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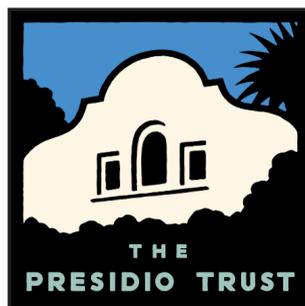


Presidio



A Monthly Publication of the Presidio Trust

Volume 3 Issue 4 April 2000



Preserving the Presidio
as a Sustainable
National Park

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News Briefs

Letterman Final EIS Now Available
The Final Environmental Impact Statement and Planning Guidelines for New Development and Uses on 23 Acres Within the Letterman Complex is now available. Copies may be downloaded from the Presidio Trust website at www.presidiotruster.gov (from the Home page, click on "Library" and then "Postings"). The EIS may be viewed in the Presidio Trust Library at 34 Graham Street on the Main Post and at the San Francisco Main Library. Copies may also be obtained by writing to the Presidio Trust at P.O. Box 29052, 34 Graham Street, San Francisco, CA 94129-0052, or by calling 415.561.5424.

The Final EIS is a supplement to the 1994 Final General Management Plan Amendment (GMPA) EIS for the Presidio. It contains responses to all of the substantive comments received on the Draft EIS, and revisions to the Draft EIS that incorporate analysis, additional information, and suggested changes made in response to comments. The Environmental Protection Agency's notice of availability of the Final EIS for the Letterman Complex appeared in the Federal Register on March 17, 2000. The 30-day review period required by the National Environmental Policy Act continues through April 16. The Trust may adopt a record of decision following the expiration of this 30-day period.



With the public's input, over the coming months and years the Presidio's housing program will be adjusted to serve the needs of the community and guarantee park preservation.

PRESIDIO HOUSING MOVES FORWARD

How many people have a national park as their backyard? More than a thousand housing units are sprinkled throughout the Presidio, built originally to lodge troops stationed at the bustling Army post. Today, the Presidio is a national park that is also a community where people live and work. Creating a housing program that meets the needs of the park's current population – and its growing workforce – is a major planning challenge for the Presidio Trust.

WORK IN PROGRESS

The Presidio's housing program is a work in progress. In order to better understand today's needs and plan for those of tomorrow, the Trust is launching a housing study that will look at current and future housing demand, rental rates and affordability, parking and transportation and access to schools and services.

The study will also consider creative ways to enhance neighborhoods and modify the current housing stock – made up predominately of large units – to better suit households of varying sizes. Existing dorms and barracks will be transformed into studios and small apartments. Construction of some additional housing units may be considered over time to meet employee demand.

A RANGE OF OPTIONS

The Trust will also examine ways to make Presidio housing affordable to Presidio-based employees from across the income spectrum. The Trust will use information from the study to refine its existing programs and create new strategies that expand housing opportunities for employees.

Already, the Trust has moved to make Presidio housing affordable to a broad range of Presidio employees. In February, a program that assists low and moderate income Presidio employees was modified to serve nearly twice as many households. To enhance the community's security, a Public Safety Housing Program offers incentives to encourage Presidio-based firefighters and police to live in the park.

BALANCING MANY NEEDS

The Trust, with the input of current park residents, is also developing a new set of residential rules that will address such issues as gardening, outdoor furniture, pets and parking. The rules will strive to balance the needs of those who live here with the need to protect the environment and keep the Presidio a welcoming destination for visitors.



A former dormitory was recently renovated to create studio or "single room occupancy" units that meet the needs of small households. To learn about the range of housing opportunities available in the Presidio, call the John Stewart Company at 415.561.5454.



The Presidio is home to 21 distinct neighborhoods. Residents enjoy spectacular views, unparalleled recreational opportunities and a safe and secure environment.



Residents are important partners in preserving the Presidio. When federal appropriations to the Trust end in 2013, housing leases are projected to provide more than half the funds needed to operate and enhance the Presidio.

PRESIDIO VOICES

Please share your ideas about the future of housing at the Presidio. All meetings will be held at the Golden Gate Club.

Housing Planning Workshop
Wednesday, April 5, 6 to 9 p.m.

Presidio Forum on Housing
Monday, April 17, 5:30 to 7 p.m.

Public Meeting of the Trust Board of Directors
Thursday, April 27, 9 a.m. to Noon

NEWS FROM AROUND THE PARK

CONVERSATION DESTINATION

The Presidio welcomed three distinguished guests in March. United Nations Director for African Affairs Patrick R.D. Hayford (right) visited the Presidio's Resource Center for the U.N. after participating in a public radio program focused on the worldwide impacts of new technology. Congressman Ralph Regula enjoyed a Presidio tour and an update on the latest happenings at the park. Former Senator Harris Wofford, currently the President of the Corporation for National Service, discussed AmeriCorps and the San Francisco Conservation Corps' Presidio programs.



"UNEARTH" A RARE OPPORTUNITY

Are you a closet Indiana Jones? U.C. Berkeley's Department of Anthropology and Archaeological Research is seeking volunteers from all walks of life to participate in a field research project at the Presidio this summer. This is a great opportunity to get hands-on experience in excavation, wetscreening, laboratory activities and other aspects of archaeological research. A minimum commitment of 10 to 15 days over the course of eight weeks (June 12 through August 4) is requested. No fees are required. Lodging and academic credit are available. To learn more or to receive an application, please email voss@ssl.berkeley.edu or call 510.848.5773.



Legend

- 1 The Main Post
- 2 Crissy Field
- 3 Fort Point and the Golden Gate Bridge
- 4 Fort Scott
- 5 Coastal Bluffs
- 6 Presidio Forest
- 7 Cavalry Stables
- 8 San Francisco National Military Cemetery
- 9 Letterman Complex
- 10 Housing Areas
- 11 Presidio Golf Course
- 12 Public Health Complex
- 13 Lobos Creek Valley



SINK OR SWIM

Do you want to share your ideas and suggestions on the enhancement of Mountain Lake? Please write to John Pelka, NEPA Compliance Coordinator, Presidio Trust, 34 Graham Street, P.O. Box 29052, San Francisco, CA 94129-0052. Email your feedback to jpelka@presidiotruster.gov. All comments must be received by April 7, 2000.

"CAN" DO ATTITUDE

The U.S. Conference of Mayors recently named the Presidio recycling program first in the nation for environmental responsibility. The honor was presented in mid-March at the 7th Annual "Recycling At Work" awards, which recognizes people and organizations who have improved the environment in their communities.



Sustainability Spotlight

The Good Earth

While some believe that “it ain’t easy being green,” the Presidio’s Regeneration Program is demonstrating innovative and sustainable ways to harness the powers of nature to produce a healthier earth.

The Regeneration Program utilizes composting, a process that converts grass clippings, weeds and other organic materials into a nutrient-rich preparation that is used to revitalize soil. “Green debris” that formerly was trucked to landfills is instead used to care for natural areas within the Presidio. Last year alone, 12 tons of organic material was diverted from the trash piles. Compost is helping to nourish plants at the Presidio Golf Course and the National Park Service’s Native Plant Nursery.

The Regeneration Program is now in its second year of operation. Thanks to a grant from the City of San Francisco that will be used toward the purchase of new equipment, compost production will increase by 250% this year.



Children “dig” learning about the environment at the Presidio.

Education and research are also key aspects of the Regeneration Program. About thirty children visit the Presidio each week to participate in fun and interactive projects that teach them how to respect and care for environment. Additionally, two major research initiatives to study the benefits of using compost are underway. A long-term goal is to develop an education program in conjunction with the Native Plant Nursery emphasizing the regenerative properties of nature.

A project close to the hearts of Regeneration Program staff is the restoration of the historic Community Garden in the Fort Scott area. With the help of Presidio tenant partner the Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association and the San Francisco Waldorf School, an extraordinary organic garden cultivated by Presidio residents is coming to life.

Board Members

Donald Fisher	Mary Murphy
Jennifer L. Hernandez	William Reilly
Ira Michael Heyman	Toby Rosenblatt
Amy Meyer	

March

Wednesday, April 5, 6 to 9 p.m.

Public Workshop on Presidio Housing

Share your views on the future of housing at the Presidio. The meeting will be held at the Golden Gate Club. Catch the Trust shuttle from the Lombard Gate. Please call 415.561.5300 for additional information.

Saturday, April 8, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Low-Flow Toilet Sale

Let the good times flow! Preserve the earth with every flush by replacing your water-wasting commode with a sustainable 1.6 gallon per flush unit. The San Francisco Water Department will sell low-flow toilets to residential customers for the rock bottom price of \$10. We’re not pulling your chain! The event takes place at the Main Parade Ground. Restrictions apply. Call 415.923.2676 for details.



Saturday, April 15, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Presidio Earth Festival 2000

“Every Day is Earth Day at the Presidio!” Live music and tasty cuisine will provide the backdrop for a fun and festive celebration of mother earth at the Main Post. Take a spin in an electric car, enjoy a bicycle tour of the Presidio or wander through educational interactive displays detailing the many ways the Presidio is a model for environmental sensitivity. Activities for children – including a tour of the “green” Fire Station – will be available. Please visit www.presidiotrust.gov or call 415.561.5418 for more information.



Sunday, April 16, 9 a.m.

March For Parks

Journey from Fort Mason through the Presidio’s Crissy Field and over the Golden Gate Bridge to Fort Baker. Complimentary ferry service will return walkers to Fort Mason. Pre-registration fees are \$18 for adults and \$8 for children under 12. Registration on march day begins at 8:00 a.m. and is \$20 for adults and \$10 for children. Proceeds benefit the parks. Register at www.sfgate.com/marchforparks or call 415.759.2690.



Tuesday, April 25, 5 to 7 p.m.

Presidio Trust Facilities Open House

Learn about day-to-day operations as well as long-term projects in building rehabilitation, landscaping, recycling, environmental cleanup, energy conservation, and much more. Since April is Earth Month, we will focus on the sustainable attributes of our programs and projects. Join us at 34 Graham Street in the Presidio.

Thursday, April 27, 9 a.m. to noon

Public Meeting of the Presidio Trust Board of Directors

The conversation about housing at the Presidio will continue at a public meeting of the Trust’s Board of Directors. Join us at the Golden Gate Club. A shuttle will run from the Lombard Gate. Call 415.561.5418 for more information.

By Jim Meadows

Presidio Trust Executive Director

Did You Know...?



WHAT IS HAPPENING AT THE PRESIDIO’S PUBLIC HEALTH COMPLEX?

You may recall that early last year the Presidio Trust began to consider the future permanent use of the Public Health Service Hospital Complex. Located on the park’s southern boundary, the cluster of historic and non-historic buildings is envisioned in the Presidio’s General Management Plan Amendment as a location well-suited for educational and lodging uses. Building on this theme, the Trust sought creative reuse ideas from the community and received sixteen preliminary proposals suggesting senior housing, student and faculty housing and school uses, among others.

The Public Health site is rich in both cultural and environmental resources that must be protected as part of any reuse strategy. Environmental cleanup challenges must also be examined. After interviewing responding teams, listening to thoughtful comments from the community and performing some additional building analysis, the Trust has determined that some further study is needed before a permanent, long-term use for the area can be settled upon.

However, it is valuable, both to the Presidio and to the surrounding community, to bring life and vitality



immediately to this area of the park. In the period until the Public Health Complex’s ultimate use is decided, the Trust is launching a short-term leasing effort for select buildings within the Complex. We believe that this new program will satisfy many goals.

First, short-term leasing will benefit historic buildings by halting the deterioration that accompanies vacancy. Leasing will also make possible renovations such as electrical upgrades and roof repairs. Renewed activity in a now-empty area also reduces the potential for crime and vandalism. Significantly, short-term leasing will generate much-needed revenue to support park operations and enhancement.

Late last month, the Trust announced

that select buildings within the Public Health Complex – the former Nurses’ Quarters Complex and five related structures – are being made available for short-term lease. The three-story Colonial Revival Style Nurses’ Quarters – most recently the home of the Chinese American School – and a handful of smaller nearby structures are being rented for educational uses and/or to community-based organizations.

Short-term leasing opportunities will be offered in other areas of the Presidio over the coming months. Rather than altering the character of the Presidio or influencing long-range planning for the park, the program will help meet immediate critical needs and will allow additional time for the Trust and the community carefully and thoughtfully to reflect on longer range planning.

We are eager to receive proposals from a wide range of community and educational organizations as soon as possible. Our staff is available to answer specific questions you may have about how your organization can apply for this offering. Please contact Joe Perrelli at 415.561.5317 for more information.

PRESIDIO TENANT PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

exploratorium

How do we see, hear, smell, feel and experience the world around us? The Exploratorium boasts a collage of 650 science, art, and human perception exhibits that stimulate people of all ages to ask these questions and seek the answers.

Like the Greek “mouseion” (literally a muse-place for scholars, scientists, and poets), the Exploratorium is a creative center for education in nature, science, art and technology. Across the world hundreds of science centers and museums have adopted the Exploratorium’s “learn through doing” approach.

The Exploratorium’s headquarters are based at the Presidio’s Crissy Field, while the museum itself is located yards away within the Palace of Fine Arts. The Exploratorium consists of three centers that reflect the Presidio’s environmental and educational missions. The Center for Public Exhibition – probably the most familiar to the public – offers a giant experimental laboratory that’s fun for people of all ages. A carefully devised curriculum of blinking and beckoning exhibits



The Exploratorium’s “Distorted Room.”

explores the nature of light, color, sound, motion, language, vision and weather, among other subjects.

The Center for Media and Communication develops innovative new tools for learning. Technological and “new media” advances bring the Exploratorium’s outstanding programming into homes, classrooms and other museums across the globe. The Center’s website (www.exploratorium.edu) receives more than 6 million visits per year and has won the Webby Award for the Best Science

website for three years running. Multimedia events, including a recent live webcast of the Solar Eclipse from Aruba, are produced through this center.

Teachers become students at the Exploratorium’s Center for Teaching and Learning. Over 10,000 professionals from throughout America participate in annual in-depth development programs, while an additional 45,000 teachers in 30 states attend Exploratorium-inspired workshops. Not forgetting youth, the museum welcomes nearly 100,000 students on field trips each year and reaches 7,000 underserved children and families through its Children’s Educational Outreach Program. The Exploratorium’s floor staff of “explainers” are high school students who learn by teaching.

The Exploratorium is open Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Wednesday evening from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Call 415. EXPLORE for further information and upcoming events.

THE “MAIN” EVENT

MAIN POST PLANNING PICKS UP STEAM

IT IS A MICROCOSM OF THE PRESIDIO ITSELF – A PLACE WHERE THE OLD AND THE NEW MINGLE TO FORM A UNIQUE 21ST CENTURY EXPERIENCE. THE NEW YEAR BEGAN WITH LIVELY AND INTERACTIVE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE MAIN POST. DOZENS OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS GATHERED IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY TO DISCUSS HOW TO SAVOR THE FLAVOR OF THE PAST WHILE REINVENTING THE SITE FOR THE FUTURE.

As reported in the February *Presidio Post*, the Presidio Trust has launched a multi-year effort to renew the “heart of the Presidio” (visit www.presidiotrust.gov/news for an in-depth look at the project). With today’s needs in mind, planners and the community are studying how to enhance the visitor experience, improve parking and circulation, restore open space and select new uses for land and buildings, all while celebrating the Main Post’s historic character.

In January, public planning workshop guests enjoyed a rare opportunity not just to discuss their ideas for the Main Post but to illus-

trate them. Wielding scissors, glue and multi-colored paper, participants broke out into six small groups to demonstrate graphically on special maps how various areas of the Main Post could take shape. This exercise, which evoked both laughter and creativity, created a solid framework on which to base future conversation.

The February Planning Workshop focused on specific improvements to guide the future look and feel of the Main Post. A discussion and question and answer period “fleshed out” broad ideas revealed at the previous gathering. For a summary of both meetings, visit www.presidiotrust.gov.



Workshop participants expressed their 21st century vision for the Main Post using the traditional method of cutting and pasting.

MAIN POST THEATRE

An emerging theme of recent community planning meetings is that the “head” of the Main Post (near the intersection of Montgomery Street and Sheridan Avenue) could serve as a “community district.” Boasting the historic Officers’ Club, an exhibition hall, a childcare center, a bowling alley and a theatre, the area has the potential to be a lively focal point for visitor activities.

At the February Public Planning Workshop, San Francisco Film Centre Project Manager Melanie Blum and Sundance Film Centers Chief Executive Officer Bill Freeman presented a preliminary proposal – now in the early conceptual stages – to create an expanded theatre and film arts centre at the now-empty Presidio Theatre.

In 1998, following a competitive process, the San Francisco Film Centre was selected to renovate and occupy two historic Main Post structures – the former Sixth Army Headquarters (Building 39) and the Presidio Theatre (Building 99).

This winter, the Centre completed a \$6.6 million rehabilitation of the Headquarters, which now serves as office space and post-production facilities for several film arts organizations, including the San Francisco Film Society.

The San Francisco Film Centre, in collaboration with Sundance Film Centers, is now exploring the possibility of creating a home for independent and international films in an expanded Presidio Theatre. Ideas for the facility could include a café, film library, gallery space and multi-purpose auditoriums that could be available for community uses, lectures and live performances.

The community is invited to learn more about this proposed project, and to offer comments, at a public scoping meeting that begins the environmental review process. Join us on Wednesday May 10, at the Log Cabin from 6 to 9 p.m. Please call 415.561.5300 for more information.



GREAT SCOTT!

COLLABORATIVE STUDY CONSIDERS THE FUTURE OF FORT SCOTT

While the Main Post is known as “the heart of the Presidio,” Fort Scott, with its dramatic Mission Revival-style historic structures arrayed around a grassy parade ground, is thought by many to be the “soul” of the park.

Built in 1912 to maintain the coastal and harbor defenses of the Golden Gate, the site’s barracks, offices, warehouses and housing communities are much like a self-contained “fort within a fort.” Its beauty, tranquility and architecture led planners to envision Fort Scott as a conference, training, and applied research center.



While a decision on the ultimate use of the site is some time away, the Presidio Trust is pleased to announce an exciting collaboration that will help shape a future befitting this extraordinary place.

The Presidio Trust is undertaking a collaborative study with generous support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. The study will consider the feasibility of establishing a “Presidio Institute” at Fort Scott – a thought center that would sponsor and enable idea and policy generation with the goal of addressing major issues of importance in our state, nation and world.

Look to the *Presidio Post* for updates as this project takes shape over the coming months.