

Public Comments December 11, 2013 to January 16, 2014

George Lucas proposed presidio museum: Susan and Niels Larsen, residents of san Francisco, strongly support this gift to the people of San Francisco. We have grandchildren living in and around san Francisco and we think this would be a great educational tool for them. We hope that the presidio trust will approve acceptance of this gift.

Thank you
Susan and Niels Larsen

I am writing to endorse and support the Lucas museum. Aside from his unbelievable collection of American art, George Lucas is offering his technology to generations of children. The museum can be a place for children to learn, create, and grow..... and to become their own innovators.

The museum can change the course of a child's life I hope that you will support this once in a lifetime opportunity that will benefit the citizens today and in the future.

Thank you
Chris Boskin

I am so grateful to you all for your hard work making the Presidio such a lasting cultural destination in the fair city of San Francisco.

I would be in full support of a Lucas Museum within the Presidio. I think it would offer much to people of all ages from all over the world.

Thanks for your consideration,
Rose Linke

Please approve one of the San Francisco Bay Area's most sophisticated member 's proposal for the sports basement area.

I strongly opposed the Fisher Proposal. In comparison , Lucas ' buildings have been absolutely gorgeous and seamless with the existing architecture. I shudder to remember the Shorenstein condo complex proposal.

Listen to the people. The Bay Area loves and is proud of George Lucas. His art collection? I don't know. Michael De Young's collection originally included, a buffalo? I believe that is true. Let the Bay Area visionary not be deterred by 'decision by committee'.

Respectfully,
Beverly Anello

We just cannot afford to turn down this most generous offer from Mr. George Lucas...please do not deny this opportunity for so many children and adults alike.

Ms Tilson

I support the proposed Lucas Museum, which sounds like an exciting new addition to our proud city's first-class cultural attractions.
Good luck with the new project.

Sincerely,
Alice So

Please, please don't let George Lucas' incredible offer escape to Chicago! For so many, many reasons his magnificent collection needs to be here, in his home town. I know you have heard all of those reasons from others and I want to add my (passionate) voice to this group who knows how important to the cultural landscape of the city... and bay area, this world class museum will be.

Please continue to consider and... lets do it!

Sincerely,
Sid Ganis

I've looked at all the proposals from the all-important viewpoint of common sense.

Presidio Exchange: this proposal reads like what it is, a collection of politically correct buzzwords strung together. For instance it "curates" " cross-disciplinary" "co-created" "residences"? WT_ does that mean? And it will be free and accessible to all, yes until the grant disappears in year two. And it will study the current trend in museums. Ahh I see, it'll be a museum about museums, how self-indulgent of them, how convenient. We'll study ourselves! Who better to grant us public money than ourselves?

Bridge Sustainability Blah Blah Blah: Who are you kidding? This is just more of the same fuzzy thinking pie in the sky PC nonsense. Get a grip because here we go again. "A new global ethic" "acceptance of this ethic has not yet reached its tipping point". Said Orwell in 1984. "Invent and dream" and don't forget it's for "the children" "We need more places for our poets to talk to our scientists, our activists to our CEOs, our friends and neighbors to each other". Activist to CEO's? You mean the takers to the makers don't you. What a joke, a very sad joke.

I've also seen the plans for the delightful hideous glass cracker box they want to plop down within site of the Palace of Fine Arts and the Golden Gate Bridge. And dare we forget where the money is coming from for these two oh so precious projects. Nowhere that's where. No one who ever earned a paycheck would fund this nonsense. You'll get people who wear scarves tied in the Parisian style with earnest suffering faces in yoga clothes holding lattes.

Lucas Center:

Everyone in the world will want to go (except those in the final sentence of the previous paragraph) The building is beautiful (beauty being the operative element as in Palace of Fine Arts and Golden Gate Bridge are beautiful) GET IT?
It's paid for. Period.

So as you see, common sense prevails. Stop jerking our chain and approve Lucas or he'll go elsewhere. He's giving us a gift, be grateful.

Thank you
Gary Packard

I read the article today in SF gate regarding nancy's Pelosi's suggestion of Mr. Lucas' proposal for a cultural museum. I think of the three options, the museum is the worst idea.

The changes that you have accomplished in the last 13 years I have lived in the city have been nothing short of astounding. I applaud your continued work to return this beautiful location back to where it belongs. My husband and I were married at the golden gate club and I run in the park every weekend. This museum will change everything you have accomplished by taking the focus away from the environment and natural beauty not to mention the incredible impact this museum will have on traffic.

I implore you to ignore Nancy Pelosi's "urging" as the article puts it and to think about the goals you set for Crissy field so many years ago and away from the monetary concerns.

--

Emily M. Weissenberger

Has anyone considered the idea of putting surface parking at the west end of the site, like the PX proposes, and then putting at least half of the museum underground, in place of the garage?

This would greatly reduce the mass of the building and preserve the views.

Joel Cantor

I have followed the chain of events relating to the Mid-Crissy selection process and after reading the SF Chronicle article of Dec. 20, 2013, as well as others, wish to express my opinion.

I strongly believe that the "star attraction" is Crissy Field and the area around it. How can one compete with the Golden Gate Bridge, the bay and the whole geographical area. We do not need an architectural building which looks out of place to mar our visual appreciation of beauty nor will its contents necessarily draw people to it.

Please allow time for the dust to settle and make the best decision.

Not all politician and influential people know best.

Sincerely,
Joann Fong

Can you tell me why as long as there has been a Presidio Trust there have been so many large building projects proposed or built? Since when is the Presidio supposed to be open to new development?

First there was the gigantic office park near the Lombard Gate, all 700,000 square feet of commercial real estate development. More square feet than the Transamerica Tower. In a national park.

Next was the demand by Don Fisher he be allowed to build a very large glass and steel modern art museum in the middle of the Main Post, a proposal that included demolition of historic buildings. This idea was being pushed too hard by the Trust. If it had been built it would have ruined the Presidio.

Then there was a proposal for a hotel, also on the Main Post, accompanied by a bad idea that would turn the Presidio Theater into a multi-plex. Commercial real estate development again.

The rehabilitation of the old Public Health Hospital included new townhomes. Residential real estate development.

The Officers Club is being turned into a restaurant/event center. Commercial real estate redevelopment.

A few display items and a few chairs don't cut it.

Now we have the proposal to build on Crissy Field buildings that are neither necessary nor wanted. We don't need a Lucas Museum any more than we needed the Fisher Museum. The Lucas proposal is too big and is out of place on the Presidio, and the other two proposals, the PX and whatever the other one is, could easily be put into existing buildings such as the Crissy Field armory building or in Building 385.

Explain to me why we are getting all these building projects? The idea of turning the Presidio of San Francisco into a national park was to save it from development, so what are all of you doing? It isn't stewardship. It's wrong. The Presidio Trust is wrong.

I would bet I am of the same mind as most Presidio visitors. I'd like to see a history center, an Army Museum, a nature center - things that would make sense to be in the Presidio of San Francisco. I'd like to see no more building proposals ever. And I would like a guarantee from the Presidio Trust that none of the historic buildings will be removed ever.

Get rid of your senior staff. All of them. They stink. From the viewpoint of a national park visitor they give us nothing. Replace them with National Park Service employees. Give is a national park, not a redevelopment zone.

I am nothing but disappointed in how the Presidio Trust has managed this park.

James Hartman

A museum featuring George Lucas' collection would be unique in the world, housing items contemporary and a direct part of the unique historical and sociological and entrepreneurial business event witnessed in the later 20th century, literally revolutionizing all media consumed by all people in the world, not 40yrs later.

Star Wars may seem to have its hokey-side in terms of being a movie with 'geek' fan base, but the impact that the film series and Lucas' management of that juggernaut cannot be misjudged.

I urge you to support the Lucas/LFL initiative.
Tom Piedmont

I agree the former commissary site on the Presidio needs a star attraction, and the PX proposal fits the bill. It offers temporal exhibits about Presidio history and more, appropriate for a site that is in a tsunami inundation zone.

The PX is poised to wait and see how the new landscape develops.

Trusting the Presidio Trust to take all the time it needs, including as many delays, is the way to go.

George Lucas is not to be trusted. He misled everyone about what the Letterman Digital Arts Center was going to be. He should spend his money restoring important Presidio vistas by undeveloping what is essentially an unfilled office development, which unethically competes with privately owned buildings outside the Presidio.

He has a spouse and child in Chicago. He may leave a piece of his heart in SF, but he's already left a whole mess on the Presidio.

The Presidio as a National Park should not be in a position of competing with other San Francisco museums, such as the Exploratorium, with is a star attraction recently relocated to offer visitors a stellar experience.

Adding a Lucas monstrosity to the Presidio doesn't help, it hurts.

The Presidio, as the Presidio Trust and the PX proposal show they know, is more than a piece of real estate for museums and motels. It is a place of great history and great space. We need to respect that.

Sincerely,
Terry Keim

As a long time admirer, supporter, and constituent of yours, I was both saddened and dismayed at the words and thoughts attributed to you in the San Francisco Chronicle (1/7/2014) regarding the proposed project adjacent Crissy Field. There are significant areas of concern which I feel deserve your greater consideration. Among these are schedule, site, and design appropriateness.

- Why the rush to judgment for this project? Surely nothing can be done at this site until the Doyle Drive construction project, now well underway, can be completed.

- At that time the entire site and landscape will be completely altered and a new physical reality created. Any new project, in addition to its mission statement function, should take heed of that and be site specific.
- just as important, if not more so, is the actual physical design of this project itself. In addition to being complementary to its environment, any proposed building should be one of highest architectural and design standards. Sadly, the Lucas project specifically fails to do so by large measure; its design verges on *Kitsch*, and its proposed contents barely less so. Certainly, the Presidio and the City of San Francisco and the Nation deserve much better.

I urge you, and others involved, for forbearance and, taking into account the issues raised above, let proper time be allowed for a full and deliberate design process to unfold,. There is no need for a hurry that could result in something we all might ultimately regret.

Respectfully yours,
Ephraim G. Hirsch, FASCE, FSEAOC

I have lived in the Presidio for 13 years, 538B Simonds Loop, and prior to that in the surrounding neighborhoods since 1975. I agree with the Haas family and Nancy Bechtle, let's wait until the Doyle Drive project and the landscaping that goes with it is in place and then decide what to do, if anything, about this public space.

There really is no rush. If we loose out on George Lucas' ersatz monolith to himself, and his kitschy art collection, so be it. He already has one albatross here, do we need another? He could also put his "art collection" in the Palace of Fine Arts, and subsidize this historic building, which could probably use a benefactor.

Better to proceed with thoughtfulness and caution, than to jump the gun and end up with something that detracts from this very special place. As for Nancy Pelosi, Jerry Brown and Ed Lee's support of Lucas' proposal, could they perhaps be looking at deep pockets for their future campaign chests?

Sincerely,
Marcia E. Herman

I would urge that the Presidio Trust take NO action on the current proposals for the PX area.

I believe that nothing should be considered until all the current construction is finished. I do not believe that a good decision can be made until the dust settles. I think that it is better if it is discussed in the future when more information is available. The location is too important to make such a hasty recommendation, particularly since it has become a political issue instead of a park issue.

Therefore, I urge you to not proceed. I think it is not appropriate to make such an important, long-term, decision at this time.

Thank you.
Paul Watts

I urge you to dismiss the Lucas Museum proposal. While it is true that Star Wars is indigenous to the Bay Area - it is not utterly important to place such a museum (that is for the Lucas collection - not solely to Star Wars) in the Presidio. A museum such as this can be put anywhere. Lucas has that kind of money to do so. The collection can be admired no matter where the museum is. Such a historic piece of land is not integral to the enjoyment of the artwork.

I believe the more fitting option is to support the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy's proposal. Every park that this organization is involved in is a testament to their mission to preserve and create spaces that are relevant for the people that visit them. I've read through the proposal they have put forth and I applaud their ambition to create a place for public programs that are Presidio-themed, participatory, and cross-disciplinary. This is such a unique parcel, it's critical we allow a structure and purpose (through programs) there that is reflective of the the location.

We should trust GGNPC to be that facilitator to create a space for the people as they always have. The Lucas Museum can be enjoyed elsewhere/anywhere.

Thank you for consideration on this important matter.
Jamie Clark

The merits of the three proposals for the Sports a Basement site notwithstanding, I believe this is the time for the Presidio Trust to pause before choosing any candidates.

The site is on the cusp of being significantly impacted by the Tunnel Top Parklands and the Youth Camp. These improvements along with others will bring about new traffic flow, an altered general ambiance, new public uses. Then - when the Trust has a truer sense of what the Sports Basement site demands - will be the time to decide on its highest and best use. Now is not the time in my opinion.

Thank you for your attention and thoughtful work,
Linda Aldrich

Please do not allow the construction of this museum. It's not appropriate for public property to become the repository of a building that is basically a showcase for one man's ego.

New construction is not what the Presidio needs. It's wonderful to have a small park within San Francisco. It needs to be returned to the state it was in 200 years ago, not developed with restaurants and museums. That's not development, that's just greed.

Sincerely
Ernest Montague

Sports Basement is a popular store and very good to the San Francisco community. The store offers rent-free space to non-profits and donates food and drink to fundraising events. Its merchandise is a

perfect fit with the activities at Crissy Field. It is profitable. Why is it necessary to replace Sports Basement with a fancy museum? I know many people who would like Sports Basement to stay. Please consider this option!

Sincerely,
Bonnie Baron

I have been a resident of San Francisco for over 27 years. Please don't approve a museum for the open space across from Crissy Field. The greatest beauty of San Francisco is its open, natural spaces, especially including the Presidio lands. There will always be an endless, constant and needless pressure to destroy those spaces with new buildings. Put the museum where it replaces ugly development with good development, and not where it destroys some of the few remaining natural places in this city.

Thank you,
David Lyon

I appreciate the time and effort that you have spent in analyzing the proposals that have been put forth for a new museum on the Presidio grounds. George Lucas and his expansive body of work in film making and production are part of San Francisco's history without doubt. Star Wars captured my imagination during my formative childhood years, and I believe that it had the same effects on many people around the world. The Lucas Arts Museum would spark the minds of many young San Franciscans and Bay Area residents in the years to come. It is a rarity nowadays that a new museum would be solely financed privately without tapping into the general funds. In effect, the museum would be a gift to the people. I hope that you will share my views on Mr. Lucas' project and that you will consider allowing the construction of his museum in the Presidio. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,
Kenny Mok, M.D.

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January 8, 2014

Chair Bechtel and the Presidio Trust Board,

I am writing to express my reservations about the possibilities at the Exchange.

I do not feel a museum devoted to a film maker's collectibles is appropriate at the Presidio. "...a large portion of the charitable deductions now claimed by America's wealthy are for donations to culture palaces - operas, art museums, symphonies and theaters - where they spend their leisure time hobnobbing with other wealthy benefactors."¹ Mr. Lucas' comment that if his "offer" is not accepted he would take it to Chicago² seems to be more of a threat than a gift. Such unpleasant remarks are inappropriate and insulting. Let him take his toys to Chicago.

The Conservancy has an ambitious plan, but it is enormous and seems to overpower the area. It appears the Conservancy is moving into infotainment (primarily for Millennials). It emphasizes a "theme park" or campus approach and envisions itself as a destination and an economic boon to the city not a Park asset. I do not feel this is appropriate for a national park. Industrial Light and Magic and the Disney Family Museum are in a similar vein and really do not belong in the Presidio. However, the Trust needed paying tenants and these two provided much needed income. Now that is not so much the case and rushing to provide the Conservancy with another source of income that only benefits the Park tangentially is not what is needed.

The third entry is more like earlier tenants of the park, providing an exploration of environmental ideas, though it isn't clear they need space that size and only affords limited public access.

Clearly there is a need for more bathrooms and food options, as well as a true visitor's center. These are all lacking at the Presidio. There is no way to become oriented to what is available and gather materials to enhance the experience. These needs should be focused on first. For the interim food trucks could provide casual stopping points and not just at Crissy Field.

Although the Conservancy focuses on Millennials as an important cohort to engage, they are not a stable population and, in my experience with them in a restoration context, merely looking for entertainment that they can cite as charitable. As technology companies mature or are bought this group is likely to shrink and move.

I am also concerned about the landscaping. Although the Conservancy promises to use native plants, the PHSH did that too, only to end up using non-natives; some of which spread easily instead, with the argument that they are historical. That could happen here.

The Conservancy plan gives short shrift to history. A PX is iconic of Army life. It might be restored and upgraded to be used as an interpretation of military life at the Presidio and elsewhere in the Bay Area.

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There is no such interpretation currently in the Park, with the exception of the Buffalo Soldiers exhibit and the Presidio Army Museum at Fort Mason. But I also feel interpretation of the Army presence here and Forts Baker, Point, Mason, Winfield Scott, Miley, Funston, Cronkhite and Barry, plus all the batteries guarding the coast is needed, too. The Park Service has an enormous collection of artifacts that have no permanent display or room for interpretation.

I feel the Presidio is losing its focus on the history of the place in favor of an overwhelming focus on environmental issues and entertainment. I have spent almost thirty years encouraging and engaging in environmental restoration in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and I truly appreciate its importance. But when one considers the extent of the fortifications and their purposes, a more complex and nuanced picture of life in San Francisco becomes apparent; one that is not interpreted and has interest for some segments of the population; not everyone wants an education in environmentalism. It is important to bring the history of the US and San Francisco to new residents and citizens. This can be done in a participatory manner at the Presidio.

The size of the proposed development and the impact it will have on the visitor is not fully developed and caution should be used. This will be here for a long time and it would be better to go slowly and carefully so the result is not jarring and out of scale. Plus it would be most unfortunate if most of those modular spaces ended up unused in the future. Updating the PX to serve as a jumping off point for visiting the Presidio, Fort Point and Fort Mason that encourages walking might make it work as a visitor center, although it is not centrally located. The PX could be used at its current size to satisfy some of the needs mentioned, but bathrooms and food stands or small dining areas need to be throughout the Presidio, not just in one.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,



Dale Smith
Habitat Restoration Team
Golden Gate National Recreation Area

¹ Robert Reich, "Philanthropy of the rich is not always charitable", *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 22, 2013
² John King, "Crissy Field plans need overhaul", *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 4, 2013