



San Francisco Tomorrow

Working to Protect the Urban Environment

Issue 338

Will you want to live in San Francisco – Tomorrow?

September 2010

SFT Endorsements for November 2010 Election

With four open seats on the, Board of Supervisors, this is a crucial election to maintain the progressive majority on the Board. Even if you don't live in one of these districts, please consider contributing to or volunteering for the candidates below. All of these candidates face significant competition in their districts.

Board of Supervisors.

- **District 2 - Janet Reilly.** SF Tomorrow endorsed Janet Reilly for an Assembly Seat in 2006, and find her to be well-qualified for this seat. <http://janetreilly.com>
- **District 6 – Debra Walker.** Debra Walker is a long-time advocate for good planning and an expert in building and land use issues, an area of expertise not well represented on the current board. <http://votedebrawalker.com/>
- **District 8 – Rafael Mandelman** – an attorney who represents communities and affordable housing advocates around the Bay Area and has also served on the Board of Permit Appeals, Rafael Mandelman impressed the PAC with his innovative thinking and problem-solving attitude. <http://rafael2010.com/>
- **District 10. Ranked Choice 1. Eric Smith 2. Tony Kelly.** This is the most crowded race, with 21 candidates vying to replace Sophie Maxwell. **Eric Smith**, our first choice for the seat, is a biodiesel advocate and has worked in the Bayview on this and other issues. <http://ericsmith10.com/> **Tony Kelly**, our second choice, is a long-time Potrero Hill businessman and advocate who proposes unique and innovative solutions to many of the City's challenges.

State measures.

SFT urges your NO vote on Proposition 23, which has been placed on the ballot and almost entirely bankrolled by Texas oil companies. Proposition 23 would roll back California's climate change law, drying up investments in alternative energy and energy efficiency projects. All that talk about reducing our dependence on fossil fuels? It's not resonating with Texas billionaires, and they're fighting back using their biggest weapons – money and misinformation.

For more information, go to the NO on 23 website: <http://www.stopdirtyenergyprop.com/index.php>

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Bird-Safe Buildings

The Planning Commission will consider adopting a policy to promote "Bird-Safe Building Standards" which would reduce structural collisions and other negative impacts on resident and migratory birds which routinely crash into urban structures that confuse their navigation. These standards comprise the conditions of approval that would be attached to a proposed project as

suggestions to architects and builders for a new building's glazing, night-time lighting, wind generators, and the monitoring and reporting of animal strikes when they do occur. The public hearing on this matter is September 23, 2010 and the Planner AnMarie Rodgers can be contacted with comments and questions. AnMarie.Rodgers@sfgov.org, 415-558-6395

North Beach at Columbus: the sum of many urban parts

How to achieve both preservation and open space

It's natural for San Franciscans to have sentiments celebrating historic resources and saving open space, but it's sometimes difficult for people to see the fundamental principles of preservation and urban design. Freeways that eradicated big sections of the urban fabric were built. Huge reaches of the Bay were filled. View-blocking highrises were erected on hilltops and the waterfront. Architectural treasures and entire Victorian neighborhoods were demolished.

With the upcoming landmark hearing for the North Beach Library at the Board of Supervisors and the release of the Draft EIR for the Joe DiMaggio Playground Master Plan, fundamental principles of good urban design should guide the city pattern---not emotion and hyperbole. Technical reports, independent historians and the Planning Department concur that the North Beach Library has high architectural, historical and

cultural significance, as well as the highest integrity of the remaining libraries designed by Appleton-Wolfard. The North Beach Library is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources. Like the City Lights Bookstore, Old Spaghetti Factory, brick warehouses and other designated city landmarks, the North Beach Library has a blend of architectural, historical and cultural merit.

The building embodies the goal of social democratization of the modern library, serving as a community living room. In tune with changing social values, the library has become a neighborhood melting pot for immigrants, ethnic groups, children, adults, seniors... For generations, the Library and Playground have been heavily-used urban destinations and neighborhood nodes.

PRESERVATION = LARGER LIBRARY. A major goal of the library program is to maximize usable space. Because of the sloped site, the existing Library's partially excavated lower level can be inexpensively expanded for library functions.

Preservation and an Addition would create 12,000 square feet of flexible area, with high cost and spatial efficiency. However, if a new library were built on the triangular site, the oddly-shaped building would cost \$8-\$10 million for only 8,500 square feet, with a lower ratio of assignable library space.

North Beach Library at left



LEGAL MANDATES = PRESERVATION. Historic preservation and an Addition to the existing library would be code-complying, compared to the triangular library's **non-code compliance**---which requires rezoning, spot zoning and 19'-6" of construction over the property line into the public right-of-way. Because the triangle lot was seized by eminent domain for open space in 2004, construction on the triangle may be **illegal**, as acknowledged by some land-use lawyers and as a legal "gray area" by the City Attorney. Moreover, the triangle lot was purchased with Open Space Funds in 2007 and is arguably usable only for open space. Furthermore, from 1988 through 2008, the Library's ballot measures, work program, budgets, presentations and publications have proposed renovation and expansion of the Appleton-Wolfard North Beach Library. Demolition was never part of the plan --- until now.

LIBRARY PRESERVATION PRESERVES OPEN SPACE AND HISTORY. An extraordinary urban design opportunity exists. The placement of the Triangle Park as open space on Columbus Avenue composes handsomely with the historic North Beach Library, Joe DiMaggio Playground and Joe DiMaggio's Softball Fields, offering fine public vistas to and from the site,

Preservation would save the strategic Triangle Park, one of four triangular vest pocket parks on the Columbus Avenue diagonal axis, and its unique/ simultaneous public vistas to Telegraph Hill, Coit Tower, Saints Peter & Paul Church, Transamerica Pyramid, cable cars, Bay and surrounding hills.

Preservation would save Joe DiMaggio's Softball Fields. The proposed new Master Plan **decreases** the regional multi-purpose play field by **12,000 square feet**, eliminating viable softball---at a field named after native son and baseball legend Joe DiMaggio. These were also the home fields for early Girls Softball Leagues, Boys/ Adults tournaments, Italian-American leagues, school teams and Ed Moose's *Les Lapins Sauvages*---with Herb Caen at first base and legendary games with Tom Brokaw, Mario Cuomo, Art Buchwald, news people and a host of San Francisco characters. The softball fields should be preserved for new generations of San Franciscans.

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November 2010 Election *(continued from page one)*

Local Measures. SFT urges your **YES** vote for the following measures;

- Proposition AA – increases the vehicle license fee to fund transportation projects
- Proposition A – \$46.15 million General Obligation bond to retrofit soft story buildings containing affordable housing
- Proposition C – Previously approved as a resolution, this will add to the City Charter the requirement that the Mayor make a monthly appearance at the Board of Supervisors.
- Proposition E – allows voter registration on Election Day – only for municipal (off-year) elections. (note; since the state does not allow Election Day registration, it cannot be implemented in elections with a statewide vote)
- Proposition I – approves a privately funded pilot project to open polls on the Saturday before the November 2001 election, as well as on the traditional Tuesday.
- Proposition J – increases the hotel tax from 14 to 16%, and closes loopholes that allow on-line travel sites to avoid payment.
- Proposition M – Requires the SF Police Department to establish a foot patrol policy, but also overturns Proposition L, the Sit/Lie ordinance, if both pass
- Proposition N – increases the real estate transfer tax for transactions over \$5 million, with proceeds going to the General Fund

San Francisco Tomorrow *OPPOSES* the following measures;

- Proposition B – sponsored by Public Defender Jeff Adachi, this would set new requirements for employee contributions to the pension fund and to health care for dependents.
- Proposition H – placed on the ballot by the Mayor, this would ban local elected officials from serving on a political party's county central committee. Elected at the state and federal level are automatically represented on this committees.
- Proposition K – placed on the ballot to draw support from Proposition J, the hotel tax increase, this measure would close the internet loopholes, but would not increase the hotel tax.

Proposition L – This ordinance would make it a crime to sit or lie on a city sidewalk.

VOTE!

Rainwater Harvesting *San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) has funded the design and installation of five rainwater harvesting systems in elementary schools in the San Francisco Unified School District. Each project installed a tank to capture rainwater, removed paved surfaces from the schoolyard to make room for a garden and let rainwater soak into the ground, and used native and edible plants to be irrigated by the on-site rainwater harvesting system. The projects achieve multiple goals: they raise watershed awareness, green the city's public schools, and keep stormwater out of San Francisco's combined sewer system.*

To help schools use rainwater harvesting systems as educational tools, the SFPUC partnered with the San Francisco Green Schoolyard Alliance and funded a Watershed Stewardship Curriculum. The lessons pertain to watershed awareness, green stormwater management, pollution awareness and prevention, and water conservation. All schools in San Francisco that replace schoolyard asphalt with permeable garden space and harvest rainwater for irrigation will find these lessons useful in connecting students to their watersheds

North Beach at Columbus: *(continued from page two)*

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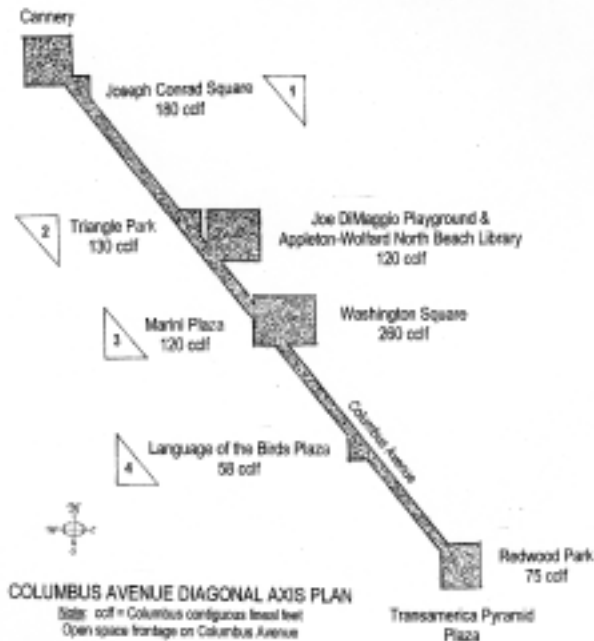
North Beach at Columbus: *(continued from page three)*

North Beach has averted many near catastrophes in urban design: Freeways on Columbus Avenue, tunnels under Russian Hill, a bridge from Telegraph Hill to Angel Island, an underground garage at Washington Square. Construction on Triangle Park would contradict the San Francisco General Plan and destroy a strategic urban place on the diagonal line of Columbus Avenue. North Beach Library's architectural, historical and cultural merit and Triangle Park, together, comprise a precious urban design composition.

North Beach has averted many near catastrophes in urban design. Notice the important diagonal of Columbus.

LIBRARY PRESERVATION PRESERVES OPEN SPACE AND HISTORY. It's important to see that an extraordinary urban design opportunity exists: The placement of the Triangle Park as open space on Columbus Avenue composes handsomely with the historic North Beach Library and the Joe DiMaggio Playground and Softball Fields, giving fine public vistas to and from the site,

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