

PRESIDIO TRUST PUBLIC BOARD MEETING – October 19, 2006

NOTE: The following is the best transcript available of the public Board meeting of the Presidio Trust Board of Directors held on October 19, 2006. It is based upon an audio recording of the meeting.

[Abrupt beginning of recorded material]

Dave Grubb: - agenda. We're going to have the Executive Director's report. We're going to have our '07 work plan for everybody. We're going to have an update on the Public Health Hospital, a Tennessee Hollow recreation update and then some public comment. That's the agenda for this evening. Let's get started with the Executive Director's report. Craig?

Craig Middleton: Good evening. Thanks for coming out tonight on a beautiful night. I've got a very brief Executive Director's report, and then we'll move on with the rest of the agenda. I'm very pleased to announce that this morning in Denver we were awarded the Urban Land Institute's Global Award for Excellence. This was an award given to the Presidio Trust Management Plan and its implementation. The Presidio was awarded along with four other major awardees - one from Milan, one from Barcelona, one from Boston and one from Singapore - so it was a nice event. And I would just like to express my congratulations to all of the people who have worked so hard on the Presidio on the Board, the staff and all of the people here. Because we know you. I look out; I see everybody. I know you've been working on the Presidio for many, many years. The ULI Global Award for Excellence states, "it recognizes the full development process of a project, not just its architecture or design. The criteria for the awards include leadership, contribution to the community, innovations, public/private partnership,

environmental protection and enhancement, response to societal needs and financial success.” So it kind of runs the gamut.

Also, I’m very pleased to announce that thanks to the support of many people in Congress, we were able to secure last week in the Defense Appropriations Bill \$2 million for the Main Parade project that will be coming to us this fiscal year. And I also - while I’ve got you all here - wanted to thank many of you for your participation not only in the event that celebrated Dr. Wayburn and his 100 years of life and his 50 years of work on behalf of the nation’s parklands. Was it last week? Time flies I guess. I think it was last week where we dedicated that beautiful site. But I also wanted to thank you because I know many of you have been involved in that whole restoration project that goes back quite a few years, and it’s really beginning to look beautiful over at Thompson Reach. Thank you. I think it was a beautiful tribute to a whole lot of people, and I just wanted to express my appreciation.

Immigrant Point, which is the point that used to be the wide spot on Washington Boulevard and is now that beautiful scenic overlook, was the site last week - the day before the Dr. Wayburn event - of another swearing-in ceremony for 52 immigrants, now American citizens, from all over the world. We’ve decided, working with the Immigration and Citizenship Service, to make that an annual event. It’s a beautiful event and I hope that next year you’ll attend because it’s really very meaningful.

I wanted also to mention something about the environmental remediation program. We have heard concerns from the Restoration

Advisory Board - which is a citizens' group that works with us on environmental remediation issues and has been for many, many years - about RAP3 which is the remedial action plan called RAP3. A RAP really is a document that chooses the remedies that will be applied to environmental clean-up sites. It's legally binding. And RAP3 has about 30 sites, most notably the four Baker Beach sites, I think two of which are on the cliff side there at Baker Beach - you guys can correct me if I'm wrong.

The RAB has written me and expressed what I will say are really two principal concerns I think - that RAP3 is taking too long and that because it's taking too long, there's a possibility that we'll miss the 2007 construction season, which really would be a travesty. We don't want to miss that. We want to keep this thing going. And, secondly, the Trust is not committed to clean closure of the Baker Beach sites - or put a different way, they're advocating clean closure of the Baker Beach sites.

I just wanted to say that we share the RAB's concern that the process around RAP3 is taking too long. It doesn't benefit anyone for the process to drag on. As the RAB well knows, we issued the draft of RAP3 in September of 2004, and have been working through the regulator's comments and concerns since the spring of '05. All of these programs are subject to complex regulatory processes, and we will have another draft of RAP3 out in the coming weeks.

As to the remedies, the Trust seeks to apply the best remedy to all of our remediation sites. The Baker Beach sites - as you might imagine,

given where they are on the cliffs - are among the most difficult and risky sites at the Presidio. The slopes are steep, and the nearby historic batteries must be considered. So we're taking a little time. We've been taking a little time to explore that, to explore the program, to review the program and to make sure that we're moving in the right direction. But I think we're all on the same page when it comes to making sure we don't miss the 2007 construction season.

Finally, I'd just like to thank the RAB for bringing this to us and for their longstanding support over many, many, many years on this program. I think it's fair to say that they are among the most committed people I have met. When you think about two meetings a month for ten years at least, on often very technical subjects, it's pretty amazing.

Now a little about tonight's agenda. We're going to update you on the 2007 work plan - 2007 fiscal year; 2007 started October 1st, so we're right in the beginning of that year. And then of course on two key projects of interest to many people in the public - the Public Health Service Hospital and the Tennessee Hollow project. At the conclusion of these updates, I've asked Terri Thomas - our director of natural and cultural resources - to talk briefly about the opportunities and challenges presented to the Presidio and by the Presidio in the area of biodiversity. And then we'll - as we always do - open the floor to general public comment. With that, I'd like to turn it back to you, Mr. Chairman.

Dave Grubb: Okay. Thank you very much, Craig. I think first we'll go right on, and we'll go into the work plan for '07 to get an idea of what we're doing. So, Lydia, do you want to -

Lydia Beebe: Thank you, Dave. In fiscal year '07 - which, as Craig mentioned, just started - the Trust will earn almost \$56 million, predominantly - almost exclusively - from leasing various facilities on the Trust. In addition to that, the federal budget appropriates \$19 million for the Trust's use, so our resources then are \$75 million. We have a budget to spend that \$75 million which was approved by the Trust Board at our September meeting, so we approved it a month ago. And it is posted on the Presidio Trust's website, so for all of you who want to know it in detail, it's available. In addition to that posting, we do have these maps in the room. There are two different maps, and they kind of go through the list of the major projects that we're doing. One deals with open space and remediation and the other with building and utility projects, so you can see how the projects are spread around the Trust by looking at those maps.

Just in order to give you a sense of what the budget does focus on, I thought I would mention some our key projects for the year ahead. We have a number of key projects on the Main Post. One is renovating one of the Montgomery Street barracks buildings - the brick buildings that are not too far from here. One that we will restore will be used as the Presidio's Visitors' Center. We will continue to work with the Disney Family Foundation to renovate another one of those barracks buildings and two other Main Post buildings. Our goal is to complete the renovations of the upper Funston buildings as well

as four beautiful Queen Anne homes. And we do get really good rents for some of these beautiful old homes, so that certainly is helpful to our other goals. And opening the Transit Center with a café and some other services for park visitors. So those are some of the main things on the Main Post. In the Fort Scott district, we plan to complete the improvements on the historic bachelors' quarters, which are at the top of Kobbe Avenue. And, again, those will be rental units.

We're working on the renovation of the historic Barnard Hall - which is building 1330; that's about all I can tell you - and making improvements to the Log Cabin. I don't know how many of you have been to events at the Log Cabin, but they will be very good. It's very good to have some further improvements there. Another project we're working on is landscape improvements, including the Arguello Gate, completion of the first phase of the Presidio Promenade, which is kind of the connection between the Lombard Gate and the Golden Gate Bridge. So those are some of our main projects on the drawing board for this year. Again, you see where they're all located on the maps, and further details are available on the website. So that's my summary. Mr. Chairman -

Dave Grubb: Thank you very much, Lydia.

Craig Middleton: Can I add one thing?

Dave Grubb: Sure, you can add something.

Craig Middleton: I just wanted to add that we're continuing our steady investment in the forest and recognizing that that forest is continuing to decline. It's more than a century-old forest with a lifespan of about 120 years. So we're trying to catch up with the deterioration, but that's a significant part of our budget.

Dave Grubb: I assume we're doing that because we need logs for the Log Cabin?

[Laughter]

Dave Grubb: It's true, right? Yes. All right. On the Public Health Hospital - let me tell you what's going on there. There has been a lot of neighborhood and stakeholder interest in this project. Nearly 300 people of the community came to our last public Board meeting and told us what they thought about our proposal to redevelop the Public Health for housing. We have heard at other meetings and via comment letters that many think the project simply is too big and that it will generate too much traffic. We've often been accused of not listening, I suppose, but we do take these matters and concerns seriously.

And so the Trust staff and Forest City, our development partner, have been out talking to the neighbors and will be, in the coming weeks, beginning a series of workshops with the community leaders to accomplish the following: investigate how we accomplish the re-use of the Public Health Hospital; how we can achieve the objectives that were set for the project; and how we can address adequately the concerns raised by the community. Now, these workshops will begin on November 6th. They will be public, so please go to our website for

time and location. I want to thank all of you in advance who have agreed to participate in this process. We will be listening. So that's what's going on with the Public Health Hospital right now. Tennessee Hollow - Bob?

Bob Burke:

Yes. Well, at expense of spontaneity, I'm going to also stick fairly strictly to my notes because I'm attempting to speak on behalf of all the Board here, and I don't want to get it wrong. The Tennessee Hollow restoration project is a high priority of the Presidio Trust, and we're making significant progress. The Board and staff are in agreement that this project should proceed in accordance with the Presidio Trust Management Plan as soon as reasonably practical. Essential to any discussion of restoration plans for Tennessee Hollow is an understanding of the disposition of ball fields, both within the watershed and throughout the park. And, as noted earlier, on September 21st, the Trust hosted a public workshop on recreation. And there was an extensive discussion of ball fields, as well as an opportunity for public comment. More than 250 people attended. Most expressed their support for active recreation. And there was some concern that the Trust might reduce the number of ball fields. Others expressed concern that we would not be able to restore the watershed in Tennessee Hollow.

We would like to make it clear that we have a strong belief both in the importance of ball fields in the Presidio and the restoration of Tennessee Hollow watershed. We do not think that these objectives are mutually exclusive. In order to accomplish both, we intend to link the development of these two projects to assure that the interests of the

greatest number of people can be met. Let me take this opportunity to lay out for you the points around which there is consensus on the Trust Board and the foundations upon which we will build our decisions about Tennessee Hollow and the ball fields. First, we will create opportunities for the ecological restoration of the Tennessee Hollow watershed. It is our hope this watershed will eventually be one of the highlights of the Presidio restoration. Progress has already been made, and we are committed to moving forward.

Second, the Trust intends to maintain or slightly increase the current number of ball fields and locate any new fields in appropriate places in order to minimize park traffic and ecological disruption and in order to maximize operational efficiency. This is a critical link to the practicality of the Tennessee Hollow restoration.

Third, we will strive to provide broad community access to the Presidio's recreational facilities - as we have in the past, I might add. As part of our review, we intend to study the most equitable and efficient ways to allocate the uses of the fields.

Fourth, outside funding will be needed to increase the number of fields and to accomplish the Tennessee Hollow restoration. The Trust simply does not have the capital or operational revenues necessary to accomplish these two essentially and closely linked projects. Most ball field users will be expected to pay reasonable charges to maintain and operate the fields. Our success will depend on the generosity of the philanthropic community and all of you. We're not going to pass a

basket looking for contributions today, so you can relax about that.

[Laughter]

Finally - and here the staff sort of stole my thunder - I thought this was going to be my dramatic announcement, but it's already been said, and I believe there's a handout confirming this. But, nevertheless, I think it's important, particularly for people with an interest in ball fields. On November 15th, the Trust will host a follow-up workshop to the September 21st meeting a roll-up-your-sleeves planning session. We will ask for your suggestions about how we can make the best use of the recreational opportunities here at the Presidio. And that, I think, concludes my comments.

Dave Grubb: Thank you, Bob. With that, we're ready for public comment.

Lydia Beebe: No, no. Terri.

Craig Middleton: Terri's going to do it.

Dave Grubb: Terri's going to do it?

Lydia Beebe: Terri. Terri's going to give a little presentation about -

Dave Grubb: It's not on the script.

Craig Middleton: I'd like to invite Terri Thomas. Many of you know her - longstanding employee of both the National Park Service first and now, thankfully, the Presidio Trust. She's going to do a little brief slideshow on

biodiversity and some of the opportunities and challenges that some of you may know about, but many of you may not. Terri -

Terri Thomas:

I ask the Board if they can maybe join the audience for a minute to be able to view this as well. Thank you very much. It's a pleasure to be here tonight to share with you all some of things that live in the Presidio and their value. So what I'll briefly be talking to you about is a little bit about the history of biodiversity here and what the Presidio Trust and its partner organizations - and together with volunteers in the community - are accomplishing in preserving the biodiversity.

This is probably a little bit of what Crissy Field might have looked like in 1812. And in 1812, Great Britain sent the HMS Raccoon, which is a boat, over to the west coast to take over the fur trading posts out here on the west coast. And during that, they got some holes in their hull, and they had to pull up on Crissy Field Beach to fix the holes in the bottom of the boat.

At that point in time, one of the members - one of the sailors - recorded the following in his journal: "The country abounds in all sorts of wild beasts. Bears, wolves and mountain cats, which at times of young are exceedingly ferocious and destroyed a number of Indians. They never attacked any of us, however, except for one man in the woods cutting plants to repair the ship's bottom, and he was devoured. They also have an abundance of seals on their coast, but they make no manner of use of them, and they, like lawless animals, rove free and uncontrolled through the wilds of love."

Well, this is probably something like what the Crissy Field Marsh looked like minus the notes in there at that point in time, and now there aren't any of those large mammals anymore on the Presidio because, of course, the urban area has taken away the large habitats that those animals need. However, there is still a great value here. And it has been recognized both nationally and internationally. In 2000, the Nature Conservancy did an analysis of the United States biodiversity in a book called "Our Precious Heritage," and it analyzed the whole nation in terms of different numbers that they could put together in a black box and say, "Okay, where should we preserve biodiversity the most?"

The first map - the blue, the darkest ones - are the ones that have the most species in them - the states. The green are the ones that have the most endemics, which are species found nowhere else - just in that state, nowhere else in the world. And the final one - the orange and yellow one - is the ones that have the most rare species. And as you can tell, California stands out in all of them. But it wasn't just California. They did it more regionally, and when they did their whole analysis, they identified six hotspots for biodiversity. These are the places that if you put in the most energy, you're going to get the most enhancement of biodiversity. And, as you can see, three of them are really in California. And the San Francisco Bay Area is one of them. So we are one of the most important spots in the nation to work on the improvement of biodiversity. But it wasn't just nationally.

Internationally, California also has been recognized as one of the 25 hotspots identified by Conservation International and Population

International for preserving species. And, in fact, California - which is number eight up at the top - was the only place in North America that was identified as one of those hotspots. So if you put those two together, you can basically say that the San Francisco Bay Area is one of the most important places in the world to work on biodiversity. So why is that? You can kind of see the San Andreas Fault going right down there - what a great view of that. And, of course, that creates a lot of different geology types - a hodgepodge of rocks that come up because of that. The different geology produces different soils, and that allows for a lot of different plant communities. And that allows for a lot of different wildlife when you also have water and food available for the wildlife. Basically, in this area, we've got a real diversity of soil, water, wildlife and a climate that allows a lot of different things to live.

Why do we care? Why do we care about biodiversity? As Aldo Leopold said, "To keep every cog and wheel is a first precaution of intelligent tinkering." And to lose a species, you don't know what you're losing. You wouldn't dream of taking a clock apart and losing a couple of cogs and wheels and trying to put it back together. It's the same with biodiversity.

With that in mind, what do we have here? We're really lucky because our design landscapes provide habitats for a lot of different wildlife that you wouldn't see other places. Our natural habitats provide for the original biology of San Francisco that's still here. It has not yet gone away and we are able to provide for it here. And our historic forests actually add another component for biodiversity. We have

coastal scrub. We have a very rare community. In fact, this serpentine prairie is found very few other places in the world. Usually, a serpentine has scrublands. And in the Coastal Bay Area only, it provides many, many rare species. In fact, we have three federally listed endangered species on the Presidio in the serpentine grasslands. One is named after us, Presidio clarkia - and that, again, the original biology in San Francisco - Marin dwarf flax, Raven's Manzanita - which is the last plant of its kind in the wild in the world - named after Peter Raven. And we have a fourth endangered plant that's found in our local dune scrub community that's called the San Francisco lessingia - again, named after our own city. It's our own plant.

We have riparian communities that, of course, provide great wildlife habitat because they have water, cover and food, but not only that - our landscaped areas provide great habitat. You see these meadowlarks, which is the one on this side; Pygmy Nuthatch; and if you're really lucky, you can see a Great Blue Heron in our turf areas catching gophers - our natural biological controls for gophers. And also our designed landscapes have some uniqueness to them in that this Hooded Oriole right here is feeding a nest of very hungry chicks with their mouths open, and you see those only in our palm trees. And they have their nests in our palm trees, and they wouldn't even be up this far north if the Presidio didn't have palm trees here for them to be in.

Our forests also add a component where there are a lot more raptors or birds of prey here than there would be without the forest. We have 23 nests that provided birds of prey this year - Cooper's Hawks, Red-tailed Hawks, Red-shouldered Hawks, Great Horned Owls. Really

there are a lot of large birds you'll see flying around, not only during the day but also in the evening times. We have 12 different species of reptiles. We are doing a study this year on that. The Academy of Sciences is helping us out with an inventory of reptiles and amphibians. We have 20 different types of mammals that vary from gophers to bats, and we do have predators like foxes and even coyotes, and over 200 species of birds that fly through here, 80 of which nest. And the arrow that you see on this picture shows that they actually come from South America and Central America and Southern California to get here to nest. They're called neotropical migrants, and they come up here to the Presidio to nest. So we're very careful about bird nesting season and not disturbing those nests; those birds have worked so hard to get here.

This year we did a study of butterflies to see what was here, and there were 17 species of butterflies that we found. The Academy of Sciences actually has 34 from the [path], so we're going to work a little bit on the biodiversity of butterflies. Bees are a really good indicator of how good your restoration sites are doing, so we also did a look at bees, and we found 60 species of bees on the Presidio. And the researcher was really surprised. That's more than Bodega Bay. And they're all native species except for one.

We also have some kind of interesting individuals. For example, the White-crowned Sparrow in the Presidio has its very own song - different than anywhere else in San Francisco, let alone in the world. And it has been studied by the Academy of Sciences for years. And we have one of the last two quail populations in San Francisco that

we're really trying to restore habitat for, to be able to keep them viable. They're decreasing, and it's hard to keep those numbers up. But we're doing our best, because some species have gone extinct on the Presidio. The Xerces Blue Butterfly has gone extinct right here. And now the Xerces Society is the butterfly society that actually preserves butterflies throughout the country, and it started with that butterfly here. But butterflies are very dependent on plants, and we do have over 200 species of plants, 16 of which are rare.

That in mind, what are we doing to make sure that this rich, natural, original heritage of San Francisco can remain? One of the main things we're doing is working with volunteers to grow a lot of plants that can provide the habitat for these. Volunteers collect seeds; they grow plants in a native plant nursery that is run with our partners - the Parks Conservancy and the National Park Service; out-plant into the field; and weed, and weed, and weed, and weed to enable these communities to be able to stay viable. And then we monitor to make sure that the restoration is a success, change our management if it's not a success, and, eventually, we're able to see insects, birds, mammals, all of sorts of things return to those sites. And we have actually done that. In fact, Matt Blodnich, who's sitting right there, found the first Western Bluebird to be seen in the Presidio in a lot of years, and it was really exciting. It was in one of our restoration sites.

We monitor things like these mesocarnivores to find out what their behaviors are throughout the Presidio. A lot of people get concerned about predators in the Presidio - raccoons, skunks. We at least have an idea of how they behave, where they go and how to control them.

This is a quail monitoring. We'll monitor some of our birds and rare species so that we can really understand where they are. In fact, before we put these bands on these birds, everybody thought the quail just stayed in the Presidio. But they didn't. We found Presidio quail in Golden Gate Park, so they're actually somehow able to manage to hop over the 19th Avenue roads to get to Golden Gate Park. They don't fly really long, so it's a challenge for them. And we try to educate the public through a lot of different means, but especially with some signage that helps them to understand some of the things that the public and our residents and tenants can do to preserve biodiversity, like not to feed the wildlife and to keep their pets on a leash, pick up after pets and things like that.

I mentioned bird nesting season, and these birds come from a long distance. Basically, during the time that birds are nesting, we try to limit the amount of vegetation cutting we do here, and it's gotten to be just a tradition. We wait until after August 1st to start to cut a lot of the vegetation here - unless it's already shorter than 6 inches.

A lot of our animals get hit by traffic. In fact, most of our grey foxes, the way that they died was by traffic. So we're very careful to try to slow down traffic throughout the Presidio. Wildlife is also really attracted to garbage, and we don't want our wildlife to become bums and garbage wildlife, so we're really careful about the type of garbage cans and really careful about keeping up with the garbage that ends up being around the Presidio. And we ask all the public to do the same. Of course, on every drain it says, "Don't dump," because it leads to the

Bay. This picture really shows why. Those birds sit right at the storm drain outlets waiting for that fresh water to come out of the storm drains to do some of their fishing, and it's very important to keep that water clean.

The last thing that I wanted to mention that we do an awful lot of is teaching kids and allowing students from schools, as well as the public, opportunities to learn from the wildlife and the natural areas of the Presidio. Last year we gave over 300 classes and reached over 3,000 students in our education program.

To close, I'm going to quote "San Francisco Flora," which was written in 1955, and they said in there, "The fringe of natural wildlife in San Francisco has been trimmed very close. But there are still some precious tattered remnants. Before this wonderful flora," and I'll add fauna, "is finally and completely extinguished, one wishes that an adequate conservation barrier might be set up." I believe through the work of our volunteers and our partners that that conservation barrier has been set up, that we are preserving the Presidio and San Francisco's natural heritage so that future generations will be able to see that original biology here, have a higher quality of life and, at the same time, get to know the history of the Presidio. Thank you very much.

[Applause]

Dave Grubb: Thank you, Terri. That was great. Are we ready? We will start the same thing as we do usually - public comment limited to three

minutes. I will call the first three names. The first one is Jan Blum, the second one is Steven Krefting and then Ron Miguel. Hopefully, I have said those properly.

Jan Blum: Good evening members of the Board. Thank you for a very positive meeting. I'm here to represent the RAB tonight. My name is Jan Blum. And Doug Kern, who could not be here this evening, asked me to underline the message that you gave earlier about the need to move on RAP3. He hopes that the upper management will do everything they can to speed the process of decision making on the plan that has been put forth for those 30 remediation sites so that we don't lose another year of cleaning up the Presidio. Additionally, members of the RAB are always - as well as the Board members - are aware that we have a substantial funding gap in the remediation program at the present time. This will slow the Trust from cleaning up the Presidio to a pristine level. And while the RAB understands always the need to be sharp on the budget and to do budget cutting where necessary, we would urge you to put the same amount of energy into finding additional sources of funds through grants, through foundations and other organizations that can help us clean up the Presidio that may be an additional source of money that we have not yet taken advantage of. Thank you very much.

Dave Grubb: Thank you. Steven?

Steven Krefting: You did just fine with the name. Thank you. Steven Krefting. I convene the Presidio Environmental Council. I want to say what a spectacular program that was, Terri. Thank you so much. That really,

I think, summed up a lot of things that explain why many of us care so deeply about the Presidio. It is not just the rich history but also the rich flora and fauna here. There's lots we could always talk about, but tonight I really want to thank you for moving forward on the Tennessee Hollow restoration project.

I want to share a story. I lead a church hiking group and normally I take them out to either Mount Diablo or Mount Tam or the Headlands. A couple of Sundays ago on fleet week Sunday, as a matter fact, I took them on a hike in Tennessee Hollow and took them up over to Inspiration Point, where many crowds were standing to watch the planes, and all the way down through the Thompson Reach and down to the meeting with the Crissy Lagoon. I didn't know how folks would react because they're used to seeing really relatively pristine places. Obviously, Tennessee Hollow gave me an opportunity to tell them about what I do in my work on Presidio issues and also to show them some of the very special places, the rich history of El Polín Springs, obviously the views from Inspiration Point, also the great serpentine grassland up there, and also to show what the project was all about - what the hope was for this area. And they got really excited. They said it was one of the best hikes they've had. They just loved seeing not only what was there but what could be there and what was planned to be there. And I just want to tell you, I took that as a good gauge of how the public will react as Tennessee Hollow is restored. So I want to commend that to you.

The only other thing I might want to mention tonight is just a process recommendation. A lot of folks in San Francisco are used to dealing

with city and county government, and one thing that just if you want to think about to consider in the future is we're used to seeing boards meet in public. Granted, you're here and you're listening to us. We'd love to see you talk to each other. If you think about that at some point in time, that would be great.

Ron Miguel:

Thank you. We didn't talk to each other before the meeting. [Laughs] And I'm speaking this evening only for myself. The Act which established the Presidio Trust calls for its Board - you - to meet at least four times a year, and two of these meetings must be public. And tonight is supposed to be one of them. I challenge you that tonight's meeting neither fulfills the accepted definition of a meeting or the basic premise underlying the accepted concept of a public meeting. It's a definition for which every authority I've consulted uses two terms - assembly and discussion. Well, the Board's assembled, but it is not now, nor in previous so-called public meetings has it ever, actually engaged in anything which could be termed as discussion among itself.

As for the premise of a public meeting, I have had the pleasure, for the last 11 years, of teaching annual seminars of incoming grand jurors in California the duties and intricacies of the civil tasks that lay before them. Part of this concerns the California Brown Act - the public meeting act. Now, I know that this statute doesn't apply to a federal body such as yourselves. However, it does contain the basis for the concept of a public meeting. In the simplest of terms, it is that they be a noticed, regular meeting of an elected or appointed body, which is viewed by the public. This was without question the perceived intent

when the Trust was established. I don't know if the Trust Board met prior to 6:30 this evening. In past instances, I do know that they have. The public is not privy to those gatherings any more than it was to the meeting when you okayed the budget last month. However, you are not now, nor have you in previously entitled public meetings, ever engaged in actual discussion among yourselves as to the subjects under your authority, nor has the public ever witnessed you voting on anything.

In my considered opinion, to call this a meeting is a sham. I'm not arguing semantics. These gatherings could possibly be called hearings. After all, what you do principally is to sit there, hear what is presented from all of us - including myself - while we sit in the audience and hear reports. I, for one, would greatly appreciate your changing your own procedures and allowing the public to physically witness the workings of the Presidio Trust Board. In the future, have as many hearings as you may feel productive, but please actually hold at least two of your public meetings in open and not behind closed doors. Thank you.

Dave Grubb: The next three are Gary Widman, Martha Walters and Red Kernan.

Gary Widman: Well, thank you. I'm Gary Widman, president of the Fort Point and Presidio Historical Association, and shortly following my remarks you'll hear from our vice president, Red Kernan, and our remarks and suggestions should be construed together.

I was recently asked to prepare a short paper by your colleague, Nancy Conner, outlining what we would like to see in a Presidio history museum. And I'm sorry that she's not here tonight to receive that paper, and I'm not going to read it. I have given copies to Mr. Grubb and to Craig. But I would like to touch on some of the aspects that are mentioned in that paper. And, incidentally, it's great to see Terri Thomas' presentation. We look forward to the time when you'll put equal effort into preserving the human history as well as the natural history of the Presidio. We're encouraged that Craig has assured us that he will soon take step one and hire a history advocate within the Presidio Trust staff.

The Presidio is really a unique place for history in the American West. And the people who were here - if they were to tell their stories - could give you a very complete relation of the history of the United States from 1776 to the present. And it's those stories that a history center should tell to the public. Some of the goals for a Presidio museum or history center I'm just going to briefly mention. I'm not going to mention them all but just a few of them.

One - the primary goal should be education, not storing of military artifacts. Primary goal should be the teaching of American history. Two - the exhibits should present and cover the span of history really from prehistoric to contemporary times. Three - the center could be on the leading edge of electronic media using game technology to present historic subject matter. And since the principal tenant of the Presidio is one of the nation's leaders in that technology, we hope that you could establish a combination that would make a Presidio museum a

showplace for education and the description of history. A guiding principle should be that no one era or no one group has a monopoly on setting out a “correct story” of past events. A special aspect of the center should be an attempt to present the past through the differing perspectives held by different groups during the different time periods involved. The center should work in cooperative programs with area universities and colleges. And they’re anxious to join; we’ve spoken with them. For example, it could present their work product in archeological investigation and interpretation and could provide educational opportunities in museum and archive management and presentation technology.

A museum center would be a visitor destination, and drawing tens of thousands of people to the Presidio would have an enormous impact on the Presidio’s own financial situation, the financial situation of its tenants and those in the surrounding areas. After all, San Francisco draws 16 million visitors annually; a very good slice of those could come to the Presidio. The center could be an institutional base for cataloging the multi-million piece Presidio artifact collection now held by the Park Service without a place to be presented. It could be a place for traveling exhibits.

And we think that the time has really come to establish a foundation that can work on a museum or a history center and get it started, and that the founding members of that foundation really should be representatives of your own Board, the Park Service, local historians, area universities, interested groups such as ourselves, and Consul Generals of Spain and Mexico. We think that a Presidio museum

would be the best investment you could make - both in terms of public values and in terms of financial values - for the Presidio. Please listen to Mr. Kernan's comments along the same line when he speaks.

Thank you.

Craig Middleton: Thank you. Martha Walters.

Martha Walters: Hi, I'm Martha Walters. I am the chair of the Crissy Field Dog Group, and, as many people in this room know, the whole dog management issue within the GGNRA is very controversial. One of the things that really confuses and sort of takes us all by surprise is the nonparticipation of the Presidio Trust in this negotiated rulemaking. You have Marin County, you have San Francisco and San Mateo counties, and then there's this big gaping hole of 1,100 acres. It's called the Presidio Trust, and nobody's participating. And we're going through the NEPA process as well as the negotiated rulemaking process. You're under the same jurisdiction as everybody else, so it would be great to have the Presidio Trust participate. We have asked you to participate. Every Board member here has been given a letter about a year or so ago; nobody responded. We went to Nancy Pelosi; nobody responded. We understand it's a really controversial issue, but we also know it's something that really needs to be addressed. There are a lot of people who live here in the Presidio who have dogs. I believe at the last count it was between 400 and 500 dogs. It needs to be managed. Whatever the outcome is, your participation is really vital to the success of the overall process. Thank you.

Redmond Kernan: Good evening, I'm Redmond Kernan, vice president of Fort Point Presidio Historical Association, and let me just run through some things. I think you've got a very good staff of people, and I think you are all good people who come together to do good work. You've got a good executive director. I do think, however, that on the horizon and in your work plan, there's something missing, and that's a piece of the visitor experience that has to do with the human occupancy of the Presidio and what the Presidio represents in terms of the history of the west of the United States. There was a report put out in response to a request from Congress called the National Association of Public Administration, and it said, "raise the visitor experience to the level of real estate." I don't think that's yet been accomplished in the way it should be. I would suggest you look at that and see how to do that.

In meetings with your executive director, he's going to add some staff, and we applaud that. But we think that you need to create - in your minds - a vision of what the end product is. None of you in your business lives proceed without having a view of where you're going, so let's create that. Doyle Drive is a huge project which is moving along, been approved, but it's going to be twice as big as the current Doyle Drive, and it has an impact on the real estate and on the national historic landmark, which the Presidio is a national landmark. And that can be mitigated by funds from that project going to explaining what the Presidio is all about. So look at that opportunity. There is in the 106 process, which is a section of the federal code which says mitigate what you're doing if it affects the historic issues. And there is the possibility of having some funds directed towards some beginning of the interpretation of the Presidio. What we think we - Fort Point -

need with you is a way to agree on a vision of the future. And I would suggest a process which would be that a committee of your Board meet with Fort Point and others that are concerned and have a series of discussions to come to some closure on what a common view would be of what that vision should be. Gary Widman, our president, laid out a view. Let's discuss it. Let's get into a dialog. Let's talk about what that should be. Let's bring in the historic community in the Bay Area - - Oakland Museum; UC, Stanford - there are a lot Stanford of connections here; USF; Santa Clara; etc. - and say, "Hey, you, the historic professors, what are the stories? How do we use the venue of the Presidio to help project that? What can we learn from it?" There's a lot to be learned.

I would urge you to meet with your director and set up a process of having a discussion about those issues. I applaud you for listening. I do share with my president of my PAR association the fact that there isn't more robust discussion so that we can all get in a round table. But think about that. And I look forward to working with you on a vision of the future. Thank you.

Dave Grubb: Thank you. The next three are Robert Sindalar, Gary Fergus and Claudia Lewis.

Robert Sindalar: Good evening. My name is Robert Sindalar. I'm with the Presidio Community YMCA, and I just wanted to briefly thank you and applaud you on what you set forth for the restoration of Tennessee Hollow and balancing the ball fields. I think it shows a real leadership commitment in terms of saying that this doesn't have to be an either/or

situation. And I'm very excited by your commitment to maintain or increase the number of ball fields and making them accessible to a wide variety of people and engaging the community in that process. I look forward to joining you on November 15th to start working on that and also to be a partner in securing philanthropic support for that effort because I think there's a real opportunity that, if we all work together, there are going to be people that are going to want to support this initiative. So that was very encouraging. Thank you.

Dave Grubb: Thank you.

Gary Fergus: Members of the Board, my name is Gary Fergus. I'm a member of the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee set up by the Department of Interior to deal with the dog management issues. I thank you for your time tonight, and I also enjoyed watching the presentation which was probably the best evidence that you can have biodiversity, you can have survival of all of these different species and plant interests, with also having the participation and the use and enjoyment of the Presidio by the citizens of the City of San Francisco and visitors. Why is that important? Because for the past 40 or 50 years and continuing to this day in the Presidio, on a daily basis, there are individuals in this community who walk their dogs, who walk them off-leash, as part of what was the 1979 pet policy that you're all aware of. I join the comments of Martha Walters, who is also a member of the committee, in pleading with you to participate - to join the dialog. You are the governing body for the hole that she was referring to that sits in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Now, some of you may not recall, but in 2001, I believe it was in this exact room when the old

advisory board was meeting, and there were over 1,000 people here to speak on this issue. It was a very important issue for people who live in the community and use the Presidio. As a matter of policy, your silence is deafening.

There is a process to bring together the environmental groups, government, conservation associations to try to find a policy that will work. You have committed in your trail plan, you've acknowledged the issue and committed to participate. And you decided not to. We urge you. We need your participation. You have a valuable voice. We encourage you to speak. Thank you.

Dave Grubb: Thank you.

Claudia Lewis: Good evening, members of the Trust. My name is Claudia Lewis, and I'm the president of Richmond Presidio Neighbors. First, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you tonight for delaying the Record of Decision on the Public Health Service Hospital project. We applaud your decision to postpone that and to invite more involvement from the community and others opposed to the current project. We view this as a positive step. We also hope that, in creating the working groups to discuss this in the coming weeks, there is genuine dialog with participants who are open and flexible to really rethinking the current plan. Because, as you said earlier, there were over 300 people in this room on June 15th, all of whom opposed the project. They were from many diverse groups, from the Sierra Club to neighborhood groups to the Golden Gate Audubon Society. It's not very common that you have a development project that generates opposition that's all

united. So somehow we must be all thinking in a responsible fashion about this.

The group that has been invited so far, I think, is a group of dedicated and concerned individuals who really are committed to coming up with a plan for redevelopment of the hospital that's in keeping with the park values and that furthers the objectives of the national park. Our concerns are really not just about size and traffic. While neighborhood groups may have initially become involved because of those concerns, the passion we now have is much greater than that. And the question we have is whether it is appropriate to populate a national park with high-end luxury apartment dwellers in the first place. Our passion is about preserving the park for public enjoyment. This should be the paramount interest that all Presidio development projects serve. For, after all, the hospital is on public land.

We've just heard an incredibly eloquent presentation about how precious this natural habitat is. The hospital sits as a southern gateway to the park. It is on the edge of incredible open space that will be even more beautiful when the Baker Beach housing comes down. It is right in the middle of an important wildlife corridor. We truly hope that the group that meets to think about what's best for the Public Health Service Hospital site is open to creative thinking, and we're not just tinkering with what the windows look like, how many stories there are or what the entrance hallways should be. Thank you.

Dave Grubb:

Thank you. Mark Weinstock and Neal Desai, I think is how you say it.

Mark Weinstock: My name's Mark Weinstock. I also have a comment and question about the Public Health Services Hospital. I also commend you that you have delayed the decision to think about it a little bit more and hear what some of us have said. I think it's great that you're going to try to accomplish re-use and achieve the objectives, as you said earlier. I think we're all in favor of that. But I do think, as Claudia said, and, as you know, it was pretty obvious from the previous, as Ron said, public assembly that every single interested party, including the National Park Service, the City of San Francisco, was pretty much against the full build-out of the hospital with its beautiful wings for high-end apartments. That just doesn't seem to be the right solution.

So now you're telling us that we should be meeting with your development partner, Forest City. We've talked to them, and their initial thing is they say they'll build whatever size and whatever the Trust wants. But Forest City also says the Trust still wants a full build-out of the hospital. So should we not be meeting with the Trust itself? Should we not have a true meeting, a true discussion? We do have some creative ideas -our neighborhood, some of the other groups. We're all pretty much in agreement about what might work - some sort of out-of-the-box ideas, not just luxury housing. They might be a bit different than what an \$8 billion REIT might want to develop, perhaps a little less profitable to the developer, but still profitable to the Trust, but yet have a lot less impact on the park. Hopefully, we can find a solution that works for the park and works for the neighbors. I think it's very possible, but I think that it's going to take everybody to do that, not just having the developer sort of calm us down or meet with

us. I don't think that's the answer. Hopefully, we can have a true discussion. Thank you.

Neal Desai:

Hi. My name is Neal Desai. I'm with the National Parks Conservation Association. For those of you who do not know about us, we were formed in 1919, and we have existed to protect and preserve our national parks for future generations. And I'm glad to hear that the Presidio has been referred to as a national park here and not a city park and not an urban park. It is an urban national park, and it's good to hear that - that that's acknowledged.

Of particular interest to NPCA is the Tennessee Hollow restoration project, and thank you for moving forward with that. There are obviously funding challenges, and we're well aware of that with the National Park Service. But we look forward to working with you folks, as well as the staff, the various stakeholders involved here in San Francisco, to seeing that this restoration takes place. We have an opportunity here for the whole National Park System to show what a great urban restoration project can look like. A lot of other national parks in urban areas - like Gateway in New York and Santa Monica, and L.A. - don't have that opportunity. Like what we've seen here on the presentation, there's a lot to be preserved. And thank you, Terri, for putting that together. Thank you for moving forward, and we look forward to working with you.

Dave Grubb:

Thank you.

Craig Middleton: I just wanted to respond, Mark, to what you had to say - or one aspect of it. And that is your concern that the discussion would be with the developer and not with the Trust. I don't think that's our intention in setting up this working group and these meetings over the next four to six weeks; we intend to be very much involved in that.

Dave Grubb: With that, thank you all very much, and we adjourn the meeting. The time is 7:40. I've got to say the time.

[End Meeting]