

PAR Planning Association for the Richmond

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Safeway at LaPlaya/Ocean Beach

Safeway representative Natalie Mattei will discuss store design and plans to develop housing on the site



San Francisco Civil Grand Jury

What it is • Becoming a member



Election of PAR Officers & Board of Directors

Wednesday, 20 January 2010, 7:00 p.m.

Richmond Recreation Center

251 18th Avenue (between Clement & California Streets)

Paid parking is available one block away in the lot behind the Alexandria Theatre between Clement Street and Geary Boulevard.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear PAR Members,
While exchanging happy new year greetings, a question that frequently follows is "What events, happy or otherwise, should we anticipate during 2010 in the Richmond District?"

While it has been customary in recent years to distinguish neighborhood issues from those at the local, state, and national levels, 2010 may be different in that regard due to the fact that recovery from the effects of the economic recession may have more profound influences on priorities at all four levels than they have had so far.

For example, land use planning (a PAR priority) has assumed that credit availability and public policy implementation were not closely interdependent. It is becoming increasingly evident that credit availability will be much more time-dependent than it has been in the past and that prolonged

periods of time for public policy implementation may jeopardize it.

As a result, there should be more pressure to ensure that permit applications are reviewed and approved or disapproved more promptly. This could result in less time being available for public reviews of those permit applications.

During the past year, recreation and park facilities and personnel were particularly hard hit by shortfalls in the budgets of the City and County of San Francisco. From everything we have seen so far, those shortfalls in local budgets are expected to be equal or even greater in 2010, and they may be greatly exacerbated by even deeper cuts in state and federal revenues to local governments.

The same may also be true for other local projects not associated with parks or recreation. We have already seen the prices of public transit increasing while

the levels and extent of those services are being reduced.

Currently planned projects may stay in that status longer without being implemented, or they may be set aside indefinitely. The overall result is that more consideration will have to be given to costs and to the more difficult process of establishing priorities as the projected amounts of available resources are diminished.

While unemployment insurance compensation and other public benefits have been repeatedly extended during 2008 and 2009, it is clear that those methods of deferring the pain and preserving some sense of consumer confidence cannot continue forever in one of the worst labor markets since the Great Depression.

As a result, it will probably become necessary for large, expensive, physical improvement projects to be either delayed

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Looking ahead to 2010—Issues facing the Richmond

It's barely the first of the year, and PAR already faces a busy agenda of issues that will have an impact on Richmond District residents and businesses.

On our radar . . .

• **Land use and permitting process**—Large-scale development projects such as the proposed La Playa Safeway, ongoing construction along Geary Boulevard, relocation of the California Pacific Medical Center to Cathedral Hill and a raft of proposed projects in the neighborhoods will demand attention in 2010.

The Board of Supervisors will be considering adoption of new Discretionary Review procedures for issuance of building permits as recommended by the Planning Department.

The new procedures will amend the Planning Code to give more authority in the permit process to the City's planning staff and reduce the number of discretion-

ary reviews they would hear in order to provide more time for them to deal with other planning issues.

• **Recreation and parks**—PAR will continue to work with Recreation and Park and event promoters to mitigate the effects of large events in Golden Gate Park as well as plans for the Beach Chalet Soccer Fields.

We expect progress on the Lincoln Park children's playground and Cabrillo Playground as well as Golden Gate Park improvements.

• **Transportation**—The Environment Impact Report for Geary Corridor Bus Rapid Transit will be available sometime in 2010 to permit start of preliminary engineering plans. The Muni Transit Authority will continue traffic calming projects in the central Richmond, while Doyle Drive construction will impact the District significantly beginning in 2010.

• **Federal institutions in the Richmond**—Planned expansion of Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC), including a parking garage and new buildings, will be discussed at the first 2010 public meeting at the VAMC on January 12. And while the Fischer museum will not be located on the Presidio Main Post after all, other issues affecting the future of the Presidio continue to take time and commitment on the part of interested parties.

• **PAR membership**—A major goal for PAR in 2010 is to reach out to new members, improve our communications with our members, and work proactively with all parties to make the Richmond a better place to live and work.

Please email President Ray Holland, president@sfpar.org with your suggestions on how we can serve our membership more effectively.

PAR Officers and Board of Directors as of December '09

PAR (Planning Association for the Richmond) is San Francisco's largest membership-based neighborhood organization, representing about 1,400 Richmond District households and businesses.

Established in 1970, we are a 501c3 nonprofit supported solely by our members.

Our volunteer Board of Directors provide expertise in law, the environment, land use, and urban planning to advocate for a better Richmond District. The 23-member

Board studies issues in order that we may promote policies of interest and benefit to our membership.

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PAR's only income is the tax-deductible dues contribution paid by our membership either to PAR or by naming PAR as a United Way designated recipient. PAR does not accept any government money or any grants, thus maintaining its complete independence.

You have made PAR the largest neighborhood organization in San Francisco and kept it as a viable voice for the Richmond District since its inception in 1970.

In the following list, we gratefully acknowledge those members who have contributed in excess of the basic \$15 membership dues since the Fall 2009 newsletter—their generosity helps us thrive.

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Ocean Beach Safeway to expand its role in area

Safeway opened its existing La Playa store in 1971 and launched an effort to redevelop the site in 2008 shortly after purchasing the underlying real estate.

As a result of its original neighborhood outreach last year, and the City's goal to add a housing component to the site, Safeway has worked to refine its proposed redevelopment plans to take all of these

goals into account.

Safeway is now proud to bring the updated plans, which include a state-of-the-art podium Safeway store and retail shops on Fulton Street and future residential options on Cabrillo Street, to the community for review and continued dialogue.

The architectural design seeks to make this an iconic Safeway location, one that

serves the neighborhood and is also part of the Ocean Beach experience, similar to the Marina Safeway's relationship to the Marina Green.

Safeway recently shared its plans with the PAR Board of Directors in November 2009 and looks forward to exchanging information at the membership meeting on January 20.

—Natalie Mattei



The proposed Safeway renovation at LaPlaya and Fulton Streets (seen here as viewed from LaPlaya Street) currently includes plans for a pharmacy, an outdoor dining terrace, and residences as well as shops on Fulton Street.

Beach Chalet fields due for major overhaul

PAR calls for more research before renovation proceeds

The Beach Chalet Athletic Fields renovation project calls for converting the fields to synthetic turf, installing lights for night play, new restrooms, parking lot improvements, better walkways and lighting, and the addition of a designated spectator area.

PAR understands the need for increased recreational space to serve members of our community, and, in general, we support the efforts to address this need. However, many questions regarding this project—the potential toxicity of the artificial turf, the amount of light spill into the surrounding neighborhoods and Ocean Beach, the appropriateness of the increased intensity of use—have not yet been fully answered.

Artificial Turf—We believe that the public concern regarding the safety of this material is worthy of further study by the Rec and Park department. We suggest that the department consider a moratorium on turf conversion until the State of California completes its study.

Lighting—It is of utmost importance that the “dark sky” environment of Ocean Beach is maintained. All lights should be on motion sensors, and no lights should be left on all night.

The added sky glow from the reflection of lights off of the field surface should be taken into account in all lighting level calculations. Lighting levels should not exceed minimum illumination levels set

forth by a reputable professional standard.

Intensity of use—The fields should close at 9 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and at 8 p.m. at the absolute latest, on other evenings; 10 p.m. is unacceptable. Maximum decibel guidelines should be set and enforced for amplified sound.

PAR requests that the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department put this project on hold for a period of six months so that questions regarding these and other issues can be investigated and resolved before proceeding.

More information about the projected soccer fields renovation is available at www.cityfieldsfoundation.org.

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Editor's note: Because this list is compiled in advance of the newsletter deadline, recent contributors' names may not appear.

Letter from the President

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or eliminated altogether while public and private resources are shifted to the more immediate needs of sustaining the fabric of our society.

Maybe all of this is simply Chicken Little thinking, and the sky is not going to fall after all! Let's hope so. It is always possible that the labor market will begin to turn around almost as quickly as it soured. If that happens, consumer dollars may begin to flow again, and the more discretionary endeavors begin to rise again on our collective priority lists.

In the meantime, though, we should expect subtle but significant shifts in neighborhood needs and improvements, which must be considered as we compose our collective priority lists.

*Raymond R. Holland, President
president@sfparr.org*

PAR changes phone and fax numbers

PAR recently upgraded its voice and fax lines to single integrated number to make it easier for members to contact the organization. Please update your contacts to reflect this change.

The new number is 415-541-5652.

Remember, if you want to register a complaint about litter, noise, or other problems, call the city's Customer Services Center at 311. You do not need to provide your name or number in order to make a request, ask a question, or



Join PAR

Membership is open to all persons living, working, or owning property in the Richmond District of San Francisco. PAR is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Your contribution is tax-deductible as provided by law.

Yes! I/we want to support the Richmond District.

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Name of business (for business members)			
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E-Mail <i>PAR respects your privacy and will not share your email.</i>			
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Please complete and cut out this form and mail it together with your check (payable to the *Planning Association of the Richmond*) to

PAR 3145 Geary Boulevard, #205 San Francisco CA 94118
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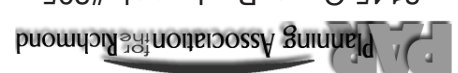
THANKS for helping to support the quality of life in San Francisco's Richmond District.

report a problem. If you're on Twitter, you can also send messages to sf311. You will need to sign up at <http://sftwitter.sfgov.org/twitter/> before you can start using this service.

And, as always, in case of fire or medical emergency or to report a crime in progress, dial 911.

—Julie Burns

The date code above your name on the mailing label indicates when your membership expires.


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