

PRESIDIO TRUST PUBLIC BOARD MEETING – October 24, 2013

NOTE: The following is the best transcript available of the public Board meeting of the Presidio Trust Board of Directors held on October 24, 2013. It is based upon an audio recording of the meeting.

[Start of recorded material]

Nancy Bechtle: Good evening, everybody. I would like to call the meeting of the Presidio Trust to order. It is now 6:40, and this meeting will be recorded, and the transcript will be on our Web site. I would like to, for the record, tell you which Board members are here – John Reynolds, Paula Collins, Bill Hambrecht. I'm Nancy Bechtle. Alex Mehran, Charlene Harvey, and Dave Grubb. Can I have approval of the minutes?

Male Voice: Seconded.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. All those in favor, please say "aye."

In Unison: Aye.

Nancy Bechtle: Okay. So, this, the Board Chair's report is – I'm not going to really talk about anything except the mid-Crissy project, because I think that's why we have such a wonderful turnout tonight. We are here to listen to all of you. Thank you for coming. This has been a very public process. I hope you like the process that we've taken.

We have had public input before. And now we are here to listen to what you have to say. I also would like to thank the teams that have

submitted the proposals to us. It's been an interesting process. I think everybody knows we had 16 proposals that were submitted. We have now narrowed it down to three. These are three very, very interesting proposals.

I've actually got to tell you that I have no idea what is going to be the outcome of all of this. So, I think at times, you think that we all know what we're doing. But I don't think that any of us have made up our minds on anything yet. I'd like to talk a little bit about the process that we're going to be taking from now on.

After this public meeting, we will be meeting individually with each one of the teams. We want to do that after we have the public meeting, after we've heard all of your questions and statements, because we thought that that would be a time that we can discuss with them what we hear. Frank Dean, I don't know if Frank is here tonight, but Frank, who is the Superintendent of the park will be with us during all of these – for the discussions, but not during the deliberations.

As I think you all know, the deliberations are really among the seven people that are the Board members here. Six of us were appointed by the President of the United States. And the seventh person was appointed by the Secretary of the Interior. And I would like to assure you that each one of us takes our responsibilities very, very seriously.

We know how fabulous this site is, and we intend to make this the best that it can possibly be. We are not obligated to take any of these proposals. We want to have whoever or whatever goes in there, it has to rise to the level of what – of the site that it is. It is the most beautiful site, I don't know, in the western United States, in the entire United States, in the globe, I don't know.

But it is a beautiful site, and we honor it. So, when we get into the regular meeting after Craig's report, as you know, each speaker will be allowed two minutes. And I'd like to say that if your question or your statement has already been made, you are not obligated to take these two minutes. You can say, "I agree with so-and-so," or "I am for such-and-such," and we will certainly take note of it.

As you know, the passions have been running pretty high on all of this. It's because we all love this place so much. So, I would like to request, and I think we all feel very strongly, that you respect each other's opinions and respect the proposals and each other – respect each other and the proposals that have been submitted.

The Board members will not really engage in discussion with the speakers, but they may make a comment at one time or another. Is that buzz humming, or is that something else? Anyway, as you can see, this is a beautiful site. It's just at the roadway that is going in. It's going to be a perfectly magnificent bluff in not too long.

So, as I said, we're all very respectful of the site. And we want it to be absolutely as spectacular – whatever goes in there as spectacular as it can be. So, I'll turn it over to Craig, our Executive Director.

Craig Middleton: Thank you, Nancy. And I love these words: Welcome to the Presidio. I get to say them a lot in this role, and I really love it. There is no doubt – and I think we can all agree – we may not agree on a whole lot, but we're going to agree on this, that there is no doubt that the Presidio is really a treasured place, a nationally important place, a local treasure, the birthplace of San Francisco, really an asset for community and our country that is unparalleled.

And the Presidio Trust is proud to work alongside the National Park Service in stewarding this place. And I wanted to acknowledge and welcome Howard Levitt, who is here from the National Park Service, a longtime friend, and has been with the GGNRA for a long time. So, thank you, Howard, for being here.

We're here tonight to provide a public forum to hear from you on your views relative to the three proposals for the mid-Crissy site, a site currently occupied by the Sports Basement. And for those of you who, like I do and I think everyone on this panel does, loves Sports Basement, don't worry. Sports Basement is not going away. Sports Basement is just going to move down the street a little bit. So, we look forward to having Sports Basement as a longtime tenant of the Presidio. But the mid-Crissy site is really important to

our goal of welcoming the public by providing a diverse set of experiences for people here.

And I just wanted to mention a couple of other things that are going on at the same time that you should know about. We're opening a new restaurant in partnership with local chef Traci Des Jardins. And we expect that to open on the Main Post on Valentine's Day. So, think about that.

The reopening of the completely rehabilitated oldest building in San Francisco, the Officers' Club, in late spring. And that will be the site of a Heritage Center, an events facility, and another restaurant.

And as Nancy mentioned, we will soon plan, begin the planning process, for this bluff area, which will be a visitor hub anchored by a new Visitors' Center – ten acres of beautiful parkland that will stretch over the roadway once the roadway is put into tunnels, and once again, reconnect Crissy Field and the Main Post.

So, we come to tonight in this project. We have undertaken a very open and a rigorous process, a transparent process, to select a partner for the redevelopment of the mid-Crissy site. And I want to thank at this point each of the teams who not only have gotten to this point in the competition, but even those teams who originally responded to our Request for Concept Proposals. So, thank you very much.

And finally, at the onset of the process, we identified six project goals that have been foundational. And with your indulgence, I'd like to just read them again for you.

Number one: enhance the visitor experience at the Presidio.

Two: provide programmatic offerings that are fresh and vital, that connect to broader themes, and that stimulate imagination and creativity, offer cross-disciplinary programming that can be effective in advancing knowledge that has broad and lasting relevance.

Number three: be compatible with the natural and cultural setting along the Crissy Marsh and San Francisco Bay, and conform to the Trust's mid-Crissy design guidelines.

Number four: complement current uses and activity in the Presidio, and integrate well with plans for Crissy Field and the Main Post.

Five: welcome a broad cross-section of the community in a manner that reflects and reaffirms the public nature of the Presidio.

And six: be economically viable.

To recap the process thus far, after a public engagement in 2011 that resulted in the development of mid-Crissy design guidelines. We in 2012, November, just about a year ago, put out a Request for

Concept Proposals. As Nancy mentioned, in March, we received 16 responses. And these responses were evaluated by the Board on the basis of these six goals that I mentioned. In May, we invited three teams to submit detailed proposals. In June, the three final teams presented their concept proposals to the public. In July, the public was invited to informal open houses with each team. The final proposals were received in September from each of the three teams. And then on September 23rd, each team presented its proposal to the public.

So, here we are tonight. And tonight, the Board looks forward to hearing from you about these projects. We will then interview teams. The staff is developing analytical tools, working with consultants. And many of those tools, things like photo simulations, will become available to the public. These tools will help us evaluate the proposals, along with your comments.

And over the next couple of months, we will indicate to you what our direction is. But I want to be clear. In case that's not enough process, I want to be clear that there's still more. And this evening does not mark the end of the public process or the public conversation.

Most of you know and are familiar with the National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA, and the National Historic Preservation Act. And these processes include these Acts, include processes that involve the public. So, we will be having throughout the spring more

meetings in which we will hear your public comment. We've learned a lot from this process so far, and I hope you have too.

And we really appreciate the degree of public involvement and interest. I think it's a testament to how important the Presidio is in our city's history and to our city's future, how amazing it is in its enduring magic, and how amazing it is in terms of how it continues to stimulate the imagination, stir creativity, and result in projects as good as the ones that we've got tonight.

So, I'll stop. I wanted to just offer a quick thought about public comment tonight. When I worked years ago for a member of Congress, there was this rule in the House of Representatives. It's called the "one minute." And because there were 435 members of the House of Representatives, each member would get one minute to make a statement about whatever the person wanted – whatever was on the floor at the time.

It's amazing what you can say in one minute. And I just say that as a way of asking you to respect the time and respect each other's time. So, thank you for being here. We look forward to this conversation and many in the future. And with that, I'll turn it back to you, Nancy.

Nancy Bechtle: Okay, thank you. I think we'll just start the public comment now. And what I would ask is that everybody who wants to sign up, I have a lot of these here. We do not have 450, I'm glad to say. But

each person will be limited to two minutes. Staff will hold up when one minute remains – where is that person? Over there. One minute. And then the same person will hold up 30 seconds. And please be respectful of this. A bell will ring when the speaker is done. Should we do that once more. Please speak directly into the microphone so that your questions or comments will be recorded accurately. As is our custom here, former Board members of the Presidio Trust are asked to speak first. So, we have a couple of them who are here, Amy Meyer and Bill Reilly. Good evening, Amy.

Amy Meyer: Good evening and thank you. Craig, I'm going to ask [unintelligible] right time. But would you please tell us what happened to the study that was being done of the site?

Craig Middleton: There are a number of studies going on. I did mention the photo simulations, which we usually do for all projects. And that is ongoing now. That will be something we'll ultimately make public, not in the distant future, but as soon as we have a chance to confirm accuracy and that kind of thing.

And at the risk of not impinging on your two minutes, I will say that in general, what I hope to do tonight is to hear from you. And so, we probably won't be answering a lot of questions. If you have questions, put them down on cards, and we'll certainly get back to you. Thanks, Amy.

Amy Meyer: First of all, I want to thank the Trust for improving the process. It's been a good process to work in. And you are looking at a wonderful opportunity, a legacy opportunity out here at the commissary site. It really divides into two parts – land use and program. And the fit, the size, and the nature of what the Parks Conservancy has proposed, it fits. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: We will subtract those three seconds, five seconds. Reset the watch.

Amy Meyer: Thank you. The proposed use of the site by the Parks Conservancy is the one that is most respectful of it, both in time and the way it fits into the landscape. Relatively speaking, the Lucas building is unrelated to the site. And very fortunately, this morning, John King published an article about a very good alternative for his very fine concept.

He's thought of a museum which is the genuine beaux-arts building, that is, the Palace of Fine Arts that is vacant. As far as the programs go, the Presidio Exchange, the PX, really makes use of something that is in three parts – the Visitors' Center, where visitors will get oriented to the Presidio; the Heritage Center, where they'll have a chance to see some exhibits, go to some programs.

But they're relatively small. The total amount of space there is 16,000 square feet for those programs. But here at the PX, it would be possible to do much more and do it in relationship to the out of

doors as well as the programs inside. They propose working with partners such as National Geographic and Stanford University. The main thing is that it relates to the site indoors and out.

A million people a year come to Crissy Field. And it would be important to be able to reach out to them. And it's a most diverse group of people. As I said, it's a legacy project in a very special place. Every major event in the west, in some way or another, went through the Presidio for probably 150 years. And it means a lot that we would have a group, an organization that would take charge of this site, that would really respect that, enlarge upon it, and make it available to people from here and from everywhere else. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Okay. Bill Reilly?

Bill Reilly: Thank you, and I'm pleased to be heard early in this Presidio World Series, contributing tonight. I'll try to do as well as Amy and keep it to the time, although I have more that I would like to say.

Well, I want to speak this evening as one who has been intimately involved with the Presidio beginning when I visited here as EPA administrator and agreed to the request that Jim Harvey made that we not list it as a Superfund site, which would have rather severely affected the interest of the market and the residents in living here. Well, in the months after I left EPA, I was heavily involved with Harvey and with Toby Rosenblatt in designing the Trust and then in

testifying before Congress and in lobbying to get it into law and to fund it.

When George Lucas appeared before the Trust to defend his proposal to build the Letterman Digital Arts facility, I was the trustee who pressed him to do more. And I reminded him that the building's presence in a national park was a very great privilege. "We need more," I said. He said, "What do you want?" Speaking for the Trust, I said, "A museum of the digital arts," recognizing that the technology, the art form, was uniquely the creation of the Bay Area and of Lucas himself. From my chair in the hearing room, I heard his lawyer say, "Let's take some time with this." Lucas disregarded that advice. He said simply, "I'll do it."

We the trustees included his commitment, which became our commitment, in the contract approving the building of Digital Arts and Magic. He put up three million dollars as earnest money, toward the museum. And now the moment has come for both sides to honor that commitment. Some years ago, as president of The Conservation Foundation, we published a report, "National Parks for a New Generation."

The Presidio, with a major and popular museum and a world-class collection of N.C. Wyeth, Norman Rockwell, a collection which dazzled Washington when it was shown at the Smithsonian, and set a record for visitation and viewing, is exactly the kind of modern national park in an urban setting we had in mind.

Many of the world's great museums are in parks and dozens are in national parks, fully funded, with ample underground parking raised up sufficiently to accommodate the expected sea level rise. That cannot be said of any other proposal under consideration.

This is obviously the major decision that this Trust will make on its watch. It will be remembered. I think its like will not come again. The opportunity for a world-class museum, I think, is a marvelous one to the Presidio, to San Francisco and to the country. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. Okay. I'm going to call now three at a time – David Bancroft, Paul Epstein and Nick Ballani. And if you could identify yourselves when you come up there.

David Bancroft: I'm David Bancroft, a longtime Presidio neighbor and fan. I am speaking tonight in favor of the Conservancy's PX proposal. In doing so, I asked myself three questions, questions that I think you either have or will be inevitably asking yourselves.

The first one is – do you want, A, a facility that will enhance the visitor experience of the Presidio as the Presidio, its history, natural environment, and connection to other national parks and to the world, or do we want a major attraction, in this instance, a significant private illustrator art collection and digital image

facility, but which will have at best an attenuated tangential connection to the Presidio?

Second, A – do we want a building whose architecture, layout and site orientation is compatible with the Presidio environs, or B – would we prefer a building whose both architecture and size is imposing and based on a historical reference, but one that is nowhere present on the Presidio?

And finally, three – in the environmental assessment which must be done after the preferred alternative is selected, do we want A, a proponent's plans which [unintelligible] of being adaptable to those environmental requirements? And once those plans are set, do we want to work with a proponent who has a proven track record of working with the Trust on the adaptation of projects? Or do we want a facility that will be much more difficult to square with environmental requirements, and was built to house someone's own materials and presentations? I, along with many of us who care dearly about this place, hope that your answers to these questions will be A, A, and A. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

Paul Epstein: Good evening. I'm Paul Epstein, and I've worn a couple of different hats dealing with the Presidio for many years. But I'm speaking tonight as an individual. Craig Middleton's opening

comments triggered a thought. And really, it's a thought which is the point that I would like to make this evening.

And that is, we do need a complex attraction on the commissary site which has a certain richness to it. And I think that richness should be based on what Congress has mandated in the creation of the Presidio Trust Act. And that includes preserving the cultural and historical integrity of the Presidio. So, I think what happens on that space needs to be something which is central to the Presidio and respects the history and culture.

Now, a lot of things have happened in these early years of the Presidio in terms of rebuilding, preserving, filling spaces. And that's all to the good. It's now self-sufficient. There is, however, a road map which would assist the Presidio to fulfill its role as a manager of a national park. And that is the Presidio Interpretive Plan, the PIP, which I'm sure you're familiar with.

It specifies a vision for interpretation and education, visitor experience goals, and themes. And it relies heavily on a partnership of the National Park Service, the Trust, and the Conservancy. And the way to implement a respectful program in the Presidio is with the PX proposal. Thank you.

Nick Ballani:

Hello, I'm Nick Ballani. I'm representing the Coalition to Save Ocean Beach Friends of Sutro Park tonight. And we do support the PX project [unintelligible] a couple of the reasons why. One, it

provides the best possible programming for the site that fits in with the area, teaching about the Presidio, teaching kids, teaching things about the history of what, as Craig said, founded San Francisco.

The other part that I mentioned is the Conservancy is bringing loyalty to the neighborhoods. And I want to talk about the neighborhoods that surround the Presidio, not just the Presidio here. I'm also the VP [unintelligible] Association for the Richmond.

And one thing through the Coalition to Save Ocean Beach Friends of Sutro Park, one thing about being a park, the Conservancy always has bred a loyalty to the Presidio, to the groups that are outside of the Presidio. And that's something that needs to be said, that the neighborhoods will help and be part of the Presidio.

Howard here knows how we come out, how the group Friends of Sutro Park Coalition to Save Ocean Beach, do cleanups. They help out at Sutro Park. They help out at Land's End because of the loyalty that the Conservancy has brought to us. And that's something that needs to be brought up. That loyalty issue is something. So, I hope you take that into consideration. I hope you all have a good day, and talk to you all soon.

Nancy Bechtle: William Shepard, Sharon Gadberry and Richard Rapaport.

William Shepard: Good evening. I'm Bill Shepard. There are two letters that set forth a responsible analysis of the criteria to be applied in your

decision-making. And one of those letters, of course, is Superintendent Frank Dean's letter of September 23rd. I hope you've all had a chance to review that letter. It's rich with wisdom and insight.

There's a second letter that was submitted to you just yesterday by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. It also provides excellent insights in applying the criteria to this project. And I urge you to carefully consider both of these letters in your deliberations and evaluation of the three competitors for this coveted project.

Additionally, the association that I'm connected with, the Neighborhoods Associations for Presidio Planning, submitted a letter to you on October 17th. And it provides a concise analysis comparing how these three proposals comply with the relevant criteria.

That analysis demonstrates why the PX is indeed the best choice. It's fundamentally compatible with the site, the Presidio, the parkland, the Presidio Interpretive Plan, and each of the project goals. Neither of the other two proposals is compatible with the site or the Presidio. Neither meets all six goals for the project.

The PX is the only proposal that meets the goals. And additionally, it's flexible in its design and its concept to allow it to evolve and adapt to change over time. We submit that the PX is the right choice for the site. Thank you.

Sharon Gadberry: Hello, I'm Sharon Gadberry. The PX proposal. It's cutting-edge. It's multidimensional. It's a cultural facility with a strikingly creative design that respects the site and respects the parkland. As a member of the board of Neighborhood Associations for Presidio Planning, I applaud the PX plans for participatory education and learning programming.

As a member of the board of the Presidio Historical Association, I appreciate the fact that the PX promises to explore the Presidio's history, culture and natural areas. As a board member of the Planning Association for the Richmond, I look forward to the PX providing live entertainment, exhibits, lectures and workshops.

The PX will be welcoming, fun, a positive place, while truly enhancing the visitor's experience. It will serve as a place for connecting visitors with all aspects of the Presidio's past, present and future. Thank you. And I finished early. I get credit.

Richard Rapaport: I'll take that extra time if you want. No, I won't. I'm sorry. Look out of these windows. And even at night, you can see why it is so important to get it right, and get it right the first time.

We having this process, and hopefully what will ultimately be the product, is a wonderful and virtually unprecedented opportunity to advance the cause of the Presidio, to make something that future San Franciscans will look at and recall with pride how they

participated in a process that produced a future that exemplifies most of all what we love about San Francisco at its best, and to strive for ways to achieve that wonderful future. The Presidio PX Plan works, and that's really all you need to say. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. Okay. We have Doug McConnell, Paul Wermer and Gail [A. F.] Jennings.

Doug McConnell: Well, I'll take all that extra time. No, I'll try to move along quickly. And I'm Doug McConnell. I'm just speaking for myself here. I'll refer to my reporter's notebook. I was just, after all the words that have already been spoken on behalf of the PX Exchange, I'm an enthusiastic supporter of that idea. It's the right idea, the right place, with the right organization to give it life.

From my point of view, it sort of becomes the natural organic epicenter of the park's ecosystem, connecting all aspects of the Presidio physically, and the larger park both programmatically and virtually. It will connect all of us to each other and our national park. This has always been a park for the people – of the people, by the people, and for the people, and that's embedded in the concept of the PX Exchange.

It will connect the park to the iconic stories of our region and the world beyond. As we know, this place is so central to so many themes all around us. It will be open, flexible and adaptive. But it will also incorporate some real meat and substance to it. So, I think

it will become the premier place for people to gather and become engaged with their national park.

The opportunities for programs, participation and storytelling, to me are just virtually endless in this, as I try to imagine the 21st century with this terrific space there, open and adaptable to the changes of our years ahead.

And finally, the Conservancy, 32 years, and it has proven that it has the vision, that it has the capacity, that it has the leadership, and that it has the tenacity to raise the funds and raise the friends to bring a world-class destination to life in this world-class place. So, good luck. It's a big decision, and I wish you well.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

Paul Wermer: Good evening. My name is Paul Wermer. There has been a lot of good stuff said that I really don't want to expand on. I am here strongly in support of the PX proposal. The Parks Conservancy, I think, has demonstrated a real sense of community, and has demonstrated the ability to carry through on their proposals and plans.

I'd like to talk a little bit about the site and the importance. When we're talking about buildings, we're talking about things that have a long life. They will be there for a long time. I'm reminded of some

temporary barracks around here as an example of just how long even temporary buildings stay around.

Here, we're talking about a prime, an incredible site. And while the buildings can stay around for a long time, uses, intents, means of engaging with people change over time. And I think it's very important when you look at the proposals that you evaluate the ability of the proposal to adapt over time to meet changing ways of interacting with the public, and changing interests of the public, and how our understanding of the history and the natural history evolve as we dig deeper and learn more.

And the other thing I just want to do is put a quick pitch for that excellent set of questions that Supervisor Dean submitted in his letter on this matter. I think those are key to understanding the right solution. Thank you.

Gail Jennings: Good evening. My name is Gail Jennings. Creativity is truly the seed upon which all ideas, whether they are scientific discovery or invention, or a book, or a piece of art, come from that would spark the brain, awaken it to look beyond what is and to what could or can be.

The Lucas Cultural Arts Museum is not only a beautiful piece of architecture, one that continues the beauty of the San Francisco Bay's coastal area, but it is also a museum that is alive, in the sense

that it will be the spark, the genesis of creative ideas, pieces of art, and all mediums for centuries.

San Francisco, since its conception, has always been a city of the world. So, any museum or cultural place that is created here is not just for the people who live in San Francisco, but also those throughout the world who consider this city also their city. The Lucas Cultural Arts Museum, like the Louvre in Paris, the National Gallery in London, and other magnificent museums, will be a point of destination for the citizens of the world because it has been created for the world to see and experience.

To limit this site for projects for anything other than the Lucas Cultural Arts Museum would be limiting access to the world of this new kind of museum – a museum not only filled with a vast and diverse art collection, but a museum which will spark and teach storytelling through digital and action film media, a museum that will be the creative seat and will nurture discoveries, inventions, other artistic mediums, a museum for everyone no matter their age nor their country.

My hope is that the Presidio Trust Board sees the importance of the creative and educational gift that the Lucas Cultural Museum will bring to this city, to this country and to the world. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Leo Holzer, Charles La Follette and Charles Jennings.

Leo Holzer: First of all, thank you for this opportunity. I want to approach two things really quick. One, with the Presidio Exchange, I'm really worried about the financing. It's a two-tier process to build. The money is not there. The George Lucas plan, we don't have to worry about the money. Also, I think it's important – when you talk to most San Franciscans, most people think Hollywood is the center of everything. And actually, film arts started in San Francisco, folks. We have a really strong history with film. And the digital arts definitely started here. But people – a lot of the silent films were actually made in San Francisco before Hollywood was even established. So, going back to that history is important.

I like the idea that more actual space will be reclaimed because of the underground parking with the Lucas facility. It's a great plan. It's fully financed. And as a Californian, this is a national treasure. It's a great site.

But I don't want to see a native Californian's art and things that were created here end up in Chicago or somewhere else. It belongs in California. It belongs at this site close to where it was created. So, thank you very much.

Charles La Follette: I'm Charles La Follette, and I support the Cultural Arts Museum Mr. Lucas has provided. He has created an exciting cultural awareness. The building plans for the museum have been proposed, changed and accepted in large measure. The financial plan has been examined carefully, and appears feasible.

This museum will be very visible and a satisfactory addition to the Presidio. And I think we cannot afford to lose this museum. It seems to match the six goals that have been told to us. Thank you.

Charles Jennings: Hi. My name is Charles Jennings, and I've been coming to this particular Presidio for a long time. My family, we grew up here. And one of the things that really impressed me about the trustees' goals and everything, they have very really ideal things here.

But I look around at the faces of the crowd that's here at this very minute, and I wonder if we're putting into the thought process [unintelligible] report on turning on a learning button for the local community. How do we get the community that's within the City itself to come to a museum, let alone get out of their neighborhood [unintelligible] explore other people?

I think it's important that when you make your decision here, you look at how do we get a complete engagement of the population in the community, not just the community living next door to the Presidio, but the entire community, going down from San Jose, going up north to Santa Rosa, going east to Stockton, bringing them closer, making that more of a unifying factor.

So, to me, it's important to ask, "What will attract people to come here?" So, if that could be part of your process, I'd appreciate that.

And the stuff that makes people excited about coming to a museum has to be there as part of the process.

And one thing that I've found to be very beneficial is to have a grassroots support system, not just in the Presidio, but in our community. And I am willing to be a part of the group to help bring other people of culture into the Presidio to see it and enjoy it. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Miles Votek, Danya Sherman and Omer Gal.

Miles Votek: Hello. My name is Miles Votek. I'm an artist, and I work in the film industry near the Bay Area. I've both lived and worked in the Presidio. I'm here to ask to select the PX. I grew up in the Bay Area, and over the past five years, I've lived in the City. I've seen the place become more and more difficult to thrive in the creative non-Internet-oriented industries.

Not only is rent too high for artists – and many of my friends have left for that reason – and for people to run smaller venues, but the companies I've worked for, who once led the film industry in the Bay Area and hired myself as well as friends, have taken their jobs elsewhere, primarily overseas, and laid many of us off.

What I would like to say is that artists and filmmakers in San Francisco don't need more museums to be inspired. We have great museums here already, and plenty of exhibits of dead artists' work.

We need places to show our work, to learn from each other, and a space to learn from people outside the art world.

That is what intrigues me about the PX. It proposes to give space for new things to happen. And they are partnering with other organizations, like Headlands Center for the Arts, to provide contemporary programs for us that we can all participate in.

While living in the Presidio, it was difficult to get friends to come out here to this part of the City. Just too many hills, too far away, too far of a bike ride. What the Presidio needs is something like the PX to bring a younger crowd out here, outside of tourists, to support and help the younger creative community in the Bay Area. That's basically what I have to say.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much.

Danya Sherman: Good evening. My name is Danya Sherman, and for the past six years, I'm from the Public Programming, Education & Community Engagement for Friends of the High Line, which is the nonprofit organization that runs the High Line Park in collaboration with the City of New York.

When I started there, the High Line was a very similar place to where you are with your beautiful site – the old transportation corridor, an incredible public asset, and a bunch of crazy ideas about what it could be. We wanted to create a unique, vibrant place

where diversity of community members and visitors alike would feel welcomed and feel inspired.

Our plans were opposed by the mayor at the time, including much of the business community and others. But after a tidal wave of community support, luckily, the City of New York took a risk and supported the project. The High Line now is one of the top three most visited sites in New York. And its economic impact is estimated to be over two billion dollars.

But more than money, it's about what the park means to people. The park is brought to life in new ways each season, thanks to the stewardship of community members, participatory art installations, lectures, performances, educational programming, and more, which all highlight the uniqueness of the site and the communities that surround it.

I do understand the difficulty of the decision that you have in front of you. But from my experience, I can say that only one proposal that you have in front of you will help you achieve the goals that you articulated tonight, which mirror what we sought to do. And that is the Presidio Exchange.

The PX will create opportunities for residents to build a deeper connection with your park through programming, partnerships and community engagement. It will meaningfully welcome a diverse audience. And it will create unique and memorable experiences for

locals and international visitors alike. I truly believe that the PX will help this park achieve its potential as one of the world's great places. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

Omer Gal: Hi. My name is Omer Gal. I'm an artist, a musician and filmmaker from Israel with a Master's in Fine Art from the San Francisco Art Institute. That's why I came here. So, I'm here to support the PX because it's the most interesting project and the most supportive of living artists. I now live in the Bayview, and have a studio in a warehouse in SoMa.

I can tell you I've been here for four years and this is only my second time in the Presidio. While I know it's a beautiful place, I tend to stay in the southeast part of the City because there's more going on for people in the arts. Everything that I've heard about the PX makes me wish it were here already. Imagining a place where I can gather with friends, see new exhibits all the time, coming events, and even be able to participate and hopefully be part of shows here.

The PX is much more in line with what cultural programs draw people now. I honestly have no interest in what the Lucas museum has to offer. I do not need another museum with a static collection and static exhibits to be inspired, especially coming from film. I create animation.

So, I feel like I need a place that's more for the art students and the artists right now in the City. We need a space that we can call our own. And that's what I love about the PX. It's inclusive, it's contemporary, and it's free. And frankly, if you want more people to come to the Presidio, have them come for the Presidio, for art, history, science, that has some relevance to this place. That's what will keep people coming back. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Suwon Cho, Jan Blum and Steven Krefting.

Suwon Cho: Hi. My name is Suwon Cho, and I'm an artist too. I just want to say we need a more lively place where we can be a part of, where we can participate actively and communicate with each other. We don't want to watch passively what has already done before. We want to make our Presidio, make it always alive instead of bringing the past to the museum. I believe my PX will give us a chance to bring the future together. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

Jan Blum: My name is Jan Blum, and the PX plan is the only one of the proposals that promotes park-based programs for the Presidio, programs that reflect and amplify the Presidio's unique history and national park values, which are important to everyone here. The sponsor of the PX, the Parks Conservancy, has a proven track record of very successfully engaging the broadest level of

community support for every major project they have ever undertaken.

And this is something to take into consideration when you're looking at how you will drive the future. This philosophy of inclusiveness ensures philanthropic support and engagement by highly diverse audiences, such as the gentleman was discussing earlier. And it engages them over extended periods of time.

Their philanthropic support and engagement will ensure the success of the PX as it changes and adapts to meet the needs of the visitors from everywhere for the entire year. The PX proposal is the only one that meets all of the Trust's criteria for this site. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

Steven Krefting: Good evening, Madam Chair, Board members, Dr. Middleton. My name is Steven Krefting, and while I wear several Presidio-related hats, I'm speaking for myself tonight. And first, I want to commend you on this really excellent public process that you're having. I urge the Board to adopt the Parks Conservancy's PX proposal as the preferred alternative.

The Conservancy has approached this project in exactly the right way. Their staff conducted extensive research on museums, cultural institutions and parks, and consulted with local and national experts. In the 21st century, we are becoming a much more racially

and culturally diverse society. In such a time, doing this kind of research and infusing the proposal with flexibility makes this project one of the most capable of reaching and engaging the greatest cross-section of our society.

The post-participatory programs are likely to engage younger visitors. The living room will attract other folks for a bite to eat, who may then discover an engaging program or exhibit on Presidio history or nearby nature, giving them new eyes to view this amazing place we live in. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Okay. Julie Haas, Melanie Blum and Laela French.

Julie Haas: Hi, all. I was a kid who went to a museum and said, “I want to do that. I want to be that. I am inspired for my lifetime by walking into a museum.” And I think that George Lucas, by his films and what he has done, was probably that kid too. And I think he has proven beyond his films or what he’s famous for what he has done with buildings.

He has done Letterman in the most appropriate for the site way it could have possibly been done. When we think back of what Letterman Hospital was and what it is now, I think everyone would agree he got it. He gets it at Skywalker Ranch. He’s gotten it at even a little park in San Anselmo. He has made a design that talks to San Francisco, speaks to the site. He is sensitive to that. And he does beautiful work wherever he seems to go.

I am asking you to please consider having this museum here. This is a national park. It will bring the nation as well as the Bay Area here. And we deserve that. We deserve its magnificence. We deserve a museum filled with light and art. And it will inspire generations to come. And I think you would be proud of that. Thank you.

Melanie Blum: I'm Melanie Blum, and I've been working developing projects in the Presidio since the Presidio Trust was first instituted. I worked on the San Francisco Film Centre, which is home to 18 different tenants in the film industry, and also worked on the Letterman Digital Arts Center. And I understand the challenges that the Trust has faced becoming self-sufficient, and I applaud them for doing so.

And George Lucas was an important part of helping to make the Trust self-sufficient and keep this as a national park. His commitment here has been strong. He's created a number of things that have benefited the public, including a 15-acre park that's part of the Letterman Digital Arts Center. He helps to fund PresidiGo, which allows less traffic to come into the Presidio, and brings many more people that might not be able to come here from other parts of the City to be able to come here.

The Trust has to continue to be self-sufficient. And I think one of the important goals is to have a project that will help continue to contribute to that self-sufficiency so this can continue to be a

national park for all people. I believe that the art that's in this museum is art that's accessible to people of all ages and all walks of life. It's the art of storytelling.

It will bring people here from all around the world, not just our neighbors in San Francisco, but people, from all walks of life, all parts of the world, will come. And this will help to make this a true national park that is available to people that come from everywhere, not just the locals.

The museum also will be fully funded and will not draw funds from other nonprofit organizations and cultural institutions in the City. And I think that's an important fact because I know, as a member of the board of directors of the San Francisco Film Society, we're always struggling for fundraising dollars. And I think the fact that this museum will be fully funded and won't draw from other organizations is a big asset. Thank you.

Laela French: Thank you for taking comments. I'm happy to share mine. I'm here tonight as a parent. I'd like to start with saying that for me, from hearing and reading everything, the PX idea, while wonderful, can fit anywhere in the Presidio, and it would be a wonderful addition. But the Lucas museum idea is the only one that truly belongs here in the Bay Area in the Presidio, and we need to do everything we can to keep it here.

The museum will be interactive. It's diverse. It's got a growing collection that, I might add, has many living artists. Artists that are working and living in the Bay Area today will be in this museum, and it will go on into the future with living artists. As a parent who lives in Sonoma, I'm very involved with my kids, their education, and their school.

We bring them to San Francisco quite a lot for enrichment. And we come in with friends who come visiting from all over the world. The Lucas museum is the kind of place I want to come to that I can't wait to share, not only with my kids, but with friends who come to visit.

The PX and the Bridge ideas are great, but neither have the clear vision to draw, from my view, as much as the Lucas Cultural Museum. John King called it a clubhouse for the PX. And it kind of made me chuckle, but that's how I looked at it, as a community center that seems to serve the few nearby but not the many and the international tourists.

For me, the Lucas museum has the promise for national and international appeal. And what has made me proudly wear the orange tonight is really the educational component of the museum. I really don't see the education enrichment for the other two projects the way that the Lucas proposal has it.

And for me, education is my number one priority. And [unintelligible] education for children in San Francisco and for Sonoma and North Bay is our number one priority. Please keep the museum here. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: I'm going to call three more names. Could I remind you all, when you get to the microphone, to please state your name again so that we have it for the record. Lucia Bogatay, Jim McCullough and Tim Ritchie.

Lucia Bogatay: Good evening, trustees. I'm Lucia Bogatay. I'm an architect, a member of the Presidio Historical Association. I've practiced in San Francisco for the past 45 years. My expertise includes master planning for governments, universities, hospitals and projects restoring buildings.

I encourage you to develop the site to reinforce what is important about the Presidio with a design which makes use of all the opportunities of the site, and turns its problems to advantages. That's what I was telling Heinz, you can tell that. Frank Dean's letter and John King's article in today's Chronicle have identified several of those opportunities.

Mr. Lucas could have an original [PPIE] building, not an imitation. It's already visually part of his enclave. The mid-Crissy site could then have something to welcome visitors, and highlight what is

important about the Presidio, what led the Presidio to become a park, a NHLD in the first place.

So, I wish you luck with your decision. It's a toughie. I don't think it's that tough. I'd certainly go for the PX in a minute. But I hope you do well with your deliberations, and I look forward to participating in your 106.

Jim McCullough: Good evening. I'm Jim McCullough. "Unique," "special," "fabulous" and "wonderful" are a few words to describe the Lucas Cultural Arts Museum. In my opinion, we can't let this world-class museum get away from us. Any city on the planet would love to have this museum. Oh and "treasure," that's another word that comes to mind. And so does "gift." We are being given an incredible gift. We should graciously accept it. Thank you.

Tim Ritchie: Well, good evening. My name is Tim Ritchie. I'm the president of the Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose. I'm also a resident of San Francisco, and a frequent runner in Crissy Field. I'd like to address just briefly the relationship between a museum and the community. I think a lot of times, we think of them as static things that only happen by day, for visitors by day.

But new museums, 21st century museums, have a very dynamic relationship with the community. They are resources. They're community resources. And in this particular case, it's a resource for innovation. So, what I'd like to say as a resident of San Francisco

and a fellow museum executive director, one focusing on technology and innovation, we welcome the Lucas Cultural Arts Center here.

I would say anything that makes the community more family-friendly and more focused on innovation is a great thing not just for the present, it's a great thing for the future. So, thank you very much.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Gerald Richards, Dr. Sabharwal and David Markus.

Gerald Richards: Good evening. My name is Gerald Richards. I'm the CEO for 826 National. We are a network of after-school creative writing and tutoring programs. We are known here in San Francisco as 826 Valencia, The Pirate Store, if you've ever been there. We are really excited about the Lucas Arts Museum.

It's for us a chance to bring our students to the museum to get inspiration, to learn, to grow. And as storytellers, it's important for us. And we see the connection quite clearly. And I think it's an opportunity to give the next generation of young people the inspiration to become the next painter, the next filmmaker, the next storyteller, the next George Lucas.

So please, I hope you put this museum here. We're excited to partner with them and to be able to bring our students from all across the City, students from the Mission and the Bayview and

Excelsior that never get the opportunity to go to museums like this or to come like museums like this, or to the Presidio, the opportunity to take advantage of that. So, thank you very much.

Dr. Sabharwal: My name is Sabharwal, and I live on Marina Boulevard here. And I walk around this area for about two to three hours a day. So, I've been doing that for many years. I've been here since '89. I've seen the three proposals. Yes, it's nice to have a museum. Yes, it's nice to have another center, a cultural center. But where is the [unintelligible] the people of this country?

We do not have a sustainable living institute. That's what we need. We waste four trillion dollars all over the world to burn fossil fuels. They'll be gone in 60 years. And the lights on the cultural institute will be difficult to turn on. We have to activate our young children to think about how they're going to live forever, and how the art is going to live forever.

So, right here, you people make the decisions. You are the people in power. I'm just a scientist. I'm just requesting that try to have a talk with Mr. Lucas. "Mr. Lucas, put some money here for sustainable living." And he will do it. Give him the incentive, and let's build a science and a culture. Have a good day. Thank you very much.

Nancy Bechtle: I may not have pronounced it right. I think it's either David Marthus or David Markus. Okay. Robin Schader, Randolph Delehanty and Don Green.

Margaret Zegart: I recognize the name Margaret, Margaret [unintelligible] thank you for having this transparent and excellent presentation consideration. I would like to suggest that the site itself should be analyzed before you make your decision. Our southern Marin area from which I come has been considering the sea level rise very seriously.

BCDC has indicated that this area would be characteristic of the inundation that will be coming. And therefore, I suggest that you take PX choice because that would be the easiest one to integrate within the higher-level areas of the Presidio. By the mid-century of this year, conservatively, there will be 16 more inches of sea level rise. And by the end of the century, they're suggesting it will be 60 feet.

So, you should consider not after your choice but also during your choice the consequences of sea level rise. Also, they've been doing studies, and they have sedimentation rates that are going to be affecting Crissy Marsh. So, there are a lot of things that will affect the success of access to this museum. I appreciate the programming you now have. And so, I support the Conservancy project. Thank you.

Robin Schader: Thank you. My name is Robin Schader. I live here in the Presidio. We moved to Pilots' Row in 2006, and we have just watched the park come alive since then. Yesterday, residents from our neighborhood, Pilots' Row, and from North Fort Scott submitted a proposal in support of the Conservancy's Park Exchange, or the Presidio Exchange.

We live right at the end of the Golden Gate Bridge and right above Fort Point. And so, we have a lot of visitors. We watch them. They ask questions. They actually really need to get situated. And wouldn't it be exceptional to be able to just point them down Crissy Field to the PX as a hub?

And visitors and residents alike have needed a place to gather out of the weather but still to enjoy the incredible vistas. We need a place to learn, to gather, and to learn more about what's available in the Presidio. Yes, the other proposals are also inviting. However, only the PX highlights the site and ties together so many aspects of the Presidio, past, present and the potential for the future.

We think that the PX would be a remarkable addition. And it would highlight the willingness of the Trust to work with the Conservancy, to continue to include people for the benefit of the public and for all those visitors who continue to come to our park from all over the world. Thank you.

Donald Green: Yeah, I'm Donald Green. Am I next? Is that right?

Nancy Bechtle: You go right ahead.

Donald Green: I wasn't certain. I've been involved with the Presidio since it got started in the Trust, and my friend Craig Middleton and Karen and Mr. Grubb after the first few years. I just want to take a second to remember the persons who have brought us here where we are today, the early Board members – Mike Heyman, Don Fisher, Bill Wilson, Superintendent Brian O'Neil and Redmond Kernan. They're not with us now, but I know they're for us.

We can take a – what can a long-term observer offer in the case before you? I've reflected on the successful role in influencing the Trust by agencies and organizations with long-term commitments to the national park system. These are both government agencies you interact with, which have overlapping responsibilities, national environmental protection and historic preservation organizations, and the local neighborhood groups.

Between 1978 and 2007, a little before some of you people got on the Board, these groups weighed in on three major Trust actions. And in each case, the Trust took a position in the beginning, choosing an alternative that was opposed by the other folks. By the time they finished their process in these three cases, they came around and took the advice of these other organizations that had a long-term commitment.

I'm talking about the original decision. We don't need a Presidio Trust Management Plan. We'll use the Park Service plan, even though there are no financial constraints. The second was the Public Health Service building, where they said, "We'll rehabilitate the whole building," and the other people said, "Let's tear down the wings and just take the historic portion." The Trust did that. And the last one was the Main Post museum, where the Trust said, "Let's consider a large building." And after the Main Post Update, they decided that wasn't right.

So, my thought is, if you people will listen carefully to these organizations that have been involved in your park for these last 17 years, you might make a decision to choose the alternative [unintelligible] pretty important point. Pick an alternative that these other organizations feel is appropriate. And the first decision may be the final decision. Thank you very much.

Nancy Bechtle: Okay. Randolph Delahunt?

Randolph Delehanty: Good evening. My name is Randolph Delehanty, and for 13 years, until two months ago, I was the historian and exhibition curator for the Presidio Trust. You may be familiar with my exhibits on the Golden Gate before the bridge and war and to send the U.S. Army in the Philippines. The historic Presidio of San Francisco is part of a unique national park and deserves a unique project at this spectacular location currently occupied by the former commissary.

The Parks Conservancy is a proven partner of the Trust, and its proposed Presidio Exchange, in my view, best complements the Presidio. The Trust would be offering programs in the new Heritage Center in the Officers' Club that could be amplified by the programs at the Presidio Exchange.

And the partners that it will bring to the park, such as the National Geographic, the California Academy of Sciences, and other important parks. The PX will have the flexibility to evolve over time in order to serve diverse publics and to address the important historical and environmental concerns that will emerge in the future.

The PX is the best use of this incomparable site, and would further the mission of the Presidio Trust to create an innovative national park at the Golden Gate that reaches beyond our walls. Thank you very much.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Ron Maykel, JoAnn McAllister and Peter Hopkinson.

Ron Maykel: Good evening. Thank you for providing this venue and having such a good location as well. [Unintelligible] and I actually live on Pacifica, but I've been involved with the Conservancy for about ten years, first as a supporter, then a stewardship volunteer. And I got involved in their Trails Forever program. And also, now I'm a member supporter, and I'm also a volunteer for the Conservancy [unintelligible] observatory.

Kind of tired, I did a hawk watch today, and I came here a few hours ago. I saw a lot of beautiful hawks over there. But I just wanted to point out that I've been involved, or I attended, experienced, or [unintelligible] on a number of occasions. I've participated in a lot of the academy courses, and even worked with some of the Presidio Trust staff people in the park.

And I work in the nursery. The Presidio Nursery is a beautiful place. It's just grown and really developed so well. And I just want to point out the Conservancy is really an impressive institution. And also the fact that they've worked with you, the Presidio Trust, so well for so many years. And they've done so much here in the Presidio. I just think that unity is a factor that should be considered.

And I think that they would be the best for the PX. They would do that. They've done so much else here with Crissy Field and the Presidio Nursery and Land's End and all over that I think that it would be nice to maintain unity in that aspect. And so, I give my support to the Conservancy PX. Thank you.

JoAnn McAllister: Thank you. Hello. My name is JoAnn McAllister. I'm a Presidio resident. I live in the Sanches neighborhood. And I'm a professor at Saybrook University. I wrote a rather academic kind of thing. And then I was inspired by my neighbors and the Friends of the Presidio Trust and the Conservancy, and especially my fellow hawk watcher.

I, too, am a GGRO hawk watcher. I'm Wednesday One team. And I've been missing hawk watching because of the shutdown, and I can't wait to get back onto the hill. And I think that's the best thing I could say to you, is that this is what really inspires people about this place. It's love.

Everyone I meet, all the volunteers, people walking and I hike all over the park trails. And I ask them, "Can I help you?" "Oh, yeah. What's that? What's that?" "Well, that's a red-shouldered hawk. And Crissy Field is right down there. And you should walk down there and take this trail." People love this land. And I think that's why it's so important to support the Conservancy's project.

The sort of academic thing I wanted to remind you about is your criteria of relevance. A programming that is open, broad-based and cross-disciplinary, not bounded already by a theme or by an art collection or an exhibit or a particular kind of art. It's really what's relevant.

And it would be relevant for generations to come with the PX programming that will engage all kinds of interests, national, international, local, and ones we don't even know exist yet, and bring multiple communities in engagement with the Presidio and the GGNRA. Thank you. And thank you so much for the gift you have already given us.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

Peter Hopkinson: Hello, and thank you very much for the opportunity of speaking here. My name is Peter Hopkinson. I'm an architect. I'm actually a fellow in the American Institute of Architects. And I started my architectural career here 52 years ago, by my math, in One Bush Street working for Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. And since then, I've gone all over the place.

And my wife and I have returned to San Francisco. We've been here now about four months. And one of the advantages of being away for so long and coming back sort of cold turkey is that I lived for five of the ten years that I was in this area in Marin. And I commuted over the Golden Gate Bridge, which has got to be the world's greatest commute.

And I could see Fort Mason and Fort Baker, and see the Presidio and see how sort of sad it was, considering what a fabulous site it is. And then when the army left in '94, it kind of went on down. And coming back so soon and so suddenly, I could see that the Trust, the Conservancy – excuse me – had renovated this whole area. And it was a wonderful and fantastic to see how much you have done – for example, this building that we are here in.

I also want brownie points for being short, and I hope not to talk any longer. But I like that many people have spoken eloquently about the PX. But the first speaker, the lady who spoke first, if

you're looking for a text to check me off on, take her speech and glue it right to my number over there. But be sure to give her credit for that speech.

Now, a couple of other things I'd like to bring up. I think it was the third speaker who had the A-A-A recommendation for the PX, A-A-A. Do you remember that? Anyway, I do. And I'm completely behind that.

And finally, no individual in the group has the track record that the Conservancy has in doing the kind of work that we all experience and we all love. And that includes starting from zero, raising funds – goodness, gracious. I don't get any brownie points for short. You know what side I'm on.

Nancy Bechtle: Joyce Lively, Becky Evans, DeeDee Workman.

Joyce Lively: Hi. Can you hear me? I'm Joyce Lively. I live nearby. I spend probably two or three days a week in the Presidio, and I love Letterman Park. I never get tired of it. I'm here to support the Lucas Cultural Arts Museum. It has a traditional structure with echoes of the park, and its surroundings – and it's part of the surroundings.

It opens into a world for children and adults using iconic images to teach our youth. It will keep them engaged and wanting to come back. It will bring people to the Presidio. It will bring people to

San Francisco. It will bring children who want to learn, and they will see things they never could see elsewhere.

The art collection, which some have compared to bringing in the Fisher collection, is not even remotely comparable. His collection is a collection of Americana whose images idealize the vision of ourselves as it needs to be seen and studied by children. They should learn about the world and the people we hope to embody as Americans, much of it during a time when great hardships were suffered in this country and the world.

We look forward to going there again and again. And his vision brings together the future and the past, both in his design and the content of the center. It will be a fabulous self-sustaining addition to our Presidio, and has the extra bonus of not replacing one parking lot with another. I think the other ideas are certainly good ideas.

However, they're all "ifs" – if we can get the money, when we raise it, if we raise it, then we'll build it. Then we hope to have partnerships. Then we'll have people – we hope to find people [unintelligible] partnerships will bring activities in that people want to see.

Those things rely on having the draw. If you don't have a draw, people won't come. I think the museums – those other centers will be mostly for people who are local. They will be for people who

are already in the Presidio and happen to wander around and say, “What is that?” Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

Rebecca Evans: My name is Rebecca Evans. I’m here on behalf of the San Francisco Bay chapter of the Sierra Club. We have 30,000 members in the Bay Area. I’m going to thank you for this process. I find it some irony that the tee-shirts that these people are wearing, the orange tee-shirts say “Education, discovery and innovation.”

These are certainly the concepts that the PX proposal will embrace. I think that the PX is the only proposal that speaks directly to the visions, the values, and the themes of the Presidio in this national park. You as the Trust Board have a very important decision to make on this.

You can leave a legacy of something of monumental status. I would also like to speak to the Conservancy’s ability to have programs and to raise funds. Over their lifetime, they have raised over \$300 million. There was a recent donation of \$25 million for another project they’re working on. I looked at their Web page when I was doing some research recently.

And basically, the list of their accomplishments, awards, etcetera, is longer than my arm. It’s an extraordinary list of things they have done for the entire Golden Gate National Recreation Area. I think

this is very important also to preserve the partnership that you have with the Conservancy, which has been going on for a number of years. I hope you will support the PX proposal. Thank you.

DeeDee Workman: Good evening. I'm DeeDee Workman with San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. The San Francisco Chamber supports the Lucas Cultural Arts Museum to redevelop the commissary building site. The Chamber heard presentations by the three finalists. Each described their proposed projects. They showed the potential building designs. And they explained their programming and vision for the facilities.

The Presidio Trust is fortunate to have three strong finalists for this project. The Chamber believes the Lucas museum, featuring over 45,000 square feet of exhibit and open space, showcasing a distinctive and extensive art collection, has the vision programming, and financial commitments to create a world-class institution that will draw a significant number of visitors to the City and to the site.

It will be a uniquely important addition to San Francisco's popular cultural attractions. The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce endorses the Lucas Cultural Arts Museum for the Presidio commissary site, and encourages the Presidio Trust Board of Directors to select this project as well. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Bruce Hamilton, William Hudson and Raymond Holland.

Bruce Hamilton: Good evening. I'm Bruce Hamilton. I'm the Deputy Executive Director of the Sierra Club in the national office. The Presidio is a national and international treasure. And the Sierra Club has been working on for decades to protect and preserve this site. And on behalf of the national Sierra Club and our 2.3 million members and supporters, I want to support the Presidio Exchange as the best proposal to reuse the commissary site.

We agree with the Trust that the commissary site offers, quote, “an extraordinary opportunity to create a cultural facility of international distinction befitting its location at the Golden Gate, and honoring the power of place.” I think it's important to remember that “power of place” because Presidio Exchange is really the proposal that respects that “power of place” and is compatible with it. One overriding consideration is that any new building should be less intrusive on the landscape than the present one.

This is a unique, world-class scenic site, as we all know, which should not be overpowered by any new or intrusive building. And again, I feel only the PX proposal meets this criteria. We've submitted longer written testimony, but thank you for this evening and good luck with your decision.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

William Hudson: My name is Bill Hudson. I would like to urge the Board to approve the PX proposal. Much has been said about the programming by Mr. Delehanty and others, which I second. But what I also want to emphasize is that the PX proposal physically is the singular proposal that embraces the connection between Crissy Field and what will be an extraordinary park at the tunnel top here, and the flow that can occur between those two locations.

And in the process, it also creates an outdoor living room that I think will become a Mecca for social interaction. And so, in many ways, I think it does blend into the environment in a way that the other two proposals don't.

And it creates, if you will, an open front door to the front lawn of Crissy Field. And it beckons people up to the tunnel top park and further into the Main Post. And it is a wonderful design that deserves your support.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

Raymond Holland: My name is Ray Holland. I'm speaking on behalf of the Planning Association for the Richmond, which is one of the largest neighborhood organizations in San Francisco. We're also a member of the Neighborhood Associations for Presidio Planning, or NAPP. We've been involved with the Presidio developments for years, going back even the army was still here.

And we think that the decision that you're facing, reviewing these proposals, deliberating on them, and making your decisions, they're going to be some very tough ones because all three of them are very solid proposals. However, in reviewing them, it's our feeling that only one of them actually meets all of the criteria in your solicitations for those proposals, and that's the Presidio Exchange.

We also feel that beyond the substance of the proposals – and I won't repeat what others have said about its strengths, which the other two don't have in all cases – but I think you also need to look at the proponent itself. The Conservancy has an established track record of working in close partnership with the Park Service and the Trust.

Everything from the Land's End Visitor Center to Crissy Field, its wonderful trails that have been built up throughout the Trust and throughout the GGNRA. The other part's the GGNRA. But I think the other thing to keep in mind, and for us as being one of your neighbors, is the ability of the Conservancy to reach out to the community, the schools, the youth, and get them involved in the programming.

And I think that they're the best potential candidate to do that. They've done it. They've demonstrated it. And we urge you to make them your preference. And one other thing, you're going to have to follow this with the environmental and historic reviews.

And one of those alternatives, in addition to these three, will be the no action alternative. I'm not sure what that would be. I can't imagine you'd leave that building there with an empty parking lot. Demolishment would be [unintelligible].

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Gerald Richards, Dale Posner and Jan Barroca.

Jan Barroca: Good evening. My name is Jan Barroca, and I'm an immediate neighbor of the Presidio on Lyon Street. And my family has been coming to the Presidio since their arrival in San Francisco in the 1870s. I remind the Trust that their job is to protect the history of the Presidio as a National Historic Landmark District.

With a museum and visitor center where the Presidio Trust could fulfill its mandates to educate and inform the public about the Presidio's extensive and distinguished history. None of the three plans so far meet your goals of providing for and maintaining the wonderful history of the Presidio.

As much as I like what Lucas has done in the Letterman site, I think his proposed building and contents, as it looks in the pictures, should be better suited out near the de Young Museum, or perhaps in the Marin County Civic Center.

And I remember that when they say that this is a present, or a free thing that we shouldn't give up, remember the Fisher Museum? We fought that too. So, don't put something just because it looks like a

big gift to us. We really would like to have something that deals with the Presidio history, and it's a wonderful history. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. We didn't get Dale Posner. Or that was Dale. Did we get Jan Barroca?

Male Voice: That was Jan.

Nancy Bechtle: That was Jan. Oh, okay, sorry. And then we have Manuel Barroca? And Tim Ritchie, I think you've already spoken. Lorraine Kelley, Margaret Zegart. She spoke? How did she do this? I'm still at number 48. Okay.

Lorraine Kelley: Well, okay. My grandparents came to the Presidio in the 1906 earthquake. They were on Lombard Street, and they were on horses in the Presidio. Anyway, no one has talked about parking. Has anyone driven here? How do these plans look at parking? Do any of the plans talk about parking?

Nancy Bechtle: Yeah, some of them do.

Lorraine Kelley: They do? Which ones?

Nancy Bechtle: I actually think they all do at some place. They address the parking. They all address the parking.

Lorraine Kelley: They all address the parking. So, the PX plan, where is the parking?

Nancy Bechtle: I think that is an important issue. In the first place, could you give us your name?

Lorraine Kelley: Lorraine Kelley.

Nancy Bechtle: Oh, okay. Thank you.

Craig Middleton: I think you'll have to look at the various plans, but they each deal with parking in a different way.

Lorraine Kelley: Okay. So, is the Presidio going to – there's bottlenecks already going at the Lombard Gate. So, if you'll have many more people going in, the bottlenecks are worse. On 101, you can't even move anymore. So, I think that parking needs to be addressed very seriously in any of these plans.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Okay. Is Margaret Zegart here? Judy Wessing? Are you Judy? Is that right?

Judy Wessing: Yeah. Members of the Trust, first I want to thank all of you for your time and attention to the views of the public. My name is Judy Wessing. I am representing younger family members who live in the NOPA and family members who are in the Presidio Cemetery. I stand in full support of the PX plan.

I think that the Conservancy's option is so much better than the Bridge proposal. It has a broad appeal and strong local support. It enhances Crissy Field, but importantly, it is not too much. Crissy Field is already a wonderful place enjoyed as a respite from the City, for a walk with a friend, or a family gathering, a picnic, a birthday. If you have been there, you know how it is used.

There are tourists, but here they have not yet overwhelmed the space as they do at the wharf and Pier 39. Therein lies the Lucas problem. My fear is that it would be too popular. It would be a destination site like Alcatraz. And it would bring busloads of tourists to overwhelm Crissy Field and the pleasure that this space now provides the public.

It seems a bit un-American to oppose either Lucas or Norman Rockwell, but this site is the wrong place. I do very much support John King's view this morning's Chronicle. I strongly urge you to approve my PX for many generations to enjoy. Thank you.

Sandra Cannon: Hi, I'm Sandra Cannon, and thank you for your service. I represent my grandparents, who are buried in the cemetery. My grandfather was a general in charge of the Presidio in the '60s. And I think what someone else was trying to say is – I'm a little bit confused because the Presidio actually draws an awful lot of visitors.

I've been visiting since I was a little girl, and there's a lot to visit here, primarily the cemetery. And I'm not entirely sure why we need to draw more visitors here. Of course, I do have an exclusive attitude about it. I've liked this place when it was a Burger King, and I had to ride a motorcycle down in Crissy Field, and I don't really like the art down there.

But the thing is, when I look at the – I'm actually trained as an architect, and worked for Skidmore, Owings & Merrill when I first moved to San Francisco. And when I look at the PX plan, I don't really feel like I see a [unintelligible] there. I don't really feel like I understand what they're trying to do. I don't like the design, and I don't feel like it really integrates with that location.

I know we've had other persons offer museums to the Presidio, and it didn't go over. It didn't work out. The Parade Ground is actually – I'm really glad it's still there as it is. I do feel like George Lucas has done a tremendous job in supporting the Presidio. And I feel if there's been a promise implied to him, he deserves it because he's really done a terrific job in maintaining the integrity of the Presidio.

And lastly, I'd like to say that I think this idea of it being self-sustaining is really important. Yeah, it's a national park, but we've just experienced something that has sort of illustrated the fragility there. And so, self-sustaining is key.

Nancy Bechtle: Len Egert, Kate Brumage and Paul Majka.

Len Egert: I'm Len Egert. I'm the Executive Director of SAG-AFTRA. We're a union that represents over 5,000 performing artists who work and live in this area. I'd like to just echo the points that were just made by the prior speaker. You talk about the history and you talk about inspiration.

And that's exactly what the Lucas museum is going to give you. It's going to give you inspiration and a rich cultural history that is going to match this gift. And this is a gift that we happen to enjoy by virtue of living here. But it's a gift that we should share with the rest of the country.

And I totally understand, living in inner Sunset, and the throngs that come through to the de Young, where I want to just jog and walk and not have anybody near me. But we need to share this place. It's a magical place, and we need to share it with the rest of the country.

My members, we're trying to increase production and their job opportunities, not just for our members, but for the industry, for the people who live here. And one of the ways that we are seeking to do that is to point to the rich history of production of film and television in this city.

This museum will do that. And it will not only be a testament to the past, but it's going to bring in future productions, and it's going to spur the kind of work that we want to bring to this city. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

Kate Brumage: Good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Kate Brumage, and I'm the Executive Director of Butler Koshland Fellowships, which is a San Francisco-based nonprofit. I'm just going to read a letter I just wrote this afternoon to the Trust Board. Again, thank you for this opportunity to share. I am speaking tonight in support of the Presidio Exchange project.

Through my work with Butler Koshland Fellowships, I was first introduced to Greg Moore and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy. Our work is to select the most outstanding public service leaders and ask them to mentor younger leaders. We chose Greg to do this because Greg is widely known as one of the most incredible leaders in his field.

And what people may not know, especially some people in this room, is that although Greg is very humble, we haven't heard his name once tonight. He is widely, internationally, a superstar on the same level as George Lucas, but instead of film, in park conservation. But just as Greg's work is a model with the Conservancy, so is the Trust and the Presidio itself.

People come here from all over the world, not just to passively view the wonderful beauty, but to be activated by the possibilities that urban rejuvenation, community engagement and visionary land management can bring. This is why your decision and the spirit in which it's made is so important.

As a model organization, the Trust has the opportunity to set a standard, to proudly declare that our national parks are indeed a place where we can meet the best version of America and the best version of ourselves. By committing to these values, and in doing so creating new possibilities for exchange, the Presidio will surely become a catalyst, inspiring other parks to reawaken their imaginations, here in the Bay Area and in the world.

You have here, between the Conservancy, the Presidio Trust, and the National Park Service, an unparalleled team that could make this project really happen. I ask you to seize this rare moment and select the Presidio Exchange. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Is this Paul coming up here?

Paul Majka: Yes.

Nancy Bechtle: I was trying to figure out whether we should raise that [unintelligible] it's a little bit low. It's hard. We have the very tall, and we have the not very tall, and short. [Unintelligible]

Paul Majka: Good evening. My name is Paul Majka. I want to thank you all for this. And I really appreciate all the three proposals that I looked at. And the thought the community for all the three proposals – that are given for the two proposals tonight, the PX and the Lucas project.

But I kind of like the other one, so I'm, like, the only voice here tonight. I think that the Bridge sustainability project offers some really interesting concepts. It could also garner the kind of public support that is deserving of this site.

But I really have a problem with all three proposals in that the building forms that have been selected I don't think respond in the way that they should to the site. I believe that the site has a beautiful vistas to, of the project from all over, and from the project within.

And I think that some of the – the Lucas proposal, although it's an interesting cultural concept-wise, that it's a little bit too retro for the time and place, and that the other proposals are rather boxy. And I don't think that they really respond well to the environment.

I would like to see in the interior space, the spaces that were [unintelligible] in each of the proposals, also seemed to have a very low roof ceiling for a very large space. And I don't think that frames the views [unintelligible] that it connects the people to the environment in the same way. So, that's it. Thank you very much.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Okay, Cary Phillips, Darcie Delasmmutt and Michael Painter. And I apologize to Darcie.

Cary Phillips: Thank you. My name is Cary Phillips. I'm an employee of Lucasfilm, but I'm here speaking for myself. I've worked at Industrial Light & Magic for almost 20 years, both here in the Presidio and in Marin. I've worked in George's buildings, which are spectacular. I've seen over the years bits and pieces of his art collection. And I think this would be a truly spectacular addition to the area, and I encourage you to accept it. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Darcie is not here. Michael Painter, Cynthia Foss, and Jessica Brainard and David Markus.

Cynthia Foss: Good evening. Thank you for this opportunity to speak to you. I really appreciate that. I am the region acquisitions coordinator for SCRAP here in San Francisco. But tonight, I present to you myself as a parent who has joyfully parented my children here in Presidio for 11 years. And I keep trying to leave, and I can't.

In fact, I thank everybody here who came from afar, because if you didn't come here, I wouldn't meet you, because I very rarely leave. My vote is for D, none of the above. I think that embracing the wisdom of putting something there that could not be anyplace else, and not putting something there that could happily live someplace else, is the only accurate action for this space.

And I'm still reeling from the loss of Sports Basement, I must say. Where am I going to get my emergency soccer balls in the middle of the night? I have two kids. And just pause. There's no hurry. Tear down the building if you must, but leave the space for a while. You don't get a new puppy right after your dog dies. So, leave it for a while. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. By the way, as Craig said earlier, you will not be losing the Sports Basement. It's just going to be moving a couple of blocks.

Cynthia Foss: It's still a loss. But thank you so much.

Nancy Bechtle: Jessica Brainard?

Jessica Brainard: Good evening. I'm one of the few people, it sounds like, tonight that's here in support of the Bridge Sustainability Institute. I think, like the gentleman who spoke earlier, we will not have a space for presenting art and having a civic space if we don't address issues of sustainability.

These are the issues of our time. And I think this is the place to tackle those issues. The Bay Area is a Mecca of innovation. And it can be explored and highlighted in the realm of sustainability. And I think it's the right topic for this place. And in terms of the PX, it's a great concept.

But I agree with someone who spoke earlier and said, “There’s not really a ‘there’ there in terms of the programming.” People talk about its relevance and flexibility, but what are they actually saying the exhibits are? What are they actually going to do there? And I think that the Bridge project really does propose talking about and having exhibits about the Presidio being really based in this place.

It’s not the only – the PX is not the only proposal that talks about the Presidio and really honors the Presidio. And in terms of the Lucas project, I agree with many that it’s a great project, but it’s not really the place here in that site, and there are other sites for it. So, I vote for the Bridge. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: David?

David Markus: Hi. Thank you for your patience in listening to us all tonight. My name is David Markus. I too am an employee of George Lucas. I’m the editorial director of the George Lucas Educational Foundation, where we create media, stories and content about what works in education. I’m also a father of three. I live here in the City. My children attend public schools of San Francisco.

So, as someone who knows a little about education, and as a father, that I want to talk to you today about the Lucas Cultural Arts Museum and the opportunity it has to be, I think, a true museum for learning where children and adults can learn, what really is baked

into the DNA of the experience the way it's baked into the DNA of everything that George Lucas does, especially in his creative endeavors.

Working within Lucas' orbit as I have in the last five years, I have seen his commitment to elevating and transforming the learning process. He sees to it every day. We tell the stories of what works in schools, the stories of how kids learn, not by rote recitation or memorization of textbooks, but by seeing, by doing, by creating their own stories and their own products.

That's what this museum can do, not only show us what art is, but show us how to do it. We do a lot of great things in San Francisco, but we don't do enough for our kids. I believe without a flicker of doubt that this museum would do more to enhance children's worldview than any of the great museums we have in this city, the art museums, that is.

And I think I might belong to most of them. They do a good job. But the Lucas Arts Museum would be better. San Francisco needs you to make this museum happen. We need you to do it for our city. We need you to do it for our teachers and our parents. But most of all, we need you to do it for our young people. It's time, and they deserve it. Thank you very much.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Madlyn Moskowitz and Julie Cheaver. And those are the last two. And if anybody wants to hand in another paper or has

not been called and thought they were going to be speaking, please get in touch with us, with one of our staff. Madlyn?

Madlyn Moskowitz: Hi. My name is Madlyn Moskowitz. Nice to see you all today. I moved here recently from New York City, where I taught high school in a neighborhood school in a place you might have heard of called Coney Island, Brooklyn. I taught in a school that had one art class. It was the required art class by the State of New York. And that's probably the only reason that that art class existed.

I tried to supplement my history classes with learning about music and film and different things as they corresponded to American history. I would be thrilled to have brought my students to a place like the Lucas Cultural Arts Museum. I firmly believe that engaging all types of students is extremely important. Students learn in a variety of ways.

And sometimes, you actually don't quite know what it is that's going to grab them. It might even be possible to bring students to a place like the Lucas Cultural Arts Museum by bribing them that seeing light sabers is going to be awesome.

But they might come away with it learning a lot about digital arts and also the sorts of resources and sorts of – thank you, one minute – the sorts of career opportunities that are available, and learning things like computer engineering and design, which as we know,

San Francisco happens to be the very center of right now in this country.

World-class museums are obviously often thought of as having barriers to entry. Having lived in New York City, I observed things like the Metropolitan Museum of Art having free Tuesdays. That's what it was when I was living there. I couldn't say right now. Free evening programs.

And the most important thing to me, programs that make it possible for teachers to bring students to their museums even if the school itself can't afford to send them. I support the Lucas Cultural Arts Museum because it's where I'd want to bring my students. And it's a place that I know they would love. Please keep this collection in the Bay. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

Julie Cheaver: Hi. I'm Julie Cheaver, I guess maybe the last one. Thank you for letting us speak and hearing our comments. I'm speaking as a citizen and as a fan of the Presidio. But I'm also a member of the Presidio Restoration Advisory Board and of the Planning Association for Richmond.

I support the PX proposal because I think it meets your six goals, as you call them, or criteria. More importantly, I think it meets the larger goals of the Presidio as set forth in the Trust Act, including

the Presidio being a great natural historic site, the preservation of the cultural and historic integrity of the Presidio, and the importance of uses that protect the Presidio from development and uses that would destroy the scenic beauty and the historic and natural character of the area and cultural and recreational resources.

The reason I'm reading from the legislation is because that in writing you a letter last night, I started thinking about the fact that your RFP is not totally in sync with the wording of this legislation. It's sort of like two mathematical sets of numbers that are overlapping. And it's pretty congruent, but not completely congruent.

I think your RFP for this project and for other projects that I've seen is too susceptible to interpretations. For example, a cultural institution for the sake of a cultural institution with nothing to do with the Presidio, or, quote, "a national and international draw at any cost," even if it might bring in traffic, noise, air pollution and congestion that impedes the people's enjoyment of the natural history and the historic significance.

So, I would urge you to select the PX, but also to think about the large – I think also this is causing a lot of turmoil in the public on the part of well-meaning developers, and even for you when you have to make a decision. So, I would urge consideration of the larger goals of the Presidio as outlined in the legislation, both in this selection, but also in your future work. Thank you very much.

Nancy Bechtle: We actually have one more, Beto Lopez.

Beto Lopez: Hello. Thanks for getting my name right. It's Beto Lopez. As you can see, I wasn't planning to speak, but I'm speaking from the heart, from my mind, right now because I feel like I'm going to have to represent for the people of my generation, the younger people.

And I really think you should have another meeting for more people in this city. Maybe go out and reach out to the colleges and maybe the other students to find out what they think about this, because I'm sure a lot of people have no idea this is happening. In 1994, I actually applied to Lucasfilm as an artist.

But I grew up with negative teachers, negative family, people saying, "It's just a dream to become a filmmaker and an artist." I had the interview. They called me. I got the letter. When I went – I chickened out because all that negativity was there made me think I couldn't do it. I didn't believe in myself. But learning from Lucas, studying him, I knew that – don't give up.

Knowing his story, learning just like him, coming to the museums – I grew up [unintelligible] Manteca, Stockton, coming out here to the Bay Area, visiting my family. I grew up in the museums to inspire me to keep doing it, that I can do it. And just knowing George's story, that inspired me more and more to never stop.

And that never happens to this day. As you can see, I'm here just as the video guy. But I've been doing a lot of positive things in my life as a filmmaker. And I really think this would inspire other people like myself to have the same goals and opportunities to be part of, that they can do it.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. I would like to thank all of you for your comments. We will certainly take these to heart. I appreciate when you're saying that it's not so easy for this decision to be made. I'd like to ask any of the other Board members if they have something they would like to say, add.

Craig Middleton: Just thank you.

Male Voice: [Unintelligible] what's the procedure now? There's still [letters, people] [unintelligible].

Nancy Bechtle: Yes, of course. People can still write. We will be taking letters. As I said, we have not made a decision. We are I don't know how far away from it, but we are a ways away. We will be meeting with the three teams over the next couple of weeks to discuss some of the questions that were asked here and some of the questions that were not asked here, and try to come to some kind of a conclusion.

But I can't promise you when that conclusion will happen. Anyway, thank you all so much for being here. It was very

educational, at least for me. Thank you. I have to say for the record, it is now 8:40. Thank you all for coming.

[End of recorded material]