

MEASURE DD COMMUNITY COALITION MEETING  
MARCH 21, 2005  
LAKESIDE GARDEN CENTER

Agenda Committee: Jim Ratliff, John Bowers and Judy Johnson  
Minutes by Kathy Raymond, Executive Director, Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation

In Attendance:

Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee – Ron Bishop  
Chabot Park Highlands Homeowner's Assoc. – Ken Benson  
East Bay Bicycle Coalition – Rick Rickard  
East Bay Regional Parks District – John Sutter  
Friends of the Cleveland Cascade – Jim Ratliff, Barbara Newcombe  
Friends of Studio One – Patrick Daughton  
Coalition of Advocates for Lake Merritt – James Vann  
Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation – Kathryn Raymond, Judy Johnson, Anne Woodell  
Greenlink Taskforce – Nancy Rieser  
Jack London District Association – Simon Waddington  
Lake Merritt Institute – Stana Hearne  
Oakland Parks Coalition – Jennie Gerard, Gillian Garro, Emily Rosenberg, Barbara Schaaf, Robert Schock  
Spanish Speaking Unity Council – Rita Torres, Jesus Vargus  
Waterfront Action – Sandy Threlfall  
Robert Schock – Community Member

From the City of Oakland:

CEDA – Kerry Jo Ricketts-Ferris  
Council Member Reid's Office – Pat Mossburg  
Council Member Quan's Office – Rich Cowan  
Public Works Agency – Joel Peter

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 P.M. by chair Jim Ratliff. The attendees introduced themselves.

Agenda Changes: The creek update was deferred to the next meeting.

UNION POINT PARK

Jesus Vargus gave an update and showed an artistic rendering of Union Point Park, which is now on Phase 2. Phase 1, which included the earthwork, was all completed around Sept. 4<sup>th</sup> of last year. The original opening date was going to be July 23<sup>rd</sup>, but due to the rain, it will most likely be moved until sometime in August. They replaced the bridge and are doing concrete work. The bridge will have a 10 ft wide path going over the mounds. The project is 45% complete from a budget perspective. They will have a large ship play area that will be installed closer to completion. The Marina by this property was already in existence and the Port contracts out its management. There were some questions and concerns over the San Francisco Bay Trail signage, specifically whether or not it would be informative enough. Kerry Jo from the City mentioned that Landscape Architect Walter Hood, under contract to the City, is working on an overall plan but that they are working on a number of different categories of markers. There will be markers along 6.6 miles, but they are not all consistent in look and feel. They plan to have an 18 ft. kiosk and

15 ft signs. Hood is also working on Gateway Markers. It was suggested that perhaps the opening of Union Point Park could be the unveiling of this signage, which will run from Jack London Square to 66<sup>th</sup> Ave.

#### EAST BAY SPORTS COMPLEX – SALVATION ARMY GRANT:

Pat Mossburg from Council member Larry Reid's office stated that Reid is supportive of the sports complex. There is \$17M earmarked for the Sports Complex and Council member Reid wants to know what is being programmed, have a signed MOU and that the Board has awarded the grant to the Oakland Salvation Army before committing the funds. The City is working with the Salvation Army on a MOU; once signed, the City's funds will be available for construction of the complex. Shelton Yee, County Business Administrator for the Salvation Army, spoke about the bequest in excess of \$1.5 billion from Joan Kroc, widow of the founder of McDonald's, to the Salvation Army to create community centers across the country similar to one built and opened in San Diego two years ago. The Corps Community Center in San Diego was built in a high-need part of that city to provide a state of the art recreational facility for kids and teens. and donated money for. The 12-acre San Diego facility was built with a \$92 million gift from Mrs. Kroc.

Her will specified that the Salvation Army couldn't use her bequest to support existing centers but that the money had to go toward creating and maintaining new centers. The money is to be divided equally among four territories in the US, the western territory covering 13 states. The Salvation Army are currently looking at awarding about \$60 million for each center and its endowment. They want to make sure the centers are built properly and have an ongoing endowment fund to ensure the continued operation of the facility.

In the first phase of the local Salvation Army's grant application, due April 4<sup>th</sup>, it's necessary to demonstrate that it controls the site where the center would be built. An Oakland center is proposed to be built at Brookfield Park where the City has long had plans to build an East Oakland Sports Complex. Cannon Design has been working on the idea for such a Complex for over 5 years. Currently the City has amassed about \$17 million on this project, which originally was expected to cost \$55 million. If Oakland is successful in its application, the Salvation Army would build the facility, and operate it. Alternatively, if the City has the money to build the complex and did so, it is estimated that annual maintenance costs would amount to \$6 million a year to fund with as much as about 80% of the costs covered through fees. One of the benefits Reid sees to this grant is the operating endowment, which the City would be very hard pressed to equal.

As contemplated, the Ira Jinkins Recreation Center, built about 10 years ago, would be demolished to make way for the complex. Architectural plans for the East Oakland Sports Complex, which the Salvation Army is basing its application on, tried to incorporate in the existing Recreation Center but it didn't work with the overall concept and look. The plans call for keeping the Sr. Center and Library, a separate facility already built on the park site. They would continue to belong to the City. The Salvation Army reported that they have looked into ways to partner with Brookfield Elementary as well.

The East Oakland Sports Complex as currently envisioned includes the building, which would be located on a rise about 12 ft. above street level such that the entrance would be on the second level. There is about 12 acres of overall land that is the boundaries of the park. In January the City Council passed a resolution directing City staff to work exclusively with the Salvation Army. SA would acquire some of the

Brookfield Park land on which the Complex and a separate chapel would be built the land for the chapel would be sold at its fair market value in order to comply with the need for separation of church and state issues. The rest of the land would work as an exchange parcel of 10.33 acres. For the grant SA must show the benefit to a high-risk area and show political support, both of which they believe they have. Additionally, SA must now that it has site control, which the MOU in progress is meant to address. So far they only have the council resolution for this.

Several concerns were raised. There is concern that the SA facility will replace a free facility in a high-risk area in order to put a pay-to-use facility in its place. SA says they do have a fee structure based on ability to pay and that they provide scholarships as well, though most would have some sort of membership fee. It was pointed out by City Staff that when this was a City project, fees would have been necessary and the City didn't have the means to make scholarships availability. The endowment accompanying the grant would make such scholarships possible. There was also concern about the SA being a church, which might alienate other denominations. Shelton Yee represented that SA strives to offer services to all walks of life regardless of denomination, and that they do not require anyone to attend church services or the like. The MOU would have to state that this agreement would have to be, forever, part of the endowment criteria.

#### OAK TO NINTH:

John Sutter spoke about the Oak to Ninth development proposal developed by Signature Properties of Pleasanton, which is now being presented for comment. John's comments addressed the proposal as it relates to the Estuary Policy Plan (EPP), an adopted element of the City's General Plan. He pointed out that the 62-acre site is public property and was only secured after a long legal battle. John noted that the EPP that was created in the 1990's after many community meetings was not being adhered to by the new plans. Signature Properties' plan shows about 1/3 of the open space called for by the EPP being chopped out of the plan. For example, the EPP calls for Estuary Park to be tended to the street; the new plan calls for high-rise condos to be built instead of expanding the park, thus continuing to block the park from view from Embarcadero, which greatly hinders the use of the park. For Crescent Park, called for by the EPP, which was supposed to be an 11-acre park has been reduced to 4 acres, built where the Ninth Ave. Terminal now stands. And for Channel Park, across the Channel from Estuary Park, which was called for to provide space for condos are proposed, which will greatly hinder the use as event space due to noise issues.

John asked that the Coalition take a position on the developer's proposed plan, insisting that the open space called for in the EPP be required of before entitlements are issued. A further concern was voiced that the San Francisco Bay Trail may not be adequately sized in the proposal and deserves advocacy to ensure that any trail that is built is wide enough to be inviting to the general public along the waterfront. The EPP also called for a specific plan for any design that was going to be built here, and it was also asked that the DD Coalition express that they should also adhere to this. It was noted that there is \$27 million in Measure DD funds for the Oak to Ninth area open space purchase. In answer to the question of who owns the property, it was stated that the property belongs to the Port, but the Port land use must adhere to the City's General Plan, and development proposals on Port land must go through the planning commission. There is concern that the fees for open space maintenance associated with the sale of proposed condos will make the public open space become privately owned. An Environmental Impact Report is underway; a

draft is expected late summer, early fall for public comment. The City's website ([www.oaklandnet.com](http://www.oaklandnet.com)) has a lot of information on the EIR process.

In answer to the request that the Coalition take a stand, participants were reminded that the Coalition is not a voting body but a coalition of representatives of organizations, which can take a stand. However, the overall feeling was that the City and Port should be told that the citizens insist they stick with the adopted Estuary Policy Plan.

#### PROJECT UPDATES:

Due to many upcoming Measure DD issues, it was decided that there should be an April meeting of the Coalition, rather than waiting to the originally scheduled next meeting, to be held in May. It was decided that there should indeed be an April 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Jim Ratliff read an e-mail about the interim solution for the 12<sup>th</sup> St. project, aimed at providing a safe route for bikers. Within the next two months the solution should be in place, the City will be doing the work. It was noted that Bike to Work Day on May 19<sup>th</sup> would be a good time to have a ribbon cutting and a splash for Measure DD.

In answer to a couple of questions about the status of getting two aeration fountains in operation, Joel Peter noted that one fountain has been located by the pergola where a failed power cable needs to be replaced in order to restore it to operation, and the new fountain donated for a location near Harrison and Grand will be installed. The Public Works Agency has had some difficulty in letting electrical contracts for the work for which DD funds were appropriated last July. The fountains projects are on hold for the moment while PWA endeavors to launch a pilot project to put an air bubbler system in the lake to stir up the water. There is a priority to install this pilot before the warm season in order to determine whether it will withstand barnacle and other disruptive build-up. PWA is shooting for the first week in April to put in this pilot project by the Sailboat House. They will use City Electricians to install. This could be one of the most effective ways they've found to add oxygen to the lake.

The Executive Committee will meet on March 31<sup>st</sup> from 2-4 p.m.

Kerry Jo mentioned that she is in the process of submitting 3 grant applications. One to the Coastal Conservancy for \$10 million and two State Grants, one for Lake Merritt Pathway improvements for \$200,000 and one for the Derby Street Trail of \$10,000. The State Grant deadlines are May 2<sup>nd</sup> and she will be asking for support letters from organizations represented by DD Coalition participants.

Next Agenda Items that were suggested:

1. Review of overall coalition taking a set position.
2. Annual Meeting
3. Creek Update
4. Update on fountain progress

The next meeting date is April 18<sup>th</sup> at the Garden Center in the Ebell Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.