



San Francisco Tomorrow

Working to Protect the Urban Environment

Issue 361

Will you want to live in San Francisco – Tomorrow?

October 2013

Big New “Vote NO on B&C” Endorsements

SFT has written a ballot measure in opposition to the passage of Propositions B and C on the November ballot. (See September SFT newsletter.)

- After a thorough and objective review, the usually non-partisan **San Francisco League of Women Voters** has come out OPPOSED to Propositions B and C.
- The civic organization, **San Francisco Beautiful**, which has been deeply dedicated to protecting the special character and livability of San Francisco for over 60 years, has taken a strong position OPPOSING Propositions B and C.
- The **San Francisco Examiner** - which previously supported the 8 Washington project - issued a strong editorial called "Ballot-Box Planning is Bad for SF" urging voters to vote NO on B and NO on C.

YOU MUST VOTE NO ON BOTH B&C. IF EITHER B OR C IS APPROVED, THE PROJECT WILL BE BUILT, AND EXPECT MORE SUCH WALLS ON OTHER PARTS OF THE WATERFRONT.

Denise D’Anne SFT Board member urges a NO vote on Prop A

This measure is an extremely difficult labor issue to understand; we’ve here given the explanation of the background issues and reasons to oppose Prop A by Jean Thomas, retired accountant, auditor, and a member of Local 21, whose Executive Director, Bob Muscat, has unfortunately led the leadership of City workers’ unions to support this and other anti-City worker proposals to save money for the City.

This year, Supervisor Mark Farrell introduced Prop A to address loopholes in the way union trust funds may be spent starting in 2020, along with changing structure of the governing board.

These restrictions will supposedly help protect taxpayers from future raids on these funds. However, in fact Prop A does the opposite, by allowing the trust funds to be spent immediately under certain circumstances.

If Prop A passes, the Mayor and Supervisors could spend money from the City fund with a super

majority vote, starting as early as next year. It is unclear who would control the City College trust fund, but we are worried that the funds would be controlled by the unelected "special trustee" who has usurped control of City College from the elected board. We are very worried that in either case, the funds would not be spent for their intended purpose--just as federal pension funds have been plundered for the purpose of "balancing the federal deficit." If you vote NO on Prop A, you will be standing against government fiscal intervention and expressing solidarity with city unions.

Voters are urged to protect the trust fund by voting NO on Prop A. If there really is a problem with the way funds will be managed starting in 2020, there is still plenty of time to fix this, without introducing loopholes that may allow the money to be “stolen by corrupt politicians”.

JAPAN TOWN: THE COMMUNITY STAKES OUT ITS FUTURE

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors (BOS) recently approved guidelines for the sustainability of Japan Town as a major focus of Japanese American culture. The guidelines, known as JCHESS, were sponsored by the Japantown Organizing Committee. They were created with wide community support, the significant assistance of the City Planning Department staff and public interaction over many months of serious discourse.

What is essential is that JCHESS is linked to the cooperative sustenance of the diverse communities who are part of the Japan Town environment, including many with historical ties such as the adjacent black communities and large cooperative housing complexes. The successful implementation of these policy guidelines depends upon having the means and resources committed to physical conservation and development. Both public and private resources are needed that support JCHESS and the needs and goals of the linked communities and assure both equity and affordability.

Meanwhile, in the pipeline there are large-scale proposals for high-cost, high-density housing and commercial developments that are being considered in the absence of a yet-to-be-articulated means to implement the new guidelines. So far undetermined are the related environmental impacts, and health, welfare and safety impacts.

These large-scale proposals are not yet obliged to assist the maintenance and creation of community institutions, services and affordability. Such development takes resources and functions from the existing, important Japan Town community

Presidio's Commissary site: PX is the best choice

At SFT's October Board meeting, we voted to support a project at the Presidio's Commissary site that will achieve the goals of the Presidio Trust as stated in the Request for Proposals (RFP), specifically as conveying the long and unique history of the Presidio. The PX proposal best meets those criteria. "The preface to the Trust's Request for Proposals is inspirational," writes Amy Meyer. "It says 'the Golden Gate occupies a singular place in the American psyche,' and states the site offers 'an extraordinary opportunity to create a

without paying ethical dues in form of community support.

Remove the existing pedestrian bridge?

A current proposal for Geary Boulevard at Steiner and Fillmore Streets near Japan Town, involves removal of the Fillmore Street pedestrian and vehicular bridge over the expressway. The depressed segment of the expressway would be filled so that all Geary Boulevard traffic would be at street level. It is claimed by some members of the BOS that the new ten (10) lanes of traffic, including four for a new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line, and six for motor vehicles, and no parking at curbside, will improve pedestrian safety while lessening the costs of installing BRT. Out in the cold amid whizzing cars would be the unprotected pedestrians, braving through traffic. This is a shortsighted and dangerous proposal.

Development proposals must conform to a detailed plan for mutual support that includes urban design, economic and residential needs. To this end, SFT will promote means of implementation including an urban design plan that will reunite the sundered parts of this community, as envisioned in JCHESS. Such a plan awaits creation, involving continuing community vigilance.

At our October Board of Directors meeting, SFT voted to oppose the destruction of the pedestrian bridge over Geary Boulevard without appropriate replacement protections for pedestrians. Further, we want an overall plan that sustains Japantown as the focus for Japanese culture in San Francisco and the region.

cultural facility of international distinction, befitting its location at the Golden Gate and honoring the power of place.' The commissary site should house a project worthy of the location, one uniquely suited to this place on the Presidio, and that cannot be housed as well anywhere else," she emphasizes.

The Presidio Trust Board meets October 24 to hear whether public support stands with the Lucas proposal, the Bridge Sustainability proposal or the PX (Post Exchange

OUTCOME OF THE CEQA BATTLE

On July 16, 2013, the Board of Supervisors unanimously passed an ordinance amending Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code, which contains the City's procedures for implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

As originally proposed by Supervisor Scott Wiener, these amendments would have curtailed public notification and participation in the development process, and "tightened up" the process to limit opportunities for CEQA appeals when a project has problematic environmental impacts.

Community groups rallied to object, and together crafted sweeping changes to the original proposal (along with some "slightly painful" compromises) which not only protect but have even enhanced our CEQA rights. As of September 30, 2013, the Planning Department is implementing these requirements, including changes to the Planning Department's website which will improve user interface and access to CEQA exemption information to make sure it actually complies with those new noticing requirements properly.

Don't build the twin tunnels under the Delta

The construction of twin peripheral tunnels in the Sacramento Delta would hasten the extinction of Central Valley Chinook salmon, steelhead, Delta and longfin smelt, green sturgeon and other fish species, as well as imperil salmon and steelhead populations on the Trinity and Klamath rivers. The tunnel plan would deliver Sacramento River water to corporate agribusiness interests irrigating selenium-laced, drainage impaired land on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, while taking vast tracts of Delta farmland, some of the most fertile on the planet, out of production in a hare-brained "habitat restoration" scheme. "At its essence the BDCP is a corporate water grab and green washing scam," according to Dan Bacher of the Environmental Water Caucus. The so-called Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) to build the twin tunnels "ignores numerous plans that have been put forth which will solve the Delta's purported 'crisis' with less costs to ratepayers and the general public and with more ecological certainty."

The Environmental Water Caucus, an organization of environmental, environmental justice,

Because of our extensive collective input and re-drafting over many months," says Eric Brooks, one of the community coordinators, "the amended legislation contains vastly better public notification and web notification procedures than the current law."

However on the regional level, the One Bay Area Plan to institute sustainable development and smart growth in the Greater Bay Area, will exclude developers who agree to build TPP's (Transit Priority Projects) from CEQA requirements! The One Bay Area Plan has lofty and admirable goals of improving air quality, transportation and housing but it will exempt builders from going through the environmental review process in order to accelerate the process for worthy developments. One Bay Area Planners claim that this exemption is needed to keep the Bay Area from turning into an overcrowded, unlivable region. The One Bay Area Plan has been sold as a necessity to stop the environmental destruction of the Bay Area and create a sustainable and smarter Bay Area. However, One Bay Area Plan also badly threatens CEQA protections by granting exemptions from CEQA for area plans.

commercial and recreational fishing groups, and Native American tribes, has released a letter to federal and state officials demanding that they abandon their proposed plan to dig a pair of massive tunnels under the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta in order to transport Sacramento River water to the existing pumps at the south end of the Delta.

The BDCP proposal has as its two main goals to reliably transport more water to San Joaquin farms and Southern California cities and to restore the fisheries and ecology of the Delta. It will do neither. The current BDCP proposal is unnecessary and will have severe environmental consequences. It will not accomplish the claimed biological and species recovery objectives and would be a costly mistake if implemented.

The current BDCP project should be reoriented to reduce exports, increase outflows, and implement the necessary structural changes that will accomplish the goals of Delta recovery, improve water supply reliability, and reduce reliance on the Delta.



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**Don't fail to vote NO on both B and C
Tuesday, November 5**

Will you want to live in San Francisco Tomorrow?

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Visit SFT's website at sftomorrow.com

Put this date on your calendar:

Thursday, December 5, 2013 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

It's the Annual San Francisco Tomorrow

HOLIDAY PARTY,

Take note of the new location, the Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin Street at Geary Street