

The Richmond is talking . . .

Bring groceries to a neighbor in need! The Richmond District Neighborhood Center (RDNC) will match volunteers offering to deliver groceries to a homebound senior with someone living nearby. Volunteers must be able to pick up food between 3 and 6 p.m. twice a week on a consistent basis and to make a commitment of at least 30 minutes per week. To schedule an orientation, contact idalia@rmdc.org or attend a general orientation meeting on Tuesday, July 25, at 6 p.m. at the RDNC.

Kudos to the Richmond District Blog for getting action on potholes. In May, the blog (richmondsfblog.com) asked readers to identify potholes in the Richmond District in need of repair and received 60 helpful submissions. Acting on this information, District 1 Supervisor Sandra Fewer persuaded the San Francisco Department of Public Works to commit a dedicated crew to the Richmond District to repair the reported potholes. The first pothole was filled on June 2 in a ceremony featuring Mayor Ed Lee, Supervisor Fewer and DPW Deputy Director Larry Stringer. Work in the neighborhood continued throughout June.

Long-deferred and now-urgent repairs are also underway on Crossover Drive in Golden Gate Park. The road has needed repaving for years, but heavy rains this past winter began to undermine certain areas and seriously compromised road conditions.



Long-awaited opening celebrated at Mountain Lake Park Playground

On June 8, the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department reopened Mountain Lake Park Playground after its recent \$3.15 million renovation funded by the 2008 and 2012 Clean and Safe Neighborhood Park Bonds, generous gifts of Friends of Mountain Lake Playground (FMLPP), the Presidio Trust and funds secured by District 2 Supervisor Mark Farrell.

The FMLPP, whose members include Jen Fetner Booth, Kate Green and PAR Board member Claire Myers, has worked closely with SF Rec and Park over the past five years to develop a design that meets the needs of the community and honors the natural and historic setting. The effort has culminated in a wonderful community gathering space.

The playground was designed pro bono by Bohlin Cywinski Jackson Architects, which donated more than \$400,000 in design services.



“Our goal was to make the playground feel as though it had always been there, on the shore of Mountain Lake,” said Aaron Gomez, project architect for the project. “We wanted it to be specific to this place, to this part of San Francisco and nowhere else.”

“This renovation is a terrific example of the community and City partnering together to fight for necessary improvements and upgrades that generations will

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Summer 2017 PAR Meeting

featuring

Representatives from
NextDoor,
the Richmond District Blog
and the
SF Police Department

...

Wednesday, July 19

7 to 9 p.m.

Richmond Recreation Center
251 18th Avenue
(between Clement & California Streets)
Limited street parking is available.
Muni: 1 California and 38 Geary

New captain has a way with words

Richmond Station Police Captain Alexa O’Brien’s weekly newsletter is a must-read publication. In addition to reporting on specific incidents and providing robust statistics quantifying crime in the district, this lively publication highlights community issues and neighborhood activities.

Readers learn about lowering the risk of becoming a crime victim, participating in the community and interesting perspectives on neighborhood police work. The newsletter’s new format includes profiles of individual officers and photographs of their community activities, providing an interesting look at the breadth of activities that officers perform.

Captain O’Brien has been a police officer for 17 years, and has deep roots in the Richmond. She attended the Katherine Delmar Burke School and the University of San Francisco. We appreciate Captain



O’Brien’s public outreach and her commitment to the community policing philosophy.

To view the most current newsletter, visit richmondsfblog.com or call the station at 415-666-8000.

Letter from the President

Dear PAR Members,
On April 25, 2017, the *San Francisco Examiner* published an article headlined: “Rules could relax for AT&T utility boxes despite graffiti dispute.” The article reported that Supervisor Malia Cohen had introduced legislation amending current law to allow utilities such as AT&T to buy their way out of current sidewalk box placement requirements by paying “in lieu” fees.

This *Examiner*’s article attracted the attention of some Richmond District residents because the issue of utility box placement was the subject of a great deal of public process some years back. As such, it now seems appropriate to keep local stakeholders informed and updated. In that the box placement issue predated my time as president of PAR, I asked former PAR President and Director Emeritus Raymond Holland to provide some background on the topic. Ray provided the following comprehensive history:

“In about 2005, AT&T proposed to install over 2,000 (this was subsequently reduced to approximately 800) ‘Surface

Mounted Facilities’ (SMFs or sidewalk cabinets) throughout San Francisco as part of its planned ‘Lightspeed (subsequently renamed ‘U-verse’) Network’ to provide one of the first high-speed internet and television services for residential and business customers. One of the most controversial issues about this proposal was its almost complete lack of compatibility with the unique land use patterns that were already well established in the City.

“Since AT&T specified that, for technical reasons, the distance between each sidewalk cabinet and its customers’ sites should never exceed 300 feet, since there are no setbacks between the overwhelming majority of homes and businesses (particularly in its Richmond District) and since the sidewalks on many blocks contain no trees or other kinds of plantings that could shield such cabinets, it would be almost inevitable for many of these cabinets would become unsightly standalone objects on the sidewalks in front of many buildings including those occupied by persons or businesses who are not interested in becoming customers of AT&T.

“As a result, negotiations between representatives of AT&T, neighborhood organizations (including PAR) and others were very intense and extensive in attempting to identify workable compromises between these competing sets of circumstances.

In 2008, the San Francisco Department of Public Works (SFPDWP) promulgated its in-house regulations for AT&T’s development and implementation of its planned programs and services. Following an unexplained hiatus of several years, AT&T began to develop and implement its programs under the SFPDWP’s regulations and with the assistance of PAR and others several years later.

“After several years of unsatisfactory efforts, PAR and San Francisco Beautiful (SFB) filed a formal complaint with the San Francisco Board of Supervisors (BOS) asking for an environmental review of AT&T’s plan.

“After over six months of public hearings and more intense debate and negotiations, the BOS eventually approved an environmental impact report (EIR) about AT&T’s plan by a vote of 6 to 5. SFB and others appealed that decision to both the trial and to appeals courts unsuccessfully.

“In 2015, the BOS elected to codify the SFPDWP’s regulations as an ordinance allowing Surface Mounted Facilities to be permitted in accordance with the procedures specified in it.

“This year, the following amendments to that ordinance have been proposed for the BOS’ consideration. It is being proposed that permittees (including, but no longer limited to, AT&T) be allowed:

- to pay an ‘in-lieu fee’ instead of planting a street tree for each SMF,
- to pay an ‘in-lieu fee’ instead of installing and maintaining landscaping for each SMF; and
- to pay an ‘in-lieu fee’ instead of installing a mural on each SMF.

“It is also being proposed that the current provision be repealed that requires an applicant for a Surface Mounted Facility Permit to make a reasonable effort to locate the SMF on private property before submitting the application. And, finally, it is being proposed that the current requirement that the permittee maintain any required street tree be repealed in order to be consistent with Proposition E passed last November (2016).

“In an undated letter to PAR, a representative of AT&T notes that it has been able to reduce both the size of its sidewalk cabinets and the number of them that will be required although the letter does not specify by how much that size or the number of those cabinets will be reduced or how. “

Thank you, Ray, for providing PAR members with such an outstanding discussion of the utility box issue. The letter from AT&T that Ray referenced has been posted for your review on the PAR website at sfpar.org.

In a recent letter sent to the Board of Supervisors, PAR weighed in on the proposed legislation. In sum, we objected to AT&T bypassing the community by restarting the box placement colloquy with the Board of Supervisors, and we objected to the failure of AT&T to adhere to the current box placement obligations, especially the prevention and removal of graffiti.

In order to keep the PAR Board informed of current community sentiment regarding the sidewalk utility box placement issue, please email any comments you may have to me at sfparpresident@gmail.com.

Richard Cornea
sfparpresident@gmail.com

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Mountain Lake Park Playground celebrates revamp

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now be able to use and enjoy for years to come,” said Farrell, whose district includes Mountain Lake Park and playground. “Mountain Lake Park is a jewel for the surrounding neighborhoods and for our City.”

The San Francisco Parks Alliance has supported and fiscally sponsored Friends of Mountain Lake Park Playground since 2010, assisting in the fund-raising campaign that raised more than \$300,000 from community members and donors and contracting with the architect and other consultants to complete the design.

Mountain Lake Park is a 15.2-acre park situated on a band of land bordered by the Presidio to the north and Lake Street to the south. Park amenities include a lakeside beach area, children’s play area, freestanding restroom, sport courts, an off-leash dog play area, and large, natural lawn areas.

The playground sits at the end of 12th Avenue, north of Lake Street, and is bound by the lake to the north, tennis courts to the east, and the freestanding restroom structure to the west. The restroom building recently went through a \$2 million renovation funded by the 2008 Parks Bond and opened in 2014.

The park is immediately adjacent to Mountain Lake itself, a

natural lake situated largely within the boundary of the Presidio. It was here in 1776 that Spanish Captain Juan Bautista de Anza and his small band of explorers camped while scouting out the location to build their “presidio” or military fort.

Over decades, the lake’s health declined due to many factors, including the construction of Highway 1 along the west shore of the lake to connect the Richmond District to the Golden Gate Bridge, which dramatically reduced the lake’s size and depth. Nonnative species found their way into the lake, causing some local plants and wildlife to disappear.

“The Mountain Lake Park Playground was built nearly 30 years ago and needed a lot of improvements,” said Phil Ginsberg, SF Rec and Park general manager. “This is a story of successful government and community partnerships; together we renovated

the playground, increased access to the park, added a new picnic area, and irrigation and landscape upgrades.”

“We’re delighted to partner with SF Rec and Park to make Mountain Lake a welcoming place for families from across the City,” said Jean Fraser, chief executive officer of the Presidio Trust. “Now kids can come to play on the swings, take a walk around the lake and even spot a turtle sunning on a log. It’s a place where nature, learning and play come together.”



Shared Schoolyard Project comes to Sutro Elementary

On Saturday, May 20, the San Francisco Shared Schoolyard Project was back in the Richmond at Sutro Elementary School for another amazing kickoff! Delicious, free tacos brought in the crowds again, and families were thrilled to meet and greet the new Richmond District police captain, Alexa O’Brien.

In addition to activities hosted by more than a dozen great partners, the local parent-teacher association also participated with a successful used clothing donation drive. Supervisor Sandra Fewer joined Supervisor Mark Farrell for the ribbon-cutting to officially celebrate this new resource for the community.

The Shared Schoolyard Project continues to open up schoolyards on a regular basis across the City.

To find out the next time the Shared Schoolyard Project is in the Richmond, follow them on Facebook or sign up for emails at sfsharedschoolyard.org.



Myra Quadros, Sutro Elementary principal, talks about the Shared Schoolyard Project.

New Presidio Trust Board director brings site experience

In May, William E. Grayson was named the first new director appointed to the seven-member Presidio Trust Board by President Donald Trump. He replaced Nicola Miner whose term had expired.

Grayson is a native San Franciscan. He graduated from St. Ignatius Prep, UC Santa Barbara and USF School of Law. The Grayson family lives next to the Presidio.

Grayson practiced law for 10 years in corporate law firm and governmental settings. Most notably, Grayson served as the Principal Deputy General Counsel of the Army during the first Bush administration. While in the Pentagon, he was responsible for overseeing the Army’s 2,700 civilian and military lawyers. During his service, Grayson participated in the transition of the

Presidio from an Army post into a stunning national park.

For the past 20 years, Grayson has been a senior investment advisor. He is currently a principal at Bernstein Private Wealth Management, providing financial planning and investment advice to families, executives, trusts and foundations.

Grayson has served on numerous boards of trustees and investment committees. These include the UC Berkeley Institute of Governmental Studies, the USF School of Law, the Archdiocese of San Francisco and the Bay Area Discovery Museum.



Join PAR now and make your voice heard.

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.

First name(s)		Last name	
Name of business (for business members)			
Address			
City		State	Zip
Primary phone		Cell/other phone	
E-Mail <i>PAR respects your privacy and will not share your email.</i>			
Membership		<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> Business
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting membership, \$15.00/year and above			
<input type="checkbox"/> Subscribing membership, \$25.00/year and above			
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor membership, \$50.00/year and above			
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron membership, \$100.00/year and above			

Please complete and cut out this form and mail it together with your check (payable to the *Planning Association of the Richmond*) to

PAR
5758 Geary Boulevard, Box 356
San Francisco, CA 94121-2112

THANKS for helping to support the quality of life in San Francisco's Richmond District.

Pay Your PAR dues online!

sfpar.org/site/join-par-via-paypal.html

to join, contribute or pay your dues the easy, electronic way!

PAR reaching out to community, seeking more members

The Planning Association for the Richmond is renewing its efforts to gain new members and explore ways for Richmond residents to connect with community-minded neighbors.

PAR has long been one of the city's largest neighborhood groups, serving as a watchdog, a forum and an advocate for our community. It is possibly the only neighborhood group with a quarterly newsletter. By expanding its membership, PAR hopes to build up this strong legacy of engagement.

The PAR board will soon institute a system to notify all new homeowners of PAR's mission and solicit their membership. PAR board members plan to distribute leaflets—and this newsletter—at tables at the Clement Street Farmers Market. And by updating its electronic communications, PAR aims to develop new ways to enhance members' voices on issues of concern to them.

Many, but not all, PAR members have given us their email addresses (which PAR will not share with third parties). These email addresses provide a resource to allow PAR to better perform its mission. You can renew your membership on our website, sfpar.org, or join PAR by filling out the form to the left and mailing it to PAR, 5758 Geary Boulevard, San Francisco, CA 94121-2112.



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

