for the November meeting will be Francisco Heights Civic Assn (FHCA) and Panhandle Residents Org – Stanyan / Fulton (PRO SF).

Officers' Reports

President Berkowitz had several names in mind as speakers for the Annual Dinner and requested Excom members to suggest more options for the December 21 CSFN holiday dinner speaker. Several suggestions were made including prominent local politicians and well-known newspaper writers and bloggers. Melissa Griffin, Willie Brown, David Chiu or Jon King are among some of those discussed. • Berkowitz also offered several persons to consider as honorees and asked the Excom for more suggestions as honoree for this year.

First Vice President Clark inquired why CSFN was a 501(c)4 non-profit organization instead of a 501(c)3 organization which would enable donors to make contributions tax deductible. She was informed that the 501(c)3 status would not allow the organization to take a position on ballot measures which were of interest to neighborhood groups. Consequently the organization could not act as a fiscal agent for member groups seeking tax deductible donations. However, other organizations have neatly made it all fit together by being a 501(c)3 and having a political action committee (PAC).

There were no reports from Second Vice President Mahan or Corresponding Secretary Millet.

Daniel Homsey from the Neighborhood Empowerment Network came to the meeting to speak about the need for organized post-earthquake plans and Proposition A. Mr. Homsey expressed the city's concerns regarding neighborhood long-term recovery beginning 72 hours after a natural disaster or "after the yellow tape comes down."

The research on post-Katrina recovery efforts showed that those neighborhoods with strong neighborhood organizations recovered quicker. That is what the city wants to see in San Francisco.

ExComm unanimously recommended to the General Assembly that we create a committee to ensure that our member organizations are prepared for their probable role in post-earthquake recovery: Post Quake Resiliency Committee.

Mr Homsey expressed sincere regret about not reaching out to CSFN and other neighborhood organizations in the drafting of the Proposition A (bond for retrofitting affordable housing). He said that it was important that we were clear on Prop A's intent, and that they had CSFN buy-in as they proceeded. Furthermore, he acknowledged that once they were asked to come before the General Assembly and our concerns were raised that *he* (Homsey) should have should have come rather an campaign worker.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm.

...Penelope Clark (RHN) 1st VP, Chair

CSFN Draft Minutes: General Assembly Meeting October 19, 2010

1. **Call to Order.** President Judith Berkowitz (EMIA) brought the meeting to order at 7:00 pm at Northern Police Station.
 - a) *Quorum declared.* Delegates and alternates represented 20 CSFN member organizations. 2 guests signed in.
2. **Introductions.** Delegates and guests introduced themselves. Hosts Dick Millet, Potrero Boosters (PBNA) and Bruce Keane, Russian Hill Improvement Assn (RHIA) described their organizations' objectives, history, and current issues.
3. **Minutes.** The September 2010 General Assembly draft minutes were approved as printed on p 3 of the October 2010 newsletter.
4. **Officers' Reports.**
 - a) **President Berkowitz (EMIA)** reported and discussed:
 - i. Ballot Propositions
 - ii. Housing Element – meeting called by Bob Friese. In Planning Director Rahaim's office. Also attending were Metcalf (SPUR), Olague (Planning Commission).
 - iii. South Mission Historic Survey finished and to be submitted for approval
 - iv. Met with Daniel Homsey (Neighborhood Empowerment Network) and Ed Lee, City Administrator re: post disaster preparedness efforts: neighborhood focus. She invited Gerry Crowley to summarize the meeting.
 - Gerry Crowley (THD) discussed the meeting she and President Berkowitz (EMIA) had with Daniel Homsey and Ed Lee regarding neighborhood disaster recovery resiliency.
 - v. *SaveMuni* effort – Big Press Conference on Tuesday afternoon November 9.
 - vi. AT&T is proposing big utility boxes on sidewalks again.
 - Gerry Crowley (THD) discussed the AT&T sidewalk utility boxes
 - b) **1st VP Clark (RHN)**
 - i. Liberty Hill Neighborhood Assn recommended for approval of membership to CSFN. Action will be taken at November meeting when Liberty Hill members are able to attend the GA.
 - c) **2nd VP Mahan (EDIA)**
 - i. The waterfront lawsuit – see October newsletter
 - d) **Recording Secretary Quesnel (EVNA)**
 - e) **Corresponding Secretary Millet (PBNA):** Mail picked up & delivered
 - f) **Treasurer Lew (NBN):**
 - i. Reported by President Berkowitz: IRS e-postcard filing requirement for all 501(c) orgs to retain tax-exempt status.
5. **Committee Reports**
 - a) **Land Use & Housing:** Chair Hiroshi Fukuda (RCA) discussed the issues as listed on page 2 of October newsletter
 - b) **Open Space:** Kathy Howard (SPEAK)
 - c) **Water Task Force:** Chair Girardot (MCIPOA)
 - d) **Transportation:** Chair Noguera (MPIC)
 - e) **Bylaws:** Chair Wilson (SPEAK)
 - f) **Gov't & Elections:** Chair Charles Head (SHARP): See Program – Ballot Measures
6. **Program. Ballot Initiatives – Part Quatre [four]**

Charles Head (SHARP) Chair, Government & Elections Committee

 - a) **Props J – Hotel Tax Clarification and Temporary Increase and Prop K – Hotel Tax Clarification and Definitions**

Leonard Hoops (Executive VP, SF Convention & Visitors' Bureau) spoke to No on J, Yes on K
Motion to support Prop J – failed 0–11–8
Motion to oppose Prop J – passed 11–0–8
Motion to support Prop K – passed 12–0–7
 - b) **Prop A – Earthquake Safety Retrofit Deferred Loan and Grant Program**

Jason Elliott (Mayor's Office) spoke in support of Prop A
Rose Hillson (JPIA) spoke against Prop A
Motion to support Prop A – failed 1–9–6
 - c) **Prop H – Local Elected Officials on Political Party Committees**

Jason Elliott (Mayor's Office) spoke in support of Prop H
Motion to support Prop H – failed 10–3–7
(Needed 11 votes minimum to pass)
 - d) **Prop AA – Vehicle Registration Fee**

José Luis Moscovich (Director, SFCTA) spoke in favor of Prop AA
Motion to support Prop AA – passed 13–3–4
7. **Adjournment.** The October 2010 CSFN General Assembly meeting was adjourned at 9:58 PM
...Demian Quesnel (EVPA) Recording Secretary

The Great Land Theft of GGP (cont'd from p.1)

have to be maintained. This does not even consider the lost recreational value of the GGP land or its financial value. The new GGP plant will have a life of 50 years.

GGP has always irrigated with inexpensive, potable (drinkable) water from wells that draw water from an aquifer underneath the park, but the PUC wants to change that. The PUC now wants to combine GGP's well water with the pristine water that we receive from the Hetch Hetchy water system. San Franciscans will be drinking this new blended water to comply with the State's requirement to develop new water sources. The reverse osmosis waste water that will be soon irrigating GGP will be six to eight times more expensive than the potable well water now being used, and it will be a lower quality water.

PUC ratepayers will be subsidizing these escalating building and water costs as part of a new "blended" water rate for Hetch Hetchy and the recycled water. No one in the PUC or RPD seems to care what the project will cost the public.

The reverse osmosis wastewater will allow the RPD to use its current irrigation system rather than having to build a second "purple pipe" system for recyclable water. The higher standard of recycled water will hopefully be good for GGP's plants and animals, but we worry that this recycled water will filter down into the very aquifer water that will now be blended into our drinking water, with substances such as pharmaceutical residue. The problem is that the old pipes still leak and it is not clear that they will be fixed.

City government, the PUC, and the RPD have already rigged the decision process in favor of building the new wastewater plant in GGP. Citizens are being asked to voice opinions on a project that clearly does not comply with City Charter 4.113. Is it asking too much to have our politicians, the RPD, and the PUC comply with our own laws?

Golden Gate Park should remain a park and not be sold off for industrial uses. The State water mandates for the PUC or the financial needs of the RPD should not supercede the voting rights given by the Charter to the people to protect and preserve Golden Gate Park. This project needs a two-thirds approval vote by the Board of Supervisors and a citywide majority vote by the citizens before moving forward.

Contact the Board of Supervisors and urge them to vote against this proposed project.

Let the people decide whether they want GGP to be an industrial park or a recreational park.

...George Wooding (MTHA)

How to Reach Us

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Jamie Whitaker
George Wooding



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COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Land Use & Housing • Monday 5:30PM Dec 13 • Northern Station • Chair Hiroshi Fukuda • ninersam@aol.com • 386-2632
Gov't & Elections • Chair Charles Head • charleshead@hotmail.com
Bylaws • Chair Evelyn Wilson • evelynwilsregparl@earthlink.net • 566-7826
Open Space • Chair Nancy Wuerfel • nancenummer1@aol.com • 731-6432, Co-chair Ramona Albright 621-9621
Water Task Force • Chair Joan Girardot • 346-5525
Transportation • Chair Gary Noguera • garynoguera@earthlink.net

AGENDA
General Assembly Meeting
November 16, 2010

- 6:30 I. Sign In and Refreshments
- 7:00 II. Call to Order/Ascertain Quorum
 - A. Introduction of Delegates and Guests / Short Announcements
 - B. Hosts
 - 1. Francisco Heights Civic Assn — FHCA
 - 2. Panhandle Residents Org — Stanyan / Fulton — PRO SF
- 7:10 III. Approval of October 2010 Minutes
- 7:15 IV. Officers' Reports
 - A. President
 - B. Vice Presidents — ExComm recommends LHNA for CSFN membership.
 ExComm recommends establishment of new standing committee:
 Post Quake Resiliency
 - C. Secretaries
 - D. Treasurer
- 7:25 V. Committee Action Items — written reports in Newsletter
 - A. Land Use & Housing
 - B. Open Space
 - C. Water Task Force
 - D. Transportation
 - E. Government & Elections
 - F. Bylaws
- 7:40 VI. New Business
- 7:45 VII. Program: Election Review and Analysis!
- VIII. Adjournment

*CSFN meets the third Tuesday of each month except for December at Northern Police Station, Turk & Fillmore Streets (Parking in rear off Turk)
 Public Transit: Muni #22 Fillmore, 31 Balboa & 38 Geary Lines*

Visitors: Please Sign the Guest Register

Neighborhood Views is published monthly, the official voice of the Coalition for SF Neighborhoods, Inc., a 501(c)4 organization.
 To Submit Articles: Email articles by the 5th of the month to sfjberk@mac.com
 Either inline text or an attached document can be used.
 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. We reserve the right to edit where necessary. Member organizations may receive two copies of the newsletter without charge. Subscription: Members/\$10, Nonmembers/\$15.

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Contents

Next Meeting
 Tuesday
 Nov 16

The Great Land Theft of GCP, Part 1 1
 November LU&H Report 2
 October ExComm Report 2
 October Assembly Draft Minutes 3