



San Francisco Tomorrow

Working to Protect the Urban Environment

Issue 377

Will you want to live in San Francisco... Tomorrow?

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A RAB, or a Robbery?

A captivated audience of planners and transit pundits gathered at the War Memorial Building recently to listen to the SFMTA and SF Planning Department staff heap accolades on the planning process of the new changes and alternatives being proposed for the RAB (Rail Alignment and Benefits) downtown routing of Caltrans and the High Speed Rail route to the DTX (Downtown Terminal). Architectural renderings that were shown included locating the High-Speed Rail entry stations to allow for more development and density in the South of Market. These previously industrial areas of the city, now being re-invented as high-end housing, were subject to questions of rising sea water levels that may turn the new areas into the Venice of the west. Regardless, the planners, including Director John Rahaim, spoke consistently of looking at this proposal as a vision for the future, while Sonja Trauss (SFBARF) held aloft her child and Rahaim noted that these plans were not for us, but for the next generation of SF inhabitants.



Transbay Terminal: stilllll waiting

There is a real problem currently with the SFMTA and Planning leadership in how they address *existing* community members, seniors, and disabled; they focus on creating plans for a conceivable *future* at the expense of everything else. When it came time for questions, Rahaim attempted to limit the open-mike Q/A series of issues being read and addressed by the planners, and only 1-3 people were able to ask their questions.

I rose to the front asking to have my question heard, and asked what about transit EQUITY? Why was there so much money being pumped into the downtown projects,

when other areas of citywide development and the promise of a citywide subway system seem lost? Sufficient dollars are needed and inventiveness in the proposals by city agencies. Rahaim noted that they are taking equity into account with the SF Transit planning initiatives. His brush-off of my question ignored again concerns about the capacity limits of a city, where the focus is on agreements with LYFT/UBER/BIRD/LIME/FORD and other corporate behemoths, but not extending to the issues raised by the community on their future needs. When planning ignores the public process by these dog-and-pony-shows, it ignores the downside of a run-away money-train, and the need to balance transit and transportation with growth in the city.

~~ A. Goodman



In the Presidio:

Fort Winfield Scott

Proposals are being reviewed that would select a developer team to oversee the rehabilitation of 20 buildings totaling nearly 300,000 square feet of space at Fort Scott in the western half of the Presidio. Visionaries seeking to tackle the significant environmental or social challenges of our time must have big ideas for the redevelopment of Fort Winfield Scott, a 30-acre campus within the Presidio of San Francisco, a national park at the Golden Gate.

Fort Winfield Scott, named for the prominent 19th century U.S. Army officer, was established as a post for the Coast Artillery Corps. Located within the Presidio Army post but functioning separately with its own commander until after World War II, it served as headquarters for the defense of the Bay Area's coastline over the course of half a century, from the era of breech loaded, rifled guns to Nike missiles. Constructed between 1909 and 1912, the Fort Scott barracks represent the earliest example of Mission Revival architectural style at the Presidio.

In January, the Presidio Trust issued a Request for Concept Proposals (RFCP) seeking one or more organizations to reimagine Fort Winfield Scott as a "Campus for Change."

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(from page 1) Fort Winfield Scott is one of the last large areas of the Presidio to be rehabilitated—the former US Army post has undergone a steady transformation from "post to park" over the past two decades.

Proponents must have the financial and management capacity to finance and oversee the rehabilitation of 20 buildings totaling nearly 300,000 square feet of space, and to make infrastructure improvements throughout the campus. Respondents may opt to include two additional buildings totaling 15,000 square feet of space. New construction of up to 20,000 square feet may be considered.

Costs for revitalizing the campus are estimated at \$200 million. Because the buildings qualify as certified historic structures, the successful bid may be eligible for the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program.

The Presidio Trust will post the proposals received on its website on July 2, 2018. Qualified proposals will be presented by respondents at the July 25, 2018 Presidio Trust public board of directors meeting.

~~ Mary Anne Miller

Clamor at the Commonwealth Club

The Future of San Francisco

The Commonwealth Club held a lively discussion recently in a packed auditorium with many San Francisco residents interested in planning and environmental issues, as the city continues to grow unbridled by traditional zoning limits and concerns for the declining quality of life. Housing affordability, traffic and other growth impacts appear to be unaffected by the usual planning restrictions and state pressures. Recently proposed legislation by State Senator Scott Wiener have added to the perceived threat posed by the overblown expectations of developers for what the city's 49 square mile size can accommodate. The panel for discussion at the Commonwealth Club meeting was made up of George Wooding, President of the Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods, Stuart Flashman, Environmental Attorney, and, Eric Brooks, Campaign Coordinator, Our City SF.

First, Eric Brooks laid out the financial implications of a housing bubble, and how corporate LLC investments and off-shore investment ignore the fact that there exists a large inventory of units that are deliberately being kept vacant by owners of SF property currently. This housing bubble can be seen in China also, where many cities are built and remain empty, while attention to concrete impacts on health and environmental concerns lags as development pressures for quick profits ignore the human side. In our small city and internationally, these development profits and investment strategies impact the quality of life.

Stuart Flashman, lawyer and expert in California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), set forth the intricacies of the law, and stated that now more than ever, we need to support and reinforce CEQA in its role of controlling new growth. Politicians and their developer financiers want to set aside local ability to enforce strict growth boundaries. In exchange for the chimera of affordable housing, the survival of our existing communities is threatened as planning restrictions are set aside by state legislation which would increase the density, decrease the open space and increase the height of new buildings that are meant to close the affordability gap.

George Wooding eloquently summarized the public positions that the Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods has endorsed in recent months, in comments supporting the rescue of our most stable neighborhoods from imminent changes that would compromise their integrity in the hope of creating more affordable housing.

~~ A. Goodman

Sue Cauthen

Sue Cauthen was a member of the Board of Directors of San Francisco Tomorrow for many years. She passed away one day short of her 85th birthday in Mill Valley.

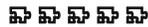
Born Suzanne Daneman May 5, 1933, in Los Angeles, she had a passion for reading, writing & travel. Her writing career began in her school newspaper at Star of the Sea Academy in San Francisco and developed at UC Berkeley from which she graduated in 1955.

Her vast knowledge of San Francisco as a major maritime city and of all the environmental and economic issues affecting the shipping industry in the city and the Bay Area, came from her career as writer and editor for various maritime journals; she honed her skills as Managing Editor of Pacific Shipper, editor and writer for Daily Commercial News, and as writer for Made in Europe, Brandon Shipper and Forwarder, Pacific Stock Exchange and McGraw Hill World News. She enjoyed traveling on freighters while working on stories and one of those trips was on a freighter to

Sue Cauthen (from page 2) Prince William Sound to cover the Exxon Valdez clean-up.

She married Jerry Cauthen and lived in a beautiful apartment on Telegraph Hill; she was involved in San Francisco Tomorrow, Telegraph Hill Dwellers and served on the city's Sunshine Task Force.

Donations may be made in her memory to Meals on Wheels San Francisco. Condolences to: sorbonnesue@gmail.com



Uber / Lyft (from overleaf) These companies warn that American workers will be less competitive if this new "gig economy" is interfered with.

The justification for the new ruling

The drivers who appeal to the Supreme Court ruling explain that their income has plummeted since 2014 and that they are barely able to make a living. Drivers claim they are making between \$3.37 and \$10 an hour or far less than minimum wage. Underpaid workers end up on government assistance and are supported by the public, either in their prime working years or during retirement. The freedom that is used as a justification for the lack of employee status is not present, the drivers argue. They complain that to be profitable, drivers must work during prime commuting hours. The freedom bandied about as a justification for the lack of overtime pay, paid rest breaks, health care, and Social Security benefits, is a ruse for greed and avarice by their employer. It is said that Uber and Lyft are dodging 25-45% in infrastructure cost with their "gig" business model. When the participants in the gig economy avoid paying their fair share of the public safety net, the public is missing out on millions of dollars in taxes that could be paid by these businesses. Today, nearly 33% of the workforce is part of the gig economy.

Unfair competition

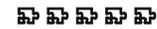
Those who fear jobs will be lost by the new gig economy are ignoring the fact that taxi companies have had unfair competition from Uber and Lyft all along. Avoiding workers' compensation, for example, is a huge advantage the gig economy has over taxis. Now, that Uber and Lyft have outcompeted taxis, their next goal is to outcompete mass transit, which is having their ridership diminished by Uber and Lyft daily. Experts believe that individual states will eventually decide whether they support or oppose the gig model. This decision is likely to be determined along party lines.

Traffic congestion management

Today, taxi drivers as a group pay \$250,000 annually for medallions or permits. Of course, Uber and Lyft drivers pay no such fees. Although Uber and Lyft claim they are

taking vehicles off the road, some others point to the 45,000 cars that have been added as nonprofessional drivers look for fares. Historically, taxi management has limited the number of taxis put on the road, not wanting to impact traffic. Today, there are 1,800 taxis on the road in the City. Uber and Lyft do not hesitate to add more drivers regularly.

~~ Glenn Rogers



In the Presidio:

The New Lodge

Many national parks have a large mansion with high-ceilinged public rooms multiple huge fireplaces called The Lodge. But the Lodge at the Presidio is a series of small lodgings rehabilitated from the simple designs of a spartan military base. The newest National Park Lodge at the Golden Gate will open June 28, 2018 and is called Lodge at the Presidio but it's one of five small b-and-b type of hotels and not at all like the single mansion-style traditional Lodge. The Presidio is so full of historic structures built by the Army of solid construction and high design quality that it is hoped that the Presidio will never have to build a mansion at all.

This newly rehabilitated historic hotel is being touted as the closest lodging in San Francisco to the Golden Gate Bridge with great views of the bridge, the Presidio's lush 300-acre forest, the San Francisco Bay, and the city skyline.

~~ Mary Anne Miller

About the Presidio

The Presidio served as a military installation from its establishment in 1776 as Spain's northern-most outpost of colonial power in the New World, later passing to Mexico and then the United States. In 1972, Congress created one of the world's largest national parks in an urban setting – the Golden Gate National Recreation Area – and declared that the Presidio would be part of the GGNRA should the military ever leave. At the end of the Cold War in 1989, Congress decided to close the Presidio. Its 218-year tenure as a military post ended in 1994 when the U.S. Army lowered its flag for the last time and the Presidio became one of the nation's parks.

Over the past two decades, the Presidio has been transformed. The Presidio Trust, the National Park Service, and the non-profit Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy have rehabilitated hundreds of historic buildings as visitor destinations, homes, and workplaces. With the purpose of moving from post to park, they have restored native habitats, conserved and renewed the forest, built hiking and biking trails, welcoming new residents as well as visitors. See more at www.presidio.gov.



Uber / Lyft Business Model in Jeopardy?

On April 30, 2018 the California Supreme Court passed a ruling, changing existing law that determines how an independent contractor can be identified. The case, *Dynamex Operations West, Inc. v. Superior Court of Los Angeles*, may completely redefine what is and is not an independent contractor today.

Background

Dynamex, which is a same-day pick up and delivery company, treated all their workers as employees before 2004. However, as a cost saving measure, in 2004 they changed the status of their workers to independent contractors. Charles Lee, in January of 2005, filled a lawsuit against Dynamex for himself and the other drivers still working for the company. Charles Lee alleged that the company had unfair and unlawful business practices. Eventually, the court agreed and turned the definition of a private contractor “upside down.”

The "ABC test" to define an independent contractor

The court's decision requires an employer to prove these three things in order to classify a worker as an independent contractor:

- A.) That the company hiring the worker does not control or direct their behavior, and
- B.) That the worker is performing a task outside of the everyday work of the employer, and
- C.) That the worker has made a decision to go into an independently established business or occupation which performs work similar to that of the employer.

The "gig" defense

Uber and Lyft have each argued that they are not a taxi service but are instead a technology “platform” which connects riders and drivers together. Therefore, they argue they should be exempt from the infrastructure that is necessary for other businesses. They believe that their business model represents a new, 21st-century economy, allowing their workers to have more freedom, flexibility to work when they choose, and to be their own “boss.” *(continued)*