



Vote “No” on the Road Repair Bond

The streets of San Francisco are terrible.

To fix their deplorable state of disrepair, the City is currently trying to convince San Francisco voters to “save the streets” by passing a \$248 million bond measure this November.

Safe, accessible, and well-maintained roads are at the very core of services a city should provide to its residents. Whether you walk, take public transit, bike, or drive, people rely on a safe, smooth and accessible route to exercise, or to travel to and from work, schools, parks, libraries, or local shops every day. People need good roads, but San Francisco has done a poor job of providing them.

San Francisco City government has failed miserably in the last 20 years to meet even the minimum standards of road repair. In 1989, San Francisco had a pavement condition index (PCI) of 78. On a rating scale of one through one-hundred, with a 100 PCI being the best, a 78 PCI was a good rating. San Francisco had one of the highest ratings of large cities in the country. San Francisco’s current PCI rating is at 64, which gives the City a “D” rating for road repair.

If everything goes as planned, and San Francisco voters approve the \$248 million Road Repair Bond, City officials estimate we’ll reach a new PCI rating of 66, according to Douglas Legg, Budget and Finance Manager of the Department of Public Works (DPW). If things don’t go as planned, Legg warns that without increased funding for street repairs, San Francisco’s PCI rating will drop to a 61 PCI rating by 2014, within only three years. The citizens of San Francisco have paid in full for street infrastructure maintenance and the City should have been able to maintain a PCI rating in the 70s.

San Francisco’s low rating is no accident. The City worked hard to earn its current 64 PCI rating by deliberately deferring road maintenance in good times and bad. Just about 80% of the money that should have been spent on road repairs, but wasn’t, was deliberately redirected to City employee salaries.

In 2003, the City had just 2,918 employees earning over \$90,000 in total pay, excluding fringe benefits, costing \$314 million. In 2010, the City had 11,838 employees earning over \$90,000, an increase of 8,920 such employees, who now cost \$1.47 *billion*, an increase of \$1.15 billion, by the stroke of the Mayor’s pen signing the City budget, and a compliant Board of Supervisors passing Annual Salary Ordinance increases. Clearly, the unfunded salary increases exacerbate our unfunded

pension problem, largely driven by overly-generous top salaries, which isn’t being addressed in pension reform ballot measures, or discussed by City officials. Thank you Willie Brown and Gavin Newsom for our terrible roads and our abundance of highly-paid, managerial employees.

Now, after years of deferred maintenance, the City comes crawling back to the voters with a \$248 million Road Repaving and Street Safety Bond on the November ballot. This is what the road repair bond claims they will give us: We get to repay for our infrastructure repair for a second time by paying \$148 million for street repaving and reconstruction; \$7.3 million for street structure rehabilitation and seismic improvements; \$22 million for sidewalk and accessibility improvements; \$50 million for streetscape, pedestrian walkways, and bicycle lanes; and \$20.3 million for upgraded traffic signals.

The actual real cost of the bond will be \$440,749,617, after adding \$189,249,617 in interest payments over the next 24 years, plus \$3.5 million in bond issuance charges. Just \$155.3 million of the \$440.8 million — only 35 percent — will actually be used for street repaving, reconstruction, and seismic improvements.

If the City had just used the money that we gave the General Fund for the intended road repairs, voters would have saved at least \$189 million in interest payments. Imagine if you paid cash for a car, and then the car dealership made you pay a second time by paying finance and principal charges for the same car over the next ten years. This is exactly what San Francisco is trying to do to City property owners.

In 2009, when the proposed \$368 million Road Repair General Obligation Bond was being considered, Supervisor Sean Elsbernd wrote in his July 2009 newsletter, “I oppose this bond because I believe that our City has the financial means, but not the political will, to prioritize the maintenance and improvement of our streets.” In 2011, Supervisor Mark Farrell stated, “I don’t believe that we should be funding street repairs with debt.” And, Supervisor Scott Weiner — who “strongly” supports the 2011 road repair bond — has stated, “It is unrealistic for the City to pay for road maintenance with existing resources.” Apparently, Supervisor Weiner doesn’t mind having the voters pay twice for road repairs, including the additional interest.

“No” on Road Repair Bond

DPW is pretending that all of the proposed street improvement projects are capital improvements and are not considered ongoing or routine maintenance. General Obligation Bonds (GOB) pay for capital improvements and are not meant to pay for one-time maintenance projects such as road repairs. Also, the length of a capital improvement GOB should exceed the life of the bond debt. Let's see: This 24-year bond will fund road repairs that will last only 12 to 20 years. The road repair project does not even qualify to be a GOB, but if it passes we'll pay for it for 4 to 12 years longer than the life of the repairs.

City officials have been going all over town telling voters that the road repairs will last 30 years. The newly-appointed acting director of the DPW, Mohammed Nuru, told the CFSN that the Road Repair bond would last 30 years. Hmmm. Apparently, misrepresenting the life of maintenance repairs to voters must be the best way to be appointed acting DPW director.

The Board of Supervisors Budget and Legislative Analyst, Harvey Rose, considers the proposed \$148.4 million in GOBs for Street Repaving and Reconstruction projects to be routine and ongoing when considering the entirety of the City's street system. Rose, therefore, “found that such projects would be most appropriately financed on a pay-as-you-go basis, without the issuance of the proposed general obligation bonds, which will result in long-term debt to the City.” Translation: The road repair bond should never have been placed on the ballot as a capital improvement.

The Hidden Agenda: A large chunk of the Road Repair Bond is going to be used to fix-up Fisherman's Wharf so that it will look nice for the America's Cup yacht races. Let rich men play with their expensive toys, but not at the expense of the City's taxpayers. If you say that you are going fix the road infrastructure, please make sure that you repair the entire city.

At a time when the City is cutting funding for health care, education and emergency services, this road repair bond would spend tens of millions of taxpayer dollars on a remodeling project in one tiny area of the City — Jefferson Street on the Wharf — in anticipation of the America's Cup race. The bond would direct more money to the Jefferson Street project than to all sidewalk, bridge, and overpass improvements combined, citywide.

According to a City-commissioned poll by Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz and Associates (FMMM), current road repair bond polling of likely voters shows 34% voting “Definitely Yes,” 21% “Probably Yes,” and 11% “Undecided, Leaning Yes,” which totals (potentially) 66% “Yes.” The Road Repair bond will need 66.66% to pass. The San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) has also added a \$513 million capital improvement bond to the November ballot. The Education Bond needs a 55% approval vote to pass. With both measures on the ballot, FMMM's poll shows San Francisco voters are far less supportive of either the education bond or the road repair bond.

Hopefully, the road repair bond will not kill passage of the school repair bond, since voters are leery of approving \$761 million in new GOB debt across the two bonds. Most voters believe the education of our City's children is far more important than our City's deferred road repairs.

The Last Straw: Two years ago, on April 28, 2009 the Board of Supervisors (File 09-0404) approved the issuance of \$42 million in Certificates of Participation (COPs) to finance the same categories of street improvement projects included in the November GOB. A year-and-a-half later, on October 26, 2010, the Board of Supervisors (File 10-1159) approved the issuance of an additional \$48 million COP issuance, with the main difference being the specific streets and locations of those projects. Between these two COPs, we're already borrowing \$90 million — plus interest — for the same type of work proposed for the November GOB.

COPs are classified as “non-voter-approved debt.” They are reviewed by the Budget and Finance Committee, and then require a two-thirds vote by the Board of Supervisors. Most of the COPs have passed unanimously, with few of the 11 Supervisors ever voting “No.” The public has no say or input into COPs, nor control of how many hundreds of millions in COPs have been issued.

COPs are long-term debt with high interest payments that should not be used for one-time maintenance projects such as road repair. The 2009 road repair COPs cost \$42 million in principle and \$83.5 million with interest. The soon to be issued 2010 road repair COPs will cost another 48 million in principle with a yet unknown interest cost. Together, both COPs interest and principal payments will cost San Francisco's general fund over \$5.0 million annually. This COP money is the exact same money that should have been spent on road repair maintenance out of the General Fund and is now committed to principal and interest payments. If the City had simply done the right thing and not deferred infrastructure payments, the General Fund would be paying directly for road repair maintenance rather than paying unnecessary COP interest payments.

San Francisco's government has done a terrible job maintaining our road infrastructure over the last 20 years. The real question is: Should the voters now reward City government for doing such a bad job? Federal, state, and local infrastructure funds should be spent on purposes that were intended. As Supervisor Elsbernd stated, the City has the financial means but not the political will to prioritize the maintenance of our streets.

Please vote “Yes” on the School Bond and “No” on the Road Repair Bond. After all, if the Road Repair bond passes on November 8, there's nothing you can do to stop the Board of Supervisors from issuing more street repair COPs on November 9 or sometime before the America's Cup race.

...George Wooding (MTNA)

CSFN Draft Minutes: General Assembly Meeting July 19

1. **Call to Order.** President Judith Berkowitz brought the meeting to order at 7:00 at Northern Police Station.
 - a. *Quorum declared.* Delegates and alternates represented 25 CSFN member organizations. 6 guests signed in.
 - b. *Agenda approved.*
 - c. *Introductions.* Delegates and guests introduced themselves. Hosts Melinda LaValle (Cathedral Hill Neighborhood Association, CHNA) and Don Stroh (Dolores Heights Improvement Club) described their organizations' objectives, history, and current issues.

2. **Minutes.** The June General Assembly draft minutes were approved as printed on p 4 of the newsletter with one amendment:

The June Minutes shall reflect CSFN Assembly voted to oppose BoS file #110401 which would give the supervisors the ability to amend and repeal ordinances and declarations of policy already passed into law by SF voters without having to go before voters again. (Introduced at BoS by Scott Wiener.) Full text of CSFN reso in June NL p.5

Resolved, that the Coalition for SF Neighborhoods strongly opposes BoS File #110401: Charter Amendment – Allowing Amendments to or Repeals of Initiative Ordinances and Declarations of Policy.

Motion passed unanimously 18 – 0 – 3

3. **Officers' Reports.**

- a. **President Berkowitz** (EMIA) Civil Grand Jury released its report on the Central Subway which concluded that the project was too expensive, too politically motivated and shouldn't be built – boondoggle! • Distributed information regarding Congressional Redistricting where proposed congressional boundaries could affect West Side Neighborhoods. • **CSFN will have a Special Assembly meeting on Monday August 8 at 6:30PM to consider those ballot measures recommended by the Gov't & Elections Cmte and for submitting arguments in support/opposition of them to the Voter Information Pamphlet (VIP).**

- b. **1st VP Clark** (RHN) referred delegates to ExComm Report on p.4 of July NL.

- c. **2nd VP Mahan** (OMMRA) Introduced newly-elected President of Excelsior District Improvement Association May Wong.

- d. **Recording Secretary Mahan** (OMMRA)

- e. **Corresponding Secretary Millet** (PBNA)

- f. **Treasurer Lew** (NBN) submitted a written report.

4. **Committee Reports**

- a. *Open Space:* Chair Nancy Wuerfel (SPEAK)

- b. *Transportation:* Chair Gary Noguera (MPIC) GA voted unanimously that CSFN co-sponsor a forum along with SaveMuni SF at the Commonwealth Club under the auspices of the San Jose Minetta Institute regarding Muni and developing immediate improvements to Stockton Street transit and transportation.

- c. *Bylaws:* Chair Evelyn Wilson (SPEAK)

- d. *Land Use & Housing:* Chair Hiroshi Fukuda (RCA) noted committee report on pg 4 of newsletter. LU&H introduced resolution out of committee to oppose bills AB485 and SB310. (see New Business, below)

- e. *Water Task Force:* Chair Joan Girardot (MCIPOA)

5. **New Business.**

- **State Legislature Bills AB485 and SB310**

Resolved: the Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhood strongly urges San Francisco representatives to the California Assembly and Senate and fellow state legislators to not adopt AB 485 and SB 310

Motion passed unanimously 25 – 0

- **San Francisco Health Facilities Master plans**

Resolved: The Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods urges that the Planning Commission not approve any building permits for the expansion of existing health facilities in San Francisco until a comprehensive San Francisco Health Facilities Master Plan has been completed and adopted describing the projected health facilities and health equipment needed to serve the health needs of the people of San Francisco

Motion passed unanimously 15 – 0 – 9

6. **Program — Measures on November 8 Ballot**

- a. **Motion to Support G&E Cmte recommendation to Support “Parks for the Public” Measure**

Denis Mosgofian spoke in favor of the measure.

Motion passed 21 – 4

- b. **Motion to Support G&E Cmte recommendation to Oppose “Fair Shelter” Measure**

Phil Ting, Aaron Goldsmith spoke against measure.

We were unable to secure a speaker supporting it.

Motion passed 20 – 2

- c. **Motion to Support G&E Cmte recommendation to Oppose Infrastructure Bond Measure**

Mayor Lee, DPW Deputy Director Nuru spoke in favor.

We were unable to secure a speaker against it.

Motion passed unanimously 22 – 0

7. **Adjournment.** The July CSFN General Assembly meeting was adjourned at 9:30PM.

...*Angelique Mahan (EDIA) Acting Recording Secretary*



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Land Use & Housing Committee Report

August 8, 2011

The Regular Meeting of the CSFN Land Use & Housing Committee was convened by Hiroshi Fukuda on Monday, August 8, 2011 at 5:29 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. An appeal was filed on August 4 on behalf of the San Franciscans for Livable Neighborhoods (SFLN).
2. Parkmerced. Volunteers will be needed the week of August 15th to help search and scan the Administrative Record for the Parkmerced Appeal. The exact days and time will be emailed.

3. CPMC:

Whereas the proposed new CPMC hospital and medical offices proposed at Cathedral Hill will cause unmitigated gentrification and loss of the currently affordable housing Tenderloin area; and

Whereas the scale of the proposed new hospital conflicts with the Van Ness Area Plan, and will have major negative impacts on surrounding and adjacent neighbors in terms of traffic and transit congestion; and

Whereas the CPMC has not been fully evaluated in terms of citywide health access and seismic safety issues in a citywide Institutional Health Facility Plan, and the needs and desirability of a fully viable and functioning reconstruction and expansion of St. Luke's Hospital in Southeast San Francisco; therefore be it

Resolved that CSFN opposes certification of the CPMC EIR; and be it further

Resolved that CSFN endorses further in-depth analysis of Alternative 3A which would create more services and access at the St. Luke's location.

4. Revised Draft of the *Recreation and Open Space Element*. The CSFN Open Space Committee is completing a report.
5. Japantown Better Neighborhood Area Plan. The Organizing Committee will make their recommendations to the Community on September 10th.
6. Market Octavia Appeal update: Please donate to the administrative expenses for the Market Octavia Appeal.
7. Infrastructure Finance District: SB310 Transit Priority Project Program (Hancock) allows for the following, approving IFD without voter approval; a minimum of three stories above existing zoning; in-lieu fee for providing "open space" of \$0.10/sq.ft. AB710: The Infill Development and Sustainable Community Act of 2011 (Skinner) reduces minimum parking requirements for developments within a half mile of transit, more importantly focuses on increasing the quality of homes and does not provide long term policies that the additional homes will be affordable to the area's workforce and the transit riders which can lead to higher home prices, more car ownership, and less transit use.

The next regular meeting of the Committee will be held on Monday, September 12 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 6:25 P.M.

...Hiroshi Fukuda (RCA) Chair

Executive Committee Report

July 27, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 5:45PM; there was a quorum. Judy Berkowitz, Penelope Clark, Angelique Mahan, Lorraine Lucas, Rose Hillson, Sue Cauthen and Evelyn Wilson were present. Jim Lew and Dick Millet were excused.

Officers' Reports

President Berkowitz reported that the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force met on Tuesday, July 26 to hear a complaint after a request for emails from the Recreation and Parks Department regarding the forum, "Golden Gate Park Under Siege" at the Commonwealth Club. The forum was held in March of this year. Rec & Park denied having any correspondence, but the emails were obtained from another source. The Task Force agreed that the Recreation and Parks Department had violated the ordinance. However, since the ordinance does not provide for any enforcement, there will probably be no repercussions.

A brief discussion was held on upcoming ballot initiatives and Pres. Berkowitz said she would have a treasurer's report so that the membership could vote on authorizing paid ballot arguments in the voter handbook. Paid arguments cost \$2.00 a word plus an initial fee of \$200.00. Pres. Berkowitz said she would email us a schedule of mayoral debates. Vice Pres. Clark noted that an early one was scheduled for August 4 at the Marines Memorial auditorium on Sutter Street, sponsored by both the police and fireman's associations.

Other events noted: A press conference by Save Muni on the 27th noted that the Central Subway was also being used to up-zone the area on the surface of the proposed subway route to Chinatown. Gary Noguera is preparing a resolution on making surface improvements on Stockton Street as a more economical way to improve Muni service there. Eileen Boken volunteered to Pres. Berkowitz that she would represent CSFN in Sacramento to protest the elimination of voter participation in approving infrastructure financing districts (AB485 and SB310).

Second Vice Pres. Mahan announced that Jerry (Garcia) Day is on Sunday, August 7 at McLaren Park, and that Mayor Lee would be there — a pretty sure indication that he *will* be running for Mayor.

Lorraine Lucas moved that \$125.00 be allocated for refreshments for the special assembly meeting on August 8, and the committee agreed. President Berkowitz said she would make the necessary arrangements. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50PM.

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

An Open Space Plan for the Next Hundred Years

A Brave New World for Open Space Planning in San Francisco.

About a month ago, without much fanfare and after the usual delays, the Planning Department released its draft proposal to replace the existing ROSE (Recreation and Open Space Element) of the City's General Plan. The genesis and planning history of this document stems from former mayor Gavin Newsom's Open Space Task Force, with participation of local organizations including SPUR (San Francisco Urban Planning and Research Association) and NPC (Neighborhoods Park Council). It is an ambitious proposal, which purports to present a blueprint or "vision" for San Francisco's recreation and open space policies for the next hundred years, accompanied by an "Action Plan" setting forth immediate priorities. As this document is broad reaching in scope and implications, eyeing to rewrite, revise and re-orient the City's open space policies for the foreseeable future, some analysis may be useful.

"High-Performing Open Space" or Enclosed Open Space?

Among the plan's primary goals is the "activation" of existing open space by providing community-serving activities, either through concessionaires or by entering into public-private partnerships with for-profit or non-profit entities. A key policy objective is the transformation of existing "underused" open space into what the document calls "high-performing open space." Among the criteria for determining what constitutes "high-performing" is economic performance. Envisioning a bleak future of ever-decreasing public support for parks and open space, the draft plan would direct the Recreation and Parks Department (RPD), along with other departments and agencies responsible for open space management, to make up for this shortfall by treating lands in their domains essentially as enterprise zones, and managing them with an eye to maximum revenue generation.

As a proclamation of policy, this is all a bit striking, especially considering that this is San Francisco: a city which prides itself on its green credentials and ecological correctness, a city with a rich history of open space and environmental activism, and a history of commitment to preserve open space for its own sake, especially open space which is free and accessible to the public. In this perhaps archaic conception, open space has value precisely because it is unstructured, because it is free and open — set apart from surrounding development. In a dense urban context, where there are structured activities and paid programming going on in all corners, open space provides a release and a refuge, a necessary antidote to the hectic business of the built environment.

Yet all of this is unacknowledged in the proposed rewrite. In contrast to the existing ROSE, where preservation and acquisition of new open space are held up as planning priorities, the present draft takes the view that open space needs to be "high-performing" and "activated." It offers a purely instrumental appraisal of the value of open space, which is measured solely by its use-value for us, its ability to "perform" for us, to serve us — "the community" — in some form or other. "Activation" may even require the enclosure of open space by turning its management over to a compatible private

partner. Since open space which is unused is merely "common," and has no value unless activated, the logic of enclosure in this context makes perfect sense.

Provisions for Non-recreational Structures on Park Land.

Hidden among the document's various objectives and verbiage are some very permissive criteria to allow for new structures in parks and open space. Policy 1.7 ostensibly calls for the preservation of existing open space and acknowledges the prohibition of non-recreational structures on park lands as per the City Charter, but then goes on to elaborate a full range of recreational and non-recreational uses (such as "cultural institutions") for which leeway should be granted. A primary criterion is that the proposed facility "directly serves the existing open space by enhancing and activating the space." Another criterion is the consideration of potential revenue generation. Following these criteria, no parkland is off limits as long as there is some form of public use. How these new planning criteria cohere to the existing Charter and voter-approved legislation remains an interesting question.

Biological Diversity, Ecological Integrity, Natural Habitats.

To its credit, the draft plan proposes as one of its objectives the protection of biodiversity, natural habitats, and ecological integrity (Objective #4). The section begins, oddly, with language about incorporating "environmentally-sustainable design principles into all open space construction," along with language advocating for the proposed water treatment facility in Golden Gate Park. This is all fine and good, but a strange way to begin a section on biodiversity. Thankfully, the following paragraphs (Policy 4.2) adapt some of the sound language of the existing ROSE regarding protection of significant natural resources, followed by some good stuff on wetlands and on educating the public on the value of biodiversity.

Yet all in all, the impression is of a fairly weak, half-baked effort, not exactly up to the standard that the City should aspire to if wants to retain its green laurels. For instance, while there is a nice side blurb on Chicago's urban wilderness program, there is no attempt to provide an assessment of that program or incorporate best practices. There is no mention of the fact that San Francisco is part of the larger UN-recognized Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve, a biodiversity hotspot. Strangely, there is no mention of global warming or sea-level rise, especially as this document is supposed to last us until the turn of the century. While the plan talks about "green connectors," there is nothing about ecological corridors. While there is talk about the value of wetlands, when the plan actually discusses proposed improvements to the Eastern shoreline (aka: the "Blue Greenway") there is hardly any green there. Similarly, when the plan addresses the Ocean Beach shoreline, it simply refers to the SPUR-led master planning effort, leaving the reader with a vision of some sort of "Copacabana in the Sunset," but nary a word about the plovers, the pelicans, or the Pacific Flyway.

This is, after all, the city of St Francis, for whom Brother Sun illuminated and imparted divine significance to all creatures. So it is a bit strange that the City's Planning Department would

Open Space Plan

present a vision for the future which is so antithetical to anything natural. In this new world of highly-activated, revenue-generating, and multi-tasking open space, there seems but little room for the frogs and snakes and damselflies and all the other critters who call San Francisco home and habitat.

Economic Shock-Therapy and the Case for Public-Private Partnerships.

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the plan is the final section (Objective #6) with its enthusiastic embrace of public-private partnerships and revenue-generation. In this vision of the future, the city and its private partners will share together the joys and burdens of managing park land for maximum activation and economic performance. No potential revenue-generating asset will remain unexamined.

While the plan does mention other sources of potential funding, such as bond measures, impact fees, and neighborhood park improvement districts — all good ideas — there is, curiously, no mention of the Open Space Fund, the only source of dedicated financing for open space maintenance and acquisition that RPD currently controls. It is hard to explain this omission. Perhaps it is because some of the folks in charge don't like set-asides in general, and would like to get rid of this and other voter-approved spending requirements? Perhaps it is because RPD Commissioners would like to continue to use the Open Space Fund as a slush fund to cover administrative cost-overruns and massive subsidies for money-losing golf operations, among other things? Perhaps it is because the Open Space Fund is the only publicly-mandated and publicly-accountable source of RPD funding besides general fund support, and as such stands in the way of the framers' bold vision for the future? Whichever the case, the absence of any discussion about the Open Space Fund in the context of a discussion about open space funding is a bit odd. A more balanced approach, recognizing all sources of existing and potential income, would certainly take some of the force out of the shock-therapy logic which demands that the department pursue revenue generation as the only feasible way forward in the face of an unforgiving fiscal climate.

Reverse-Engineered Planning and Top-Down Priorities.

Another disturbing thing about the draft is that much of the new language, rather than providing guidance to future planners, seems designed instead to conform to existing "self-selected" planning priorities, and to confer maximum flexibility to department administrators to pursue their supposed mandates. This can be seen clearly in the accompanying "Action Plan" which outlines immediate, mid-term and long-term priorities. In the first category are such things as the construction of a water treatment facility in Golden Gate Park, for which the planning justification can be conveniently found in Policy 4.1 of the proposed document. Also among the immediate priorities is the active pursuit of new vendors for park lands. Diesel-burning food trucks, hawkers of lawn equipment, restaurant and nightclub entrepreneurs — all are welcome to submit bids, so long as the department gets its cut. Justification for such an approach is clearly spelled out in the appropriate sections of the plan calling for increased "activation" of open space, and in sections about and the need for revenue generation. Should

future administrations seek to dispose of park land for almost any purpose, the mechanism is laid out succinctly in Policy 1.7.

Further down on the Action Plan's enumeration of priorities, relegated to a five-year time-frame, are programs such as the Trails Program, approved and funded by the 2008 Parks Bond measure. Lowest on the list, currently scheduled for an uncertain future, is the implementation of recommendations contained in the City's Natural Areas Plan. Tellingly, the creation of a natural resource management plan was something listed as a priority at the time of the drafting of the existing ROSE document, over twenty years ago. While finished and approved by the RPD Commission, that plan remains hostage at environmental revenue. Since completion and implementation of the Natural Areas Plan is the single most important action the City could be doing to ensure the long-term sustainability of its fragmented ecosystem, the consignment of the plan to funding limbo speaks volumes about the City's current level of commitment to natural resource protection. At least the "Action Plan" is honest in articulating current planning priorities, although it hard to fathom that such a vision of the future will garner much "buy-in" from the public in the event the Department decides to pursue another revenue bond, as is anticipated.

The Process

The draft document is scheduled for public vetting at the San Francisco Planning Commission during the coming months, and for adoption in October. It is possible, with sufficient goodwill, and a willingness of department staff to give up on some of the more tendentious language, that the document could be cut and pasted into passable form. While this would be a preferred outcome, it won't happen without clear direction from the Commissioners, a lot of work, dialogue and openness on the part of staff, and probably a slightly expanded time-frame beyond the one currently envisioned. Another thing the Commissioners may wish to consider is submitting the final draft to independent peer review. That would at least provide some measure of objective analysis and comment before the Commission lends its imprimatur.

If the process gets bogged down — as well it might — a cost-effective and time-effective solution may be to simply update the existing ROSE where needed, while threading in some of the non-problematic objectives and recommendations of the new plan. Such an approach would have the added value of keeping the current structure of the ROSE intact, while allowing for the referencing of new sections where appropriate. Not only does the proposed replacement ROSE jettison decades of accumulated planning wisdom, it creates an archival nightmare since many exiting planning documents refer to existing sections of the plan. It is as if some demented scribe decided to substitute the Book of Mormon for the Old Testament, leaving it to future philologists to figure out what went wrong.

Whichever direction forward, it is clear that the current draft is fraught with problems and ideological baggage, and can hardly represent a city-wide "vision" for the future.

...Steven Chapman Director, Foundation for Ecology and Culture.

...Submitted by Kathy Howard (SPEAK)

Sun Shines on Rec & Park Dept Efforts to Curtail Free Speech

In March 2011, the Golden Gate Park Preservation Alliance and SF Ocean Edge brought together a panel to discuss the potential impacts of proposed development projects on Golden Gate Park. The Commonwealth Club was chosen due to their commitment to free speech and their willingness to explore a wide variety of issues. The panel included moderator Jim Chappell, former Executive Director of SPUR and panelists Anthea Hartig, Ph.D., (President of Western Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation), Mike Lynes (Conservation Director and General Counsel for Environmental Matters, Golden Gate Audubon Society), George Wooding, (President, West of Twin Peaks Central Council and columnist for the *Westside Observer*), and myself, representing GGPPA. The Club approved the program, notice went out to the general public, and people started to register for the event.

We were therefore surprised in late April when the panel was modified by the Club, to include a member of the Recreation and Park Commission. The Recreation and Park Commissioners and Recreation and Park Department staff have unlimited time to address the public at Commission meetings and in other government venues, and the addition of this person meant that the amount of time that we had in our own forum would be curtailed. However, in the spirit of cooperation, we accepted this addition.

In late June, in an effort to learn more about what had caused the change, panelist George Wooding filed a Sunshine Request to Rec and Park asking for all Department communications about the program. The Recreation and Park Department reply denied that there were any documents.

However, Wooding learned from other sources that these emails did exist. In these communications, Rec and Park employees, a Recreation and Park Commissioner, and a member of a Recreation and Park public-private partnership attempted to not only discredit the panel members and to influence the content of the panel discussion but also in one instance to have the program cancelled. We applaud the Commonwealth Club for upholding the principles of free speech and proceeding with the panel discussion.

The Sunshine Ordinance Task Force heard this complaint on Tuesday, July 26th, 2011 and found in favor of Wooding on various issues. The Order of Determination just issued findings that Rec and Park violated four sections of the Sunshine Ordinance. The Department has been ordered to release the requested records and to appear at the SOTF Compliance Committee on September 13th.

An excerpt from the panel discussion is featured in the August/September 2011 Commonwealth Club magazine. The full Commonwealth Club panel discussion can be accessed through SF Ocean Edge's website:

<http://home.earthlink.net/~sfoceanedge/id68.html>

...Katherine Howard (SPEAK)

CFSN Draft Minutes Special Assembly Meeting August 8, 2011

The duly-noticed Special Assembly meeting was called to order at 7pm by President Judith Berkowitz. 15 member organizations attended. Quorum declared. 5 guests attended.

1) School Bonds, Prop A

David Goldin, Chief Facilities Officer SFUSD and Todd David, edMatch spoke supporting the School Bonds. No opposition found.

Motion from the floor was to support School Bonds.

Motion Failed 7 – 2 – 6

NO POSITION

2) Road Repaving and Street Safety Bonds, Prop B

Recommendation from Government & Elections Committee to **OPPOSE** the proposition.

Action taken at July GA meeting to support the G&E recommendation (July draft minutes item 6.c. on p. 3)

Motion from the floor to write a ballot argument in opposition to the Street Bonds.

Motion Passed 11 – 3 – 1

3) City Retirement and Health Care Benefits, Prop C [Mayor Lee]

Mayor Lee spoke in support (June). Opposition represented by Claire Zvanski.

Recommendation from Government & Elections Committee to take **NO POSITION**.

Motion from the floor to support the recommendation from G & E to take **NO POSITION**

Motion Passed Unanimously 14 – 0 – 1

4) Retirement Benefits for City Employees, Prop D [Adachi]

Jeff Adachi spoke supporting the measure. Opposition represented by Claire Zvanski.

Recommendation from Government & Elections Committee to **SUPPORT** the measure.

Motion from the floor to oppose the recommendation from G & E Cmte, and that CSFN take **NO**

POSITION

Motion Passed 12 – 1 – 2

5) Amending or Repealing Legislative Initiative Ordinances and Declarations of Policy, Prop E

Motion to **oppose** passed at June General Assembly.

Motion from the floor to write a ballot argument opposing the measure.

Motion Passed Unanimously 14 – 0 – 1

The August 8, 2011 CSFN Special Assembly meeting was adjourned at 9:50PM.

...Angelique Mahan (OMMRA) Acting Recording Secretary

AGENDA
General Assembly Meeting
August 16, 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. Ewing Terrace Neighborhood Assn — ETNA
 - 2. Fair Oaks Community Coalition — FOCC
- 7:15 III. Approval of July 2011 Minutes
- 7:20 IV. Officers' Reports
 - A. President
 - B. Vice Presidents
 - C. Secretaries
 - D. Treasurer
- 7:25 V. Committee Action Items — written reports in Newsletter
 - A. Water Task Force
 - B. Transportation
 - C. Open Space
 - D. Land Use & Housing
 - E. Government & Elections
 - F. Bylaws
- 7:40 VI. New Business: Reso regarding CPMC and St Luke's
- 7:45 VI. Program: A Few More Ballot Measures
- VII. 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

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

Action Items:
 Resolution regarding CPMC EIR and St Luke's. p. 4.

Next Meeting
 Tuesday
 August 16

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