

The Richmond is talking . . .

Traffic light at Geary Boulevard and Palm Avenue: After a three-year-long wait, a traffic light at Geary Boulevard and Palm Avenue will replace the cautionary flashing yellow light that warns drivers to slow down.

The intersection is adjacent to the Institute on Aging Senior Campus and can be hazardous for elders when drivers heading east from Arguello Boulevard rush to make the next green light at Stanyan Street and Geary Boulevard.



Drivers are urged to be aware of newly installed traffic lights at Palm Avenue and Geary Boulevard.

Alexandria Theater renovation begins: Recent activity at the Alexandria Theater on Geary Boulevard and 18th Avenue gives hope that Richmond residents will see construction finally start on its redevelopment.

The theater has been closed for more than 10 years, and previous owners had numerous failures-to-comply citations.

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Fall 2014 PAR Meeting

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Candidates, Propositions & Ballot Measures

Join us for a discussion of issues up for vote on the November general ballot.

**Wednesday, October 15
7 to 9 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.
Muni lines:
1 California, 2 Clement and 38 Geary



Environmental contamination cleanup completed at Presidio

This May, the Presidio achieved a milestone in the cleanup of environmental contamination left from Army days: the program to remove or treat pollution in soil and water was completed. The achievement was made official when the two state agencies that regulate hazardous waste and petroleum pollution certified that their cleanup orders for the 1,491-acre base were successfully carried out.

In 1997, a record number of civic groups, including PAR, and the National Park Service submitted formal comments opposing an Army plan to leave the landfills and other hazardous waste sites mostly in place, in some cases with restrictions on future land use. After taking over the program, the Presidio Trust opted for removing most of the remaining contamination, thus making possible an increase in open space and natural areas in the new park. Some of the cleanup sites located closest to the Richmond District include:

- **Mountain Lake.** San Franciscans became concerned about possible lead in the lakebed after a beloved swan named Daisy was found to have died of lead poisoning in 1996 (possibly from either contaminated sediment or a fishing line



Beautiful Mountain Lake Park has been dredged and sediment-causing storm drains have been rerouted.

sinker). Samples taken by the Army in the early 1990s and later by the Trust showed spots of lead but seemingly not in amounts that required excavation.

In 2000, however, a UC Berkeley graduate student used a different test known as a core sample to study historical levels of pollen in the sediment. That test showed that harmful amounts of lead formerly used in gasoline had been deposited through runoff from Highway 1 between 1939 and the early 1990s. It turned out that the samples taken by the Army and the Trust had drawn from either above or below the lead layer.

After protracted discussions with the California Department of Transportation, the US Department of Justice filed a lawsuit in 2009 that resulted in Caltrans agreeing to pay \$13.5 million for excavation of contaminated sediment and rerouting of storm drains. Dredging of the lake was completed in early 2014.

An additional area, the North Arm of the lake, was added to the dredging project after a Restoration Advisory Board member, Mark Youngkin, discovered that a Caltrans storm drain pipe, which had been incorrectly described in maps, discharged into the North Arm.

- **Nike Missile Site.** This site, in operation between 1955 and 1963 on a ridge south of the former Public Health Service Hospital, was once one of 12 Nike Ajax missile-firing facilities in the Bay Area that were manned 24 hours a day during the Cold War. The 34-foot non-nuclear missiles were kept in three underground concrete structures and could be raised by hydraulic elevators for launching. The Army originally

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Letter from the President

Dear PAR Members,
Decisions, decisions, decisions!
Richmond District residents and those who are registered to vote among them will be facing many decisions over the next few months, and some of these may be difficult decisions.

On and before November 4, voters are going to be asked:

- **Who should be elected?** There are 19 or 20 local, state, and federal offices to vote for.

- **Which of six proposed state laws** (several of which are particularly complex) **should be enacted?**

- **Which of twelve proposed local laws** (several of which are also particularly complex) **should be enacted?**

It was administratively determined on September 12 that one of the proposed state laws did not qualify for the Novem-

ber 4 ballot. An appeal of that decision is pending. The timetable for the appeal is unknown. Consequently the publication of the state and local voter information pamphlets maybe delayed. It is crucial that the voter information pamphlet be available so voters can know precisely what they are being asked to decide.

The agenda for PAR's next General Membership Meeting on October 15 will be devoted exclusively to learning more about those three sets of issues that will be on the November 4 ballot.

From now until the end of this calendar year, the Presidio Trust is asking the public to join it in reviewing the different designs that have already been proposed by five internationally known landscape architectural firms for design of the thirteen acres of new parklands that will emerge after the replacement for Doyle Drive (i.e., the Presidio Parkway) has been completed within the next two years.

The former elevated Doyle Drive physically separated the Main Post of the Presidio from Chrissy Field. When completed, the Presidio Parkway will descend much more rapidly to the surface and below it from the southern end of the Golden Gate Bridge. At the northern edge of the Main Post, the parkway will be underground, covered by newly constructed tunnels.

Resolved: Actions taken by PAR

Approved: Letter supporting Lincoln Manor resident to Ed Reskin of MTA for a new Residential Parking Permit zone. PAR asks that MTA be flexible in expanding the RPP zone to allow other residents who want to be included who were not originally included in the current RPP request.

Approved: A letter to the SF Board of Supervisors supporting the San Francisco Coalition Undergrounding Utilities to make a plan to underground overhead wires, excluding Muni, throughout the San Francisco. Currently undergrounding of overhead utilities has stopped. Utility customers are paying off the debt occurred from undergrounding roughly half of San Francisco's overhead utilities.

These new parklands will connect the Main Post with Chrissy Field for the first time amidst some of the most spectacular views in the world—what should they look like?

Please go to www.presidio.gov to register for one of the regular weekly tours of the area to view where those new parklands will be sited. To review some of the designs that have already been proposed for them so far and to view the physical models of those proposed designs, go to the Trust Headquarters at 103 Montgomery Street in the Main Post.

You can visit the website or go to Trust Headquarters to find out how you can submit your comments and suggestions for the design of those new parklands.

Please do not pass up these unique opportunities to make your voices heard and please, please VOTE!

Ray Holland
president@sfpar.org

Officers & Directors

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Nicholas Belloni, Co-Vice President
Richard Corriea, Co-Vice President
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PAR Representatives in Other Organizations:

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Housing Action Coalition: Dan Baroni
Kaiser Permanent Citizens Task Force:
Peter Winkelstein
Neighborhood Associations for Presidio
Planning: Paul Epstein, Sharon Gadberry,
Ray Holland
Neighborhood Working Group for Presidio
Master Plan: Ray Holland
Ocean Beach Master Planning Committee:
Julie Burns
Presidio Restoration Advisory Board:
Julie Cheever
Richmond Community Coalition: Ray Holland,
Nick Belloni

Richmond is talking

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Problems included graffiti and homeless people inhabiting the building.

The new owners, who are familiar with the area, are taking action to comply with the conditional use permit requirement. The entrance to the theatre has been securely fenced in and a security camera is clearly visible.

Permits are posted on the Geary Boulevard and 18th Avenue sides of the guilding, and tenants, including a construction/building maintenance office, now occupy two of the commercial sites on Geary Boulevard.

Where in the Richmond?



Contamination cleanup completed at Presidio

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planned to leave the structures in place as abandoned, but some RAB members became concerned in 1997 when we noticed that one of the elevator bay doors had rusted through, and an oily sheen could be seen in standing water below.

Three of us visited a similar Nike site maintained as a museum in Fort Barry in Marin County, found old blueprints for the Presidio site, and alerted the Army that the structures were likely to contain up to 271 gallons of hydraulic oil, deteriorating lead-based paint and asbestos.

In 1999, the Army removed the hydraulic oil, piping, asbestos and lead-based paint and locked and secured the empty structures. In 2008, the Trust removed storm drain pipelines and contaminated soil in the area.

• **Baker Beach landfills.** Six landfills



The Nike missile site museum at Fort Barry (above) in Marin County is similar to the former Nike missile site near the Public Service Hospital.

on the coastal bluffs above Baker Beach were excavated between 2004 and 2013, clearing the way for restoration of natural areas and the creation of new trails by the National Park Service and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy.

• **100,000-gallon oil storage tank.** This hilltop tank, built in the 1950s to replace

a similar tank erected in about 1900, stood near Washington Boulevard across from the World War II memorial. It stored heating oil that was sent by gravity through pipelines to buildings around the base. After the use of heating oil was discontinued in the 1960s, the tank held diesel fuel for a time. The Army removed it in 1995 and the Trust excavated more soil in 2007 after finding residual petroleum contamination that exceeded regulatory levels.

• **Landfills 8 and 10.** These two sites to the south and west of the former Public Health Service Hospital are among several landfills that were left in place for reasons of expense or feasibility, but both were re-engineered for seismic stability and erosion control, covered with two-foot caps of clean soil and replanted with native plants.

—by Julie Cheever

Water conservation is everyone's concern

Water conservation is everyone's responsibility. Can't remember the last time you brought out your umbrella? Yes, we are in a severe drought. Average annual precipitation for San Francisco through August is 13.15 inches. This year, average precipitation through August is only 8.46 inches. Throughout California, rainfall this year is at 49 percent of the historical average. Coupled with the last two years of below-average rainfall, California water reserves are very low.

In January this year, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission asked residential customers to lower their water usage by 10 percent. This equals 8 billion gallons of water that needs to be saved by the SFPUC by the end of the year. To help meet this goal, California has instituted mandatory water restrictions.

Anything you can reduce and reuse water will help the SFPUC reach its goal.

Reduce your water usage

- Take shorter showers.
- Turn off the tap while soaping up your hands, then turn it on again to rinse them.
- Identify and repair leaks in toilets and other plumbing fixtures.
- Replace inefficient toilets, urinals and clothes washers; toilets more than 20 years

old should be replaced; rebates are available from sfwater.org/rebates.

- Limit outside irrigation, adjust irrigation to avoid runoff, check for leaks.
- Minimize car washing; mandatory state restrictions require a shut-off hose nozzle.

Reuse water

- Use graywater from dishwashing or clothes washing for irrigation.
- Waiting for the hot water? Catch the cold water that runs before the hot and save it for toilet flushing, plant watering or other purposes.

Save water

The SFPUC is promoting safe and effective graywater use. Using graywater can be an important way to reduce potable water use and flows to our sewer system.

Graywater is water from showers, bath tubs, washing machines, and bathroom sinks. It is water that contains some soap but is clean enough to water plants.

To pioneer the use of graywater in the city, the SFPUC offers a Laundry-to-Landscape Graywater Program, a Residential Graywater Permit Rebate and a Graywater Design Manual for Outdoor Irrigation. For more information go to SFwater.org.

The SFPUC also offers a free water-

wise evaluation where a technician will visit your home to identify leaks, inefficient fixtures and provide recommendations to improve your water efficiency. To schedule an appointment, contact the Water Conservation Section at 415-551-4730.

Free high-efficiency showerheads and faucet aerators are also available, and they can be picked up at SFPUC Customer Service between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at 525 Golden Gate Avenue.

Consider decoupling your rain gutter from the sewer system and collecting the water for future irrigation use. Storage tanks and design plans are available at the Urban Farmer Store, 2833 Vicente Street, 415-661-2204 (urbanfarmerstore.com).

Encourage others to conserve water. For example, if you are offered water in a restaurant, remind the server or owner that we are in a drought and to only offer water if requested.



A 205-gallon water tank fits neatly in a corner beneath a rain downspout.

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 on online!

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

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

Keeping the Richmond a pleasant place to live

PAR's mission is to maintain and improve the quality of life for Richmond District residents, and to protect those things that are important to us all. It exists to preserve the specialness of this corner of the city and its many small businesses, homes and restaurants, all nestled in a near-rectangle, the edges of which are delineated by parks, water, hills and sand.

SF City Hall listens to PAR because it coalesces and amplifies the voices of District residents, and more than 500 member households. PAR has a reputation of knowing the concerns of residents, of being principled and of being committed to its mission.

Whether you were a PAR member before or are new to the area, please consider joining with your neighbors by becoming a PAR member. Dues begin at \$15 per year.

If you are interested, please complete and return membership application to the left or go to www.sfpar.org where you can use PayPal.

—Richard Corriea

Answer to Where in the Richmond?:
The demolition of the Christian Science Reading Room at Clement Street and Funston Avenue has revealed a long-hidden ad for Vess soda.

WWW.SFPAR.ORG

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

