



Setting Straight RPD's Tangled Rebuttal

I want to thank Recreation and Park (RPD) General Manager, Phil Ginsburg, and Recreation and Park Commission President, Mark Buell for their critique of my article, "The Recreation and Park Department Makes Another Bad Deal."

Readership of the original article has greatly increased, and the story continues to be reprinted and emailed throughout the City. The original article can be viewed in CSFN's February newsletter. Many other stories critical of Mr. Ginsburg's and Mr. Buell's attempts to privatize the San Francisco park system are now being published. I stand 100% behind my original story and would not change one word.

Mr. Ginsburg's and Mr. Buell's angry response to my article can be viewed in CSFN's March newsletter, where they submitted and signed an article questioning my facts and credibility regarding the privatization of the RPD. Both men are angry because I questioned Mr. Ginsburg's competence, park privatization projects, and the prioritization of the RPD's budget. I am also requesting that the RPD's proposed November 2011 Parcel Tax be voted down, unless services to the public are restored.

I respect Commission President Buell for his service to the community. Mr. Buell is a wealthy developer who was appointed president of the Recreation and Park Commission (RPC) to be ... a developer. You can't fault a guy for being good at what he was asked to do. Mr. Buell and the other six Recreation and Park Commissioners were all appointed with the understanding that they would have to make the RPD self-supportive.

This Newsom-appointed RPC has supported park privatization issues 100% of the time and votes unanimously approximately 95% of the time. The RPC is the poster child for why the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor's Office should have split commission appointments. The current RPC acts as a rubber stamp for park privatization.

Mr. Ginsburg was appointed to his job because he is a good friend of Gavin Newsom. He had no prior Recreation and Park experience, no development experience, and no real experience managing a City department. Gavin Newsom told him that he had to privatize the parks, and Ginsburg is doing this to the best of his ability.

Mr. Ginsburg states, "Regrettably Mr. Wooding makes too many ill-informed accusations about our budget to respond to all of them here," and then Mr. Ginsburg doesn't respond to *any* of the accusations because — regrettably — they're all true. Let's list the accusations Mr. Ginsburg neglected to mention, deny, or clarify:

- 99.9% of the people in the neighborhoods had no idea that the RPD was about to fire the recreation and park directors in 2010. **True.**
- The park needs of San Francisco's citizens who pay for the parks are now secondary to the RPD's attempts to generate more revenue from the parks. **True.**
- Being broke is not a good excuse for poor judgment, poor management, poor public notification, or poor prioritization of park resources. **True.**
- According to Nicole Avril, RPD's Director of Partnerships and Development, higher-paid RPD management employees were not fired because of an informal RPD salary multiplier program that asks higher-paid employees to generate revenue of 5 to 10 times their paid salary. RPD's management has become a sales force. **True.**
- The RPD budget decreased children's services by \$13.4% (\$1.5M) and increased the RPD's planning, development and privatization budget by 633.3% (\$1.9M). **Absolutely true.**
- Mr. Ginsburg and Katie Petrucione, mislead/lie to the public and RPD employees by stating that the \$3.3 million in lump sum parking fees from renting Civic Center parking spaces to the PUC would reduce layoffs. The money went directly to the City General Fund and not to the RPD. **True.**

Ginsburg and Buell are upset because San Franciscans do not want to pay parcel taxes for operational services in parks and recreational property that we are not receiving. We paid for Recreation and Park Directors, but they were all fired in 2010. Meanwhile, in 2010 Mr. Ginsburg hired 13 new employees making over \$100,000 in pay and increased the RPD payroll by \$1.4M (Benefit packages averaged an additional 33%). **Also True.**

What services do these people provide the public besides fundraising and public relations? Do they mow a lawn or coach a kid? If we are not paying the RPD directly for recreational services, we are alternatively being asked to pay for services from private, for-profit businesses that lease park facilities. Some people can no longer afford to use their own parks. The RPD insists that their privatization of park assets will make them self-sustaining as City General Funds dry-up. None of this is true, as the RPD's money is constantly being sent to the City's General Fund.

Ginsburg states, "Thankfully, Mr. Wooding's views do not reflect the clear majority of park users." The citizens that I represent vote and pay taxes. The West of Twin Peaks Central Council (WTPCC) which represents 18 neighborhood

Rec & Park: To the Point, Sirs

(cont'd from p.1)

associations voted unanimously to have the RPD rehire Recreation and Park Directors. Stop hiring \$100,000 fund raisers and start providing the park services that voters pay for and expect. Either restore services or risk watching the RPD's parcel tax and the half-baked 2012 RPD general obligation bond get voted down.

These are some of the other RPD funds that went to the City's General Fund in 2010: \$3.3M in PUC garage funds, \$1.6M in AIDS Memorial Grove and turf management funds, \$0.4M in Marina Harbor Yacht funds, \$0.1M in RPD bequest funds, \$1.2M in RPD "savings incentive" resources, and \$1.6M in Open Space Funds, among others. Just the funds above account for a combined \$8.2M — but there's more.

My favorite is the \$1.1M "Downtown Park Fund" (a.k.a., the "mid-Embarcadero Fund"): money that was donated by citizens and businesses to develop a specific open-space parcel on the Embarcadero on which to place the 1915 Pan American Exposition's pipe organ. Once the City located the "donated" \$61,000 bocce ball courts on this parcel, it freed-up the \$1.1M to be given to the City's General Fund; the pipe organ stays in mothballs. That takes us up to at least \$9.3M quietly returned to the General Fund, with Ginsburg's and Buell's tacit permission.

San Francisco and the RPD can't have it both ways. Don't charge the public for services that we no longer receive. Don't make the public pay twice for services that we have already paid for. Don't send RPD employees with a combined salary of over \$500,000 to a meeting at J.P. Murphy Park — which was just renovated for \$3.9M in public bond money — and tell us that the RPD has no money and that the brand new park clubhouse needs to be rented to a private, for-profit business for \$1,500 per month. Don't prioritize the six-figure salaries of professional bureaucrats who have no Rec and Park experience over children's services.

The next disaster on the RPD budget horizon: San Francisco's Capital Planning Committee (CPC) suddenly announced in mid-March that they are moving the \$150M, 2014 Neighborhoods Parks and Open Space Bond to the November 2012 election. The CPC is also adding \$35M to RPD's proposed new General Obligation Bond, "to incorporate critical open space needs to the harbor," bringing the total to \$185M. Sure... let's pay off a \$35M bond debt with \$15–20M in interest for the America's Cup over the next 30 years. Mr. Ginsburg is a member of the CPC and Mr. Buell is Chair of the City America's Cup Committee. They haven't even presented this information to the Recreation and Park Commission yet — there's probably no need to, since the RPC rubber-stamps every RPD proposal.

The CPC's report states, "The Port will participate with the RPD in a proposed General Obligation Bond — subject to completing review required pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)." But the RPD won't be ready. The RPD also needs to spend the remainder of the prior "2008 Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond" money, but it is doubtful that they will.

The new RPD bond for 2012 is so rushed and confused that the City's CPC states, "The allocation between [RPD] programs and specific sites has not been determined, and the substantial renewal and enhancement needs of the RPD are not met by the project funding." In bureaucratic language, this means that Mr. Ginsburg doesn't seem to know what he is doing. I expect that a wafer-thin master plan will be hastily developed to support RPD's ill-conceived 2012 bond.

Finally, Mr. Ginsburg states, "Sorry George, your math just doesn't add up." Well, Phil, if my math doesn't add up, it's because I'm using RPD's own budget numbers and other public records.

...George Wooding (MTHA)



LU&H Report

(cont'd from p.4)

- Association may be misrepresented regarding approval of conditions.
9. AT&T utility box blight: BOS hearing on April 26, 4 PM at City Hall. San Francisco Beautiful (SFB) www.sfbeautiful.org and the Planning Association for the Richmond (PAR) are urging community groups to officially join the fight and endorse the Appeal filed to require the City to conduct a responsible and transparent environmental analysis of alternatives prior to the installation of 726 utility boxes on our City sidewalks.
- 10.SB 375 & Bay Area Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), www.onebayarea.org. Presentation by MTC and ABAG: "Initial Vision Scenario" at SFCTA, April 19,

- 10:30 AM City Hall Rm. 263. Public workshop: April 25, Milton Marks Conference Center, 455 GG Ave, SF.
11. Antennas: Installation of antennas in neighborhoods and a blight issue in Nob Hill. Other areas of town affected. Need for discussion.

The next regular meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, May 9, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Northern Police Station located at Turk and Fillmore Streets.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

...Hiroshi Fukuda (RCA) Chair

CSFN Draft Minutes: General Assembly Meeting March 15, 2011

1. **Call to Order.** President Judith Berkowitz brought the meeting to order at 7:05 at Northern Police Station.
 - a. *Quorum declared.* Delegates and alternates represented 24 CSFN member organizations. 5 guests signed in.
 - b. *Agenda approved.*
 - c. *Introductions.* Delegates and guests introduced themselves. Hosts Marc Duffett (Sunset Parkside Education & Action Committee, SPEAK) and Denise LaPointe (Twin Peaks Improvement Association, TPIA) described their organizations' objectives, history, and current issues.
2. **Minutes.** The February General Assembly draft minutes were approved as printed on p 3 of the March newsletter
3. **Officers' Reports.**
 - a. **President Berkowitz** (EMIA) The 3rd revision + final certification of the EIR of the 2009 Housing Element is scheduled to be heard March 24th at the Planning Commission. She also will speak at the SaveMuni Press Conference on March 28th.
 - b. **1st VP Clark**
 - c. **2nd VP Mahan** (EDIA) Attended first meeting of the New Century Transportation Advisory Committee. See inserted report.
 - d. **Acting Recording Secretary Mahan** (EDIA)
 - e. **Corresponding Secretary Millet** (PBNA) Mail distributed.
 - f. **Treasurer Lew** (NBN) submitted a written report.
4. **Committee Reports**
 - a. *Nominating Committee:* Gary Noguera, Chair (MPIC), reported that the committee has been contacting eligible delegates regarding service on the Executive Committee and brought to the General Assembly's attention that without adoption of proposed Bylaws Amendments the delegates serving in the positions of Treasurer and Corresponding Secretary have already termed out, and that the Recording Secretary has a vacancy.
 - b. *Open Space Committee:*

RESOLVED, that CSFN suggest to the GGNRA that they must study and weigh the impact of all Alternatives for a Dog Management Plan, especially the Preferred Alternative in the DEIS, on neighboring city parks, and especially San Francisco city parks, as part of the DEIS process and that they have not done so; and FURTHER RESOLVED, that CSFN oppose the Preferred Alternative until such studies have been done; and FURTHER RESOLVED, that CSFN communicate this resolution to the GGNRA as part of the public comment period (before April 14, 2011), and send copies of the resolution to the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department, Recreation and Park Commission, Mayor Ed Lee, and the Board of Supervisors. (GGHNA)

Motion Passed 12 – 1 – 4

- c. *Transportation Committee* Gary Noguera, Chair (MPIC)
 - d. *Bylaws Committee* Evelyn Wilson, Chair (SPEAK) introduced amendments to Bylaws. See Bylaws Committee report on page 5 of March NL. Proposed amendment to Article VII Legal Suit Initiation, Joining and Withdrawal was referred back to Bylaws Committee for further clarification. Motion to strike Article VI proposed amendment Section B2b.

Motion passed 19 – 0

Motion to accept proposed Bylaws Amendments to Article VI Section B1, 2, 3 to read as follows:
 1. Officers shall serve for a one-year term beginning at the close of the May meeting, or until a successor is elected.
 2. Any person who has served for three or more consecutive years in any office shall be allowed to continue to run and serve in that office.
 3. No person shall hold more than two offices at a time.

Motion passed 20 – 0
 - e. *Land Use & Housing:* Hiroshi Fukuda, Chair (RCA) noted committee report is on pg 4 of newsletter. Resolved: CSFN strongly urges the Board of Supervisors to support the four appeals for case #110206, and return the Parkmerced Area Plan EIR back to the Planning Commission to make it more accurate and complete.

Motion passed 15 – 0 – 3
5. **Unfinished Business.**
 6. **New Business.**
 7. **Adjournment.** The March CSFN General Assembly meeting was adjourned at 9:45PM.

...Angelique Mahan (EDIA) Acting Recording Secretary



Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee recommends the following for office for the 2011–2012 term:

President: Judith Berkowitz (EMIA)

First Vice President: Penelope Clark (RHN)

Second Vice President: Angelique Mahan (EDIA)

Recording Secretary: Angelique Mahan (EDIA)

Corresponding Secretary: Dick Millet (PBNA)

Treasurer: Jim Lew (NBN)

ExComm Members-at-Large: Sue Cauthen (NBN),
Rose Hillson (JPIA), Lorraine Lucas (HAIA)

Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the April 19 GA meeting.

All Candidate Statements will appear in the May Newsletter.

If there are contested offices, voting by ballot will occur at the May General Assembly.

...Gary Noguera (MPIC) Chair

Land Use & Housing Committee Reports

April 11, 2011

The Regular Meeting of the CSFN Land Use & Housing Committee was convened by Chair Hiroshi Fukuda on Monday, April 11, 2011 at 5:44 P.M. in the Community Room of the Northern Police Station at Turk and Fillmore Streets.

The Committee considered the following items:

1. San Francisco 2009 HOUSING ELEMENT: San Franciscans for Livable Neighborhoods will file an Appeal of the 2009 Housing Element FEIR which was approved by the Planning Commission last month. It is too late to file a separate appeal. **Resolved:** the LU&H Cmte recommends to the CSFN GA that CSFN join the appeal.
2. Booker T. Washington project, Presidio and Sutter Streets: Project sponsors (Randi Gerson – for Ben Golvin -- Equity Community Builders; Steve Perry, Architect; Mark Slutzkin, John Stuart & Co.; Dariush Kayhan, Mayor's Office of Housing made a presentation. Committee felt the project was worthy, but was too large for the site. It attempts to combine a community center, housing for youth, childcare, and a gymnasium in a residential area. It is another example of "spot zoning." Your neighborhood could be next. **Resolved:** the LU&H Cmte recommends to the CSFN GA that CSFN opposes the current design and requests the building be redesigned. Building is too tall and bulky, the top floor should be removed. Change massing at Sutter Street side section to step it down and back more from north east corner so it is not so imposing when viewed from rear. The façade conflicts with the architectural character of the street, it needs to be redesigned to match features of surrounding buildings. It has inadequate parking, it needs at least 25 parking spaces for residents or applicants for placement should not be accepted if they have a car, or secure long-term offsite agreement for 25 spaces for residents.
3. Parkmerced: Next hearing at Board of Supervisors on May 24, 2011. Project will greatly impact the southwestern region of the City. We need to lobby the supervisors. The project is much too large, violates tenants rights, and it is unworkable, and unmitigatable.
4. Market Octavia Plan appeal update: Additional funds are needed to cover administrative expense. Member organizations will be asked to contribute to cover administrative cost.
5. Japantown Better Neighborhood Area: Community meetings will begin next month to review changes.
6. CPMC: Informational hearing April 21. Van Ness Plan requirement of 3 replacement units for every 1 unit removed is not being addressed. Gas pipe issue remains unresolved.
7. CPC Rules and Regulations: Hearing on May 12, 2011. Draft due this week. See captions notes:
http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/TranscriptViewer.php?view_id=20&clip_id=11792
Proposed Adoption of Amendments: Issues include block of time (10 min., min. 3 speakers), deadline for submittals, what is a neighborhood group, consistency of reports (i.e. shadow/noise study, envir. materials for complicated cases).
8. Live Nation-Masonic Auditorium Update: ABC (Alcoholic Beverage Control) hearings to continue through August. Major problem is that the large Nob Hill Residents

(cont'd on p.2)

Executive Committee Report

March 23, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 5:47 PM by the committee chair, Penelope Clark. Those present were Judy Berkowitz, Penelope Clark, Angelique Mahan, Dick Millet, Lorraine Lucas, Evelyn Wilson, Rae Doyle. Demian Quesnel has resigned from the committee; Angelique Mahan has assumed duties as acting recording secretary. (Thanks, AM!) Not attending were Jim Lew and Sue Cauthen. There was a quorum.

Officers' Reports

President Berkowitz said in her report that she would send out a reminder to Coalition members that the Planning Commission would be voting on the final certification of the EIR of the 2009 Housing Element, as well as the Element itself, at their meeting on Thursday. She noted that Commissioner Kathrin Moore had posted reservations she had on the EIR on the Planning Department's web site. She also reported that the San Francisco Housing Action Coalition (HAC) announced that it was going to have a seminar on May 4. There will be a \$30.00 fee to participate. The SaveMuni SF group has scheduled a press conference for March 28, on the Central Subway. She also said that one group is still outstanding in its 2011-12 membership renewal, but she would contact them about renewing their membership.

First Vice President Clark asked **Cathy Lenz** of the Parkmerced Action Coalition, which has applied for membership to CSFN, to tell Excom members about her group. She said the group had in excess of 55 members. Besides concern about the proposed new development at Parkmerced, the group is interested in issues regarding transportation in the area, the nearby planned water treatment plant, and the impact of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area's proposed plans changing the amount of space where dogs are allowed (both on and off leash). They are also interested in joining with other neighborhood groups in the area in working on neighborhood issues. After discussion, the Board voted to recommend PmAC to the General Assembly for membership at the April 19 meeting.

Second Vice President Mahan reported on the New Century Transportation Advisory Panel meeting she attended. Studies on congestion pricing in other cities, e.g. Paris, Copenhagen and Vancouver, were presented. A recommendation for studies on congestion pricing and its impact on altered driving behavior and funding public transportation will be requested at the Supervisors' Land Use and Transportation Committees.

There was a brief discussion on local issues that might be on the ballot in June, providing a state election is scheduled by the governor for that time. Local measures that might be voted on include the ability of Mayor Lee to reclaim his old job with the City, "Students First" — students would be assured they could attend their neighborhood schools, and a proposal to increase remuneration of school board members from \$500 to \$50,000 per year.

The Excom committee approved a presentation of **Board of Supervisors President David Chiu's** legislation restricting the distribution of various telephone yellow pages to those "opting in" as the program for the General Assembly meeting on April 19.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 PM.

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

A Tsunami of Dogs

It was a case of unintended consequences of the tsunami alert on a Friday last month that cleared Ocean Beach and Fort Funston of people and their dogs. In Stern Grove, a Recreation and Park employee counted 200 dogs romping in the area set aside for unleashed dogs. Normally, the peak count of animals is about 60 in Stern Grove and that would occur during weekends. Also the parking lot was jammed and the adjacent neighborhoods, not happily, took the spillover traffic.

The unintended consequences of the tsunami alert served to bolster claims of dog owners that a National Parks Service (NPS) proposed Dog Management Plan will result in overcrowding of dog walkers in San Francisco parks and open spaces. NPS proposes a 75 per cent reduction of off leash areas in Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) sites that are currently open the public in Fort Funston, Ocean Beach, Baker Beach, Crissy Field and Lands End.

The NPS issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on January 14, 2011 for the proposed new Dog Management Plan and will be accepting public comment on the DEIS until May 29, 2011.

Sally Stephens, Chair of SF DOG, emphasized that dog owner groups are not opposed to the objectives of public safety, protection of threatened species, erosion control and habitat restoration in GGNRA sites as stated in the 2400 page DEIS. Those groups disagree about the extent of problems caused by dogs, and speculate that the goal of the NPS is to reduce recreational use by people.

SF DOG and other dog owner groups want studies done that consider the impact on San Francisco parks and open space. They speculate that reducing the amount of "off-leash" GGNRA areas will result in overcrowding in San Francisco parks and cause conflicts with other park users. The increased use may have an impact on the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department's financial, natural, and human resources.

Jean Donaldson formerly of the San Francisco SPCA, speaking before the San Francisco Animal Control and Welfare Commission in 2007 regarding public safety issues of off-leash dogs said, "Off-leash play has not proven to be a factor in dog bites. According to both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Veterinarian Medical Association, the majority of bites take place on the guardians' property.

Public comments on the proposed Dog Management Plan will be accepted until May 29, 2011. Comments can be submitted online at or by mail to Frank Dean, General Superintendent, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Building 201, Fort Mason, San Francisco, CA 94123-0022. Comments sent by fax or e-mail will not be accepted.

...Sally Stephens (GGHNA)

Special thanks to Office Depot for photocopying services!

How to Reach Us

President: Judith Berkowitz • sfjberk@mac.com • 824-0617
1st VP: Penelope Clark • penelopeclark@yahoo.com
2nd VP: Angelique Mahan • angelmahan@hotmail.com
Recording Secretary: Demian Quesnel • dquesnel@usa.net
Corresponding Secretary: Dick Millet • milletdick@yahoo.com
Treasurer: Jim Lew • emtjal@sbcglobal.net
Member-at-Large: Sue Cauthen • scau1321@aol.com
Member-at-Large: Rae Doyle • raedoyle@sbcglobal.net
Member-at-Large: Lorraine Lucas • wozopozo@pacbell.net
Parliamentarian: Evelyn Wilson • evelynwilsregparl@earthlink.net

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Gary Noguera
Bert Polacci
Jeanne & Winchell Quock
Steve Williams, Attorney
(And thanks to Maria Sousa)



COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Land Use & Housing • Monday 5:30PM May 9 • 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	
April 19, 2011	
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. Barbary Coast Neighborhood Assn — BCNA 2. Buena Vista Neighborhood Assn — BVNA
7:15	III. Approval of March 2011 Minutes
7:20	IV. Officers' Reports A. President B. Vice Presidents — ExComm recommends PmAC for CSFN membership, D. Treasurer
7:25	V. Committee Action Items — written reports in Newsletter A. Water Task Force B. Open Space C. Land Use & Housing — Two resos (see LU&H Report p.4) D. Transportation E. Nominating F. Bylaws G. Government & Elections
7:40	VI. New Business
7:45	VII. Program: proposed Yellow Pages Ordinance Supervisor David Chiu
	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 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.

Coalition for SF Neighborhoods
P.O. Box 320098 San Francisco CA 94132

Action Items:
 Reso regarding CSFN joining the appeal of the 2009 Housing Element FEIR which was approved by the Planning Commission last month. (LU&H p.4)
 Reso concerning opposing the current Design of 800 Presidio and requesting that the building be redesigned. (LU&H p.4)

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Next Meeting
 Tuesday
 April 19

**Yellow Pages Ordinance Proposed by Supervisor David Chiu
– Frequently Asked Questions –**

YELLOW PAGES BY THE NUMBERS

How many Yellow Pages phone books are dropped in doorways and apartment building lobbies in San Francisco?

- According to industry, San Francisco receives almost 1.6 million Yellow Pages phone books each year – even though there are only about 800,000 residents in the City. Like junk mail and spam, many of the phone books are unwanted and never get used.
- These 1.6 million phone books, if stacked, equals the **height of over 287 TransAmerica Pyramids** – nearly eight and a half times the height of Mt. Everest. That amount of phone books are delivered – and then eventually thrown out – every single year.
- At an average of 4.33 pounds per book, the Yellow Pages create nearly **7 million pounds of waste every year in San Francisco.**

HIDDEN COSTS OF YELLOW PAGES

What are the hidden costs from the dumping of Yellow Pages at San Francisco residences and businesses?

- According to San Francisco Recology, it costs **\$300/ton** to collect and dispose of (or recycle) Yellow Pages in San Francisco. This cost is born entirely by commercial and residential ratepayers.
- According to San Francisco Recology, **Yellow Pages cannot be processed in the same way as other paper collected.** They require manual handling in the pre-sort phase of processing. The books that get by the pre-sort station contribute to premature wear on disk screens, where they stall and just spin in place. The disks have to be replaced almost every year at great cost.
- Based on these disposal and recycling rates, the hidden costs of phone books in our waste stream may be over \$1 million per year.

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

What are the effects on the environment from the distribution of the Yellow Pages?

- The amount of natural resources required to produce, distribute and dispose of all these Yellow Pages paper phone books is staggering - as is the carbon footprint of production, distribution and disposal - for a product that is delivered unasked for year after year.
- The paper industry is the 4th largest source of carbon dioxide emissions among U.S. manufacturers.
- Even if old phone books are recycled, the carbon footprint for their distribution and disposal is significant. According to U.S. EPA, not producing a phone book reduces carbon emissions almost two and a half times as much as recycling a phone book.
- If half as many Yellow Pages were produced for San Francisco residents, nearly **6,180 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions would be saved every year.**

ALTERNATIVES TO THE YELLOW PAGES

What should I use to find a phone number if I don't want to use the print Yellow Pages?

- The phone. From any phone you can access free phone directories such as 800-BING-411 or 800-FREE-411. These services provide searchable listings and connect the dialer for no charge.
- The Internet. According to the Public Policy Institute of California, over 86% of Bay Area residents use the internet. Internet users can use online Yellow Pages, local consumer review sites like Yelp.com, and search engines like Google.
- The White Pages. If you know the name of the business, you can look up their phone number in the business listings in the White Pages. The White Pages are not affected by the San Francisco ordinance.
- If you don't use the Yellow Pages, you are in good company. When looking up a phone number, **people are 15 times more likely to use the internet than the phone book.** According to Experian Simmons 2010 *National Consumer Survey*, only 38.3% of adults opened a Yellow Pages directory within the last year.

THE SAN FRANCISCO ORDINANCE

If the new ordinance is passed, how will I be able to get a phonebook if I want one?

- The ordinance allows for phone book distributors to distribute Yellow Pages to all San Francisco residents and businesses who want them. **Anyone who wants a Yellow Pages directory can get one.**
- Yellow pages may be distributed at community centers, grocery stores, or directly at residences when a resident is at home and personally accepts the Yellow Pages.
- The ordinance simply prohibits Yellow Pages from being left in doorways of residents or businesses that don't want them - where they often become garbage.
- Before leaving Yellow Pages in a doorway for a resident, a distributor must confirm that delivery is desired. Confirmation can be done by phone, by mail, or by leaving a notice of attempted delivery (in the same way that UPS attempts to deliver a package and leaves a delivery notice before leaving a package unattended).
- The ordinance includes an outreach program. Distributors will be invited to work with the City to devise outreach programs to ensure that people who want the Yellow Pages will receive them.
- The ordinance does not change the law indefinitely – it only creates a three-year long pilot program that will allow the City to measure the effect of the program on Yellow Pages distribution and small business.

Will the ordinance affect niche and non-English language commercial directories?

- The major niche and non-English language commercial phone directories – like *Momento* (Spanish Yellow Pages) and the *Chinese Yellow Pages* and *Chinese Consumer Pages* – have reported that they do not drop directories at doorways. Instead, these phone books are distributed through supermarkets, community centers and events.

They report that this method reduces waste, is good for the environment and is very effective with businesses.

As a result, these niche directories will not be affected by the ordinance.

Why is the ordinance necessary? Doesn't the industry's self-regulation program solve the problem?

- We have already tried self-regulation by the phone book industry, and the continued waste, blight, and safety hazards are not acceptable. Where industries stand to gain from increased distribution and sales, self-regulation has generally proven ineffective.

For more information, contact Catherine Rauschuber, legislative assistant to Supervisor David Chiu, at catherine.rauschuber@sfgov.org or (415) 554-7450.

Act Now to Prevent Utility Box Blight

We urge all users of the public realm - our sidewalks, streets, plazas and parks to attend an important public hearing and contact their neighborhood association and Supervisor. Your voice to protect the public realm from the onslaught of private interests cannot be heard unless you use it!

What:

Appeal Hearing for the Environmental Review Exemption of 726 Proposed Utility Boxes

Where:

**Board of Supervisors Chambers, City Hall
Tuesday, April 26 at 4 PM**

726 Utility Boxes Planned for City Streets

Soon you may find a huge utility box installed in front of your home and there will be nothing you can do about it. If AT&T prevails, hundreds of new utility boxes will occupy sidewalks throughout all neighborhoods of the city.

San Francisco Beautiful (SFB) and the Planning Association for the Richmond (PAR) are urging community groups to officially join the fight and endorse the Appeal we have filed to require the City to conduct a responsible and transparent environmental analysis of alternatives prior to the installation of 726 utility boxes on our City sidewalks.

We are asking the Board of Supervisors to enforce existing regulations limiting the privatization of our public sidewalks. AT&T is attempting to sidestep the more costly alternatives required under [Order 175, 566](#) signed by Mayor Ed Lee in 2005, when he was director of the Department of Public Works.

Those regulations state that, if not placed underground, utility boxes are to be placed on *private* property. This private-sector solution requires genuine, thorough efforts to contact property owners who are willing to lease space for Internet and cable equipment. These existing regulations state that street-level fixtures are a last resort only if the other two approaches prove technologically or economically infeasible.

In writing the 2005 regulations (and after extensive collaboration with San Francisco Beautiful), Ed Lee determined **"...surface-mounted facilities in the public right-of-way will impede travel on public streets, inconvenience property owners, create visual blight, or otherwise incommode the use of the public rights-of-way by the public."**

AT&T's 726 proposed utility boxes are four-feet high, over four-feet wide, and over two feet deep. They would be flanked by vertical posts to prevent damage by vehicles. Already intrusive, they will be permanent graffiti magnets, obstacles to the visually impaired, and hazards to opening passenger car doors. As to property values, a utility box detracts from the "curb appeal" of one's house or commercial property.

We are asking the Board of Supervisors to reverse the Planning Department's decision that granted AT&T a blanket go-ahead to install 726 utility boxes without an Environmental Impact Report. The recent departmental finding – called a Categorical Exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act – officially denies that the massive installation would have a cumulative impact upon the quality of the public right-of-way.

In 2008, AT&T made an application for a Categorical Exemption for a similar, citywide installation. Community groups voiced opposition at a contentious environmental impact hearing held before the full Board of Supervisors.

During the City's 2008 environmental impact hearing, then-Supervisor Jake McGoldrick revealed AT&T's dubious efforts to place utility boxes on private property. AT&T's letter soliciting property owners had made no mention of compensation. Before a vote was taken, the Dallas-based telecommunications giant withdrew its application.

Our community universally acknowledges the need for expanded Internet and cable capacity. However, it is *where* these utilities are to be housed that seriously concerns San Francisco Beautiful and other civic groups. The AT&T scheme, as it now stands, would encroach upon the public realm while solely benefiting private parties. Instead, SFB continues to advocate that private firms bear the full cost of their installations rather than impose the burden on our public sidewalks and streetscapes.

In recent meetings with AT&T, SFB and other civic groups heard excuses rather than a desire to make undergrounding and private-property solutions work. They claimed landlords wanting too much rent, lack of 24-hour access, lack of liability insurance, and the inconvenience of AT&T obtaining building permits or zoning variances – all solvable issues. AT&T profit margins may be more than ample to offset these factors since one utility box, if fully subscribed, might generate more than \$700,000 in annual revenue. Claims of “can’t afford it” place the burden of proof upon carriers.

San Francisco property owners can be a part of the solution, collecting reasonable rents for housing these new utilities (as opposed to finding large metal boxes permanently mounted in front of their buildings).

San Francisco Beautiful cautions against the precedent of ceding our sidewalks to AT&T. As other utilities follow suit, thousands of boxes would further blight our sidewalks – if the Categorical Exemption from environmental review is not reversed by the Board of Supervisors.

San Francisco need not compromise the unique character and livability of our neighborhoods in order to remain a leader in both technological innovation and utilization.

We urge concerned citizens and community organizations to contact their Supervisor in support of an Environmental Impact Report and to come testify.

Utility Box Information

If you have any questions, comments, or want to help galvanize your neighborhood organization’s support, contact jonathan@sfbeautiful.org or call your neighborhood leaders to demand attention on this critical issue.

...Milo Hanke, Past President, San Francisco Beautiful