



San Francisco Tomorrow

Working to Protect the Urban Environment

Issue 335

Will you want to live in San Francisco – Tomorrow?

May 2010

You and Your Friends Are Invited to

Our Annual Awards Dinner

Wednesday, May 19, 2010

We will honor

*Jane Morrison, Politics for the Environment, with the
JACK MORRISON LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
and
Inge Horton and Doug Kern, two UNSUNG HEROES*

Come early to schmooze at the 5:30 p.m. Reception (no-host bar) Dinner at 7:00 p.m.

*Patron \$120 Sponsor \$80 Dinner \$50 Send checks to Jane Morrison, 44 Woodland, SF 94117 564-1482
CASTAGNOLA'S Restaurant, 286 Jefferson Street - Fisherman's Wharf. Take Muni F line, #10, 20, 20 and 47 lines or use
the three-hour free validation at the Triangle Parking lot at the end of Taylor off Jefferson.*

about Inge Horton

Many people who know Inge Horton connect her generally with her work at the San Francisco Planning Department. As a planner involved in the Neighborhood Commercial Rezoning and Residential Rezoning Studies she held numerous public meetings to patiently explain the newest version of the Department's proposals and listen to the concerns of property owners, merchants and interested persons. Who would have anticipated that she, in her retirement, would sit at the other side of the table and fight the City over the demolition of a functional branch library that could have been renovated and saved? In her efforts to save the library, an architecturally significant design of the architects Appleton & Wolfard in a setting, designed by Wurster, Bernardi and Emmons and landscape architect Thomas Church, all notable practitioners, she was supported by many groups and preservation organizations. *(cont'd page two)*

about Doug Kern

A graduate of U.C. Berkeley in Geophysics, Doug earned his MBA at Cornell. He worked as a corporate environmental mediator until 1994, when the Presidio of San Francisco was decommissioned as an Army Post and became a National Park. As a geophysicist and professional environmental mediator, Doug thought he could be of help to the new park as it began the work of cleaning up the toxic materials left behind by the Army. In 1994 Doug volunteered to serve on the Presidio Restoration Advisory Board (RAB), a citizen's group charged with advising the Presidio Trust on appropriate cleanup. Doug also saw a unique opportunity to restore a fully functioning riparian ecosystem at the Tennessee Valley Watershed. Mostly covered over, this forgotten creek, with its three branches, was almost entirely contained in culverts and pipes. He created a program to explain the Presidio to urban young people. *(cont'd page two)*

Seawater Desalination: *New Solution or New Problem?*

Desalination, the process of converting salt water to drinking water, is an increasingly discussed technology in California today. Locally, the San Francisco PUC, in conjunction with East Bay MUD, Contra Costa Water District, and Santa Clara Valley Water District, are exploring a jointly controlled desalination plant that could be located at Ocean Beach or near the Carquinez Bridge. While desalination sounds great at first, it presents many problems to ratepayers and the environment that actually make it the least desirable water supply option.

Desalination is extremely expensive and energy intensive. Desalinating seawater requires enormous amounts of energy that in turn make desalinated water the most expensive source of water available to water agencies. Water agencies already use enormous amounts of energy, approximately 20% of California's energy, to move water. At a time when California is figuring out how to reduce its energy use to combat global warming, desalination would send us in the wrong direction.

Furthermore, desalination pollutes coastal environments. After desalinating seawater, a toxic, super-salty brine is created and dumped back into the ocean, altering the local ecosystem. In addition, fish and other marine life are killed when sucked into the intake pipes of a desalination plant. Our oceans are already in bad shape and desalination would only make things worse.

Finally, desalinated water may not be safe to drink! Our federal EPA is finally beginning to test emerging contaminants and other toxic substances in our oceans that may not be able to be filtered. For example, San Francisco Bay is filled with toxins, hormones, flame retardants, and other chemicals that should be thoroughly analyzed before proceeding with desalination.

Finally, in most places, there is no real need for desalinated water. During the last 25 years, because of improvements in conservation and efficiency, demand for water in California has stayed relatively flat and NOT increased. Fortunately, we still have many opportunities to save water through a variety of ways including fixing leaks, rainwater harvesting, grey water use, replacing old toilets and washing machines, and preventing waste in our landscaping. All of these tools are three to four times cheaper than desalination and do not harm the environment. While we may need desalination in the future, we should prioritize and promote wise water use first! For more information, see <http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/water/desalination/>

about **Inge Horton** (cont'd from page one)

Unfortunately, her appeal was not successful and subsequently, the Ortega Branch Library was demolished.

Interested in exploring the roots of citizen participation, Inge wrote her Master's thesis at UC Berkeley on this topic, using her neighborhood association, SPEAK, as the case study. Many years later, Inge put the spotlight again on the Sunset-Parkside neighborhood where she lives. As the head of the historical and architectural survey of the turn-of-the-century Oceanside community which underlies the Sunset, Inge directed the work of architectural historians, wrote grants and championed the cottages and little houses that needed recognition and protection from thoughtless development and historical extinction.

Inge's old friends would not have been surprised because as an architecture student in the early sixties in Berlin she protested against the noise from the construction of an insurance building next to the dormitory where she lived. The construction went on day and night. Inge's protest gained a construction break which resulted in silence in the night, allowing 180 students to get some sleep.

about **Doug Kern** (cont'd from page one)

Doug has devoted thousands of hours, gratis, to advance community understanding of the complexities of environmental remediation and to work with multiple regulatory agencies to develop appropriate clean-up remedies, making the Presidio safe for wildlife and for human health.

In 1997, starting from scratch, he found a strong partner in Galileo Academy (High School) and worked with UC Berkeley to develop a comprehensive curriculum for engaging inner-city kids in science: "Teaching Watershed Processes in the Presidio of San Francisco."

With several grants, and partnerships that include The Crissy Field Center, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, UC Berkeley, National Park Service, Presidio Trust, and the San Francisco Unified School District, the program has been an outstanding success.

Doug developed a dedicated website, *The Daily Kernel*, which delivers an uncensored view to the public on restoration, remediation and cleanup of the Presidio.

All About Jane Morrison

Jane Morrison will receive the Jack Morrison Lifetime Achievement Award at SFT's Annual Dinner May 19. We salute Jane for the civic spirit she embodies and the radiant energy she emanates; but beyond beauty and talent, Jane gets things done!



A long-time political activist, Jane decided she could best achieve her humanitarian goals by working to elect and inform the right public officials. In 1952, she worked as a door-to-door precinct worker for the Adlai

Stevenson campaign. From 1959 to 1964, she managed headquarters, volunteer recruiting and fund-raising events in the campaigns of Jack Morrison and George Moscone for Board of Supervisors, Phil Burton and John O'Connell for State Assembly and Alan Cranston for U. S. Senate.

In the 1960s, she started her six years as the California Democratic Party's State Women's Chair by working with 27-year-old Teddy Kennedy in organizing Northern California for John F. Kennedy for President. From 1964 to today, Jane has

organized and conducted dozens of Woodland Avenue house parties for such Democratic candidates as Eugene McCarthy, Michael Dukakis, Barbara Boxer, Dianne Feinstein, Nancy Pelosi, Willie Brown and Tom Ammiano.

Jane's idea of political fun is a "grass roots" event at which the donations will be in the \$20 dollar range, or registering voters at supermarkets and transit stops. She even initiated voter registration at INS new citizen ceremonies. All her political work has been as a volunteer, working evenings, weekends and vacations outside her 35-hour work week for KNBR-NBC Radio in San Francisco until her retirement in 1987. Since then, she has been a full-time political activist. Fresh from numerous 90th birthday celebrations, Jane is running again for Democratic County Central Committee, a job which got her elected Chair of the Democratic Party in California in 2002-2004.

She joined the board of San Francisco Tomorrow in 1992 and later served as SFT President for five years. Using her contacts and experience to promote SFT's environmental agenda, she represented SFT on the Port of San Francisco's Waterfront Land Use Plan Advisory Board in the early 90s, where her leadership was key to ensuring that the 40-foot height limit remain on the waterfront. Since 1999 Jane's top priority has been High Speed Rail (less air pollution than autos and airplanes) and the extension of Caltrain to the Transbay Terminal to connect directly with buses from San Mateo, Marin and Alameda counties.

EIR appeal to preserve Golden Gate Park

The San Francisco Planning Department issued a categorical exemption for the Beach Chalet Soccer Fields project on April 8th, 2010, meaning that they are not requiring an Environmental Impact Report. This project will have a significant adverse impact on Golden Gate Park and Ocean Beach from the standpoint of the environment, the historic character of the Park, the sports field lighting on 60 foot poles, the plastic grass, the introduction of paving into parkland, the expansion of the parking lot, the increase in traffic into the park and at Ocean Beach, the damage to the windbreak that protects the park, and so many other issues. An EIR is vital to explore the adverse impacts on this parkland, evaluate them, and propose mitigations or alternatives.

Despite strong opposition from the environmental community, the Historic preservation community,

neighborhood groups, and many individuals, the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission rushed to approve the Beach Chalet Soccer Fields project on April 15th, 2010. The Commission held only this one hearing on the project. Testimony submitted included verbal testimony of over 35 opponents, and written testimony of almost 200 personal letters, as well as the concerns of 80 neighborhood groups and organizations and petitions from over 1,400 individuals questioning this project. San Francisco Tomorrow has joined SF Ocean Edge, Golden Gate Audubon Society, Sierra Club, and other organizations in appeal the Planning Department's ruling to the Board of Supervisors who will decide if an Environmental Impact Report is required. **What to do:** write letters to the BOS and to the Mayor, asking for an EIR. Copy sfoceanedge@earthlink.net on your letters and visit the website www.sfoceanedge.org.

Greening Historic Buildings

Historic Buildings can benefit from new weatherization and new mechanical systems, but mostly they are already green because *they are full of energy*. Embodied energy is the number of BTU's represented by the extraction, manufacture, distribution transport, and the labor to have the building materials brought to and assembled on a site. Existing buildings have a high embodied energy such that the potential replacement to a demolition has to save energy for decades to make up for the wasted energy and "debris" of the demolition.

First, to the "debris". We are blessed to have a City that was built from an unending forest of virgin redwood, Douglas fir, cedar and spruce. Wood frame buildings, including homes in San Francisco that were built 1850-1925, represent the best lumber that has ever been available to a City. There is a hidden redwood forest in the city, on the faces of and in the structure if its buildings. If we find stands of virgin redwood in the forest we create national parks or conservation areas to protect them, but if we find stands of virgin redwood in the city we put them in a dumpster?

In Iowa, government programs encourage sustainable growth by the renovation of the existing housing and commercial building stock: Now it is upping the ante. In 2006, city officials designed a plan to turn Dubuque into an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable city. A key part of that plan relies on existing historic buildings for both good community design and green-building ideas: "Many believe that to have a green building,

everything must grow out of the newest technologies. This approach solves one problem by introducing another. Demolishing old buildings is inefficient. *When a building is torn down, its 'embodied energy'--the energy already exerted to create and gather the materials and then construct the structure--is wasted.* Moreover, materials from that demolished building could end up in a landfill. The National Trust for Historic Preservation estimates that one-quarter of the municipal waste stream consists of construction debris."

Thanks to the Planning Commission which voted 5-1 to deny the demolition permit, the cottage at 1269 Lombard Street will be adequately shored while its renovation plans are studied. As such, the decision will maintain the structure and its historical spatial relationships with the adjacent buildings to the great benefit of the potential Historic District there. Ending this cycle of waste with the denial of the demolition of 1269 Lombard, shows the way to a more sustainable future for our neighborhoods. Let's end the demolition of little houses in San Francisco. (*F. Joseph Butler, AIA is a practicing architect in San Francisco, and co-founder with Giovanna Kirby, of the Little House Committee.*) If you want to know more, pick up "New Energy from Old Buildings", 'The Concept of Embodied Energy', by William I. Whiddon, published in 1981 by The Preservation Press, National Trust for Historic Preservation. Or "Greening Historic Buildings" by Tina Trenkner, or go to <http://www.governing.com/article/greening-historic-buildings>

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SFT Annual Awards Dinner
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