

Edwin M. Lee, Mayor
Recreation and Park Commission
Minutes
October 19, 2017

Commission President Mark Buell called the Recreation and Park Commission meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. on Thursday, October 19, 2017.

ROLL CALL

Present

Mark Buell
Allan Low
Kat Anderson
Gloria Bonilla
Tom Harrison
Larry Mazzola, Jr.
Eric McDonnell

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Commissioner Buell: Thank you, I will be brief. When I do receive compliments about the Department in emails I like to pass them on to the Department so please accept this thank you S.F. Recreation and Park, "thank you S.F. Recreation and Park for another fantastic trail building project partnering with Vo-Cal at McLaren Park. I've been using the Glen Canyon to Twin Peaks trail every week, a past project that volunteers also building with the leadership of S.F. Park and Rec and Vo-Cal. After seeing the great work from the original part of the S.F. Park and Rec Vo-Cal Glen Canyon project years ago I've been volunteering with my daughter alongside our neighbors from San Francisco and around the Bay for several years for S.F. Park and Rec Vo-Cal projects and I'm super-impressed by how well run these projects are in addition to the fantastic results. Keep up the great work, Ed Pike." Thank you Ed.

I also will note that I was at the Zoo Committee meeting this morning and I'm happy to report that the zoo had a policy during these terrible fires in Sonoma and Napa County to make the zoo available free of charge to any families that were relocated or getting out of the way of fire and as a result of that 4,000 people came free to the zoo which is really quite impressive so I thank Tanya Peterson and the zoo management for being right ahead of schedule on that one. They also offered to take in animals from places like Safari West and others so they really participated as good neighbors might.

That concludes my President's report and let's move on.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Phil Ginsburg: Good morning Commissioners. Weather permitting, I want to invite everyone to the next Civic Center Commons block party which is this evening from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. We invite you all to come out at Civic Center, UN Plaza and Fulton Street. This is the final episode in a series of free family friendly events being held on the third Thursday evening of each month since July out in Civic Center. The event features live music on three stages, food trucks from off the grid, beverages, family friendly activities, roller skating, this event series grew out of the Civic Center Commons initiative of a partnership between city agencies and community partners to transform the public spaces linking Market Street to City Hall and it was an initiative that began with great anticipation of our amazing new playgrounds which we hope to have completed very early in '18. For more information about tonight's event visit commonsthursdays.com.

Then Saturday we invite everyone to join us for the grand opening of San Francisco's first BMX bike park. The opening is Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. where we'll kick off the party with demonstrations, bike clinics, kids races, food trucks and a ceremonial ride on the BMX bike track that I will be joining. This \$1.1 million project is part of a larger effort to activate and rejuvenate San Francisco's second largest park. Our Department is currently

engaging with neighboring communities through a series of planning meetings as we invest more than \$10 million in improvements to the park in large part because of the 2012 Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond. Other recent and current projects have included court resurfacing at Crocker-Amazon Playground which started this month, on Mansell Streetscape improvements earlier this year, on Prague Street Steps in 2016, the Philosopher's Way Trail in 2013, Peru Playground in 2013 and actually it even ties into the Vo-Cal project. Saturday's event is co-hosted by the McLaren Bike Park founders who have been our active community partners on this project and themselves have raised roughly \$150,000 towards construction of the park. Halloween is right around the corner. Scaregrove our annual family Halloween event at Stern Grove takes place next Friday October 27 from 3:00 to 9:00 p.m. featuring age-appropriate haunted houses and we say that because the original Scaregrove haunted house was so scary that we needed to do something more age-appropriate so now we have two haunted houses, carnival rides, hayrides, live entertainment, food trucks and this year an out of this world costume parade of ghoulish space goblins and maniacal monsters. Tickets are \$10 per person and can be purchased in advance at McLaren Lodge or at the gate. For more info visit us at sfreepark.org.

Next Saturday evening Kung Fu Yoga anyone? Next Saturday, October 28, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. please join us at St. Mary's Square in Chinatown where we recently took title to the St. Mary's extension for a free action-packed movie night featuring Jackie Chan's latest blockbuster Kung Fu Yoga. The event is co-hosted by KTSF Channel 26 and features free face painting, tai chi, food, the movie starts at 6:00 p.m. St. Mary's Square gained 6,000 square feet of space this week as we opened a new rooftop extension at the park. The new park space which provides much needed open space in one of the city's densest neighborhoods was part of an agreement with developers from the nearby 500 Pine and 350 Bush Street properties, this is one where victory has many parents. There were indeed many parents responsible for this but I would like to take the time to thank our Mayor, Supervisor Peskin, Vice President Allan Low who was a leader in this project and helped us navigate some tricky and technical real estate issues, former Commissioner and long-time advocate Gordon Chin and many others. It is a beautiful space.

Lastly, so if you've got 12,300,600 minutes how do you measure the importance of thousands of volunteers who dedicate their time and energy in our parks each year? On Saturday, November 4, our Department will be hosting a volunteer appreciation event at the County Fair building in Golden Gate Park to thank our park volunteers for the more than 205,000 hours of volunteer time they gave to improving our parks and programs over the past fiscal year. This event is but a small token of our appreciation for all of the love and care they're shown our parks. The event includes a catered lunch, art exhibit, live entertainment, fresh produce courtesy of Alemany Farms and community gardens. We invite you all to join us at our volunteer appreciation event. Then lastly again, we can never remind ourselves enough of the importance of connecting young people to nature particularly in our underserved and equity zone communities so for your pleasure a video about our Fabulous Greenagers program which this year expanded into our second neighborhood. It's been in the Bayview and now in Chinatown as well. [video plays]

That concludes the General Manager's report.

Commissioner Mazzola: I had a question on Scaregrove. It's a big hit I think, right? Was there any consideration of doing it—and maybe it's a money thing—but is there any consideration of doing it two nights because it seems like there's a lot of work that goes into getting it set up with two haunted houses and everything else and you only do it for six hours. Has it been discussed?

Phil Ginsburg: We discuss it every year and I think right now our plan is to try to expand it to a second night next year. It's actually much trickier than it seems but we have been sort of incrementally working out way there. It is a wonderfully popular event and it's relatively new. We welcome between 5,000 and 10,000 people out there.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Marvin Lambert: Hello Commissioners. I live at 2117B Bush Street and I want to accomplish two things. The first thing is I rise to raise a point of order. I submitted this in writing and I don't know if it got through because your mailbox reports being on vacation. I would like to request that Item 5I.

Commissioner Buell: You can bring this up with Item 5 comes up on the calendar.

Marvin Lambert: It will come up. I want to request that it be—

Commissioner Buell: You can request that when it comes up on the calendar. This is general public comment for items that don't appear on the calendar right now. You're speaking under a section—

Marvin Lambert: I'm raising a point of order and I want to request that Item 5I be moved from the consent calendar to the general calendar.

Commissioner Buell: You can make that request when Item 5 comes up.

Marvin Lambert: I believe I can make a point order request at any time in the meeting. Okay, so I'm making it now, I'll make it again. I hope that this becomes part of a agenda item later because it is a proposal that I've made the park Department. This is an example of cultural inclusion and equity. I know your charge on the later is to talk about that. This is what I propose a way to include that historically accurate representation of what went on in a historic District in the city. So thank you very much, I'll talk to you later.

Commissioner Buell: Thank you.

Ace Washington: Good morning Commissioners. This is my first time coming to your Commission and it's for a worthy cause and we'll talk about that when we get to the item but as I do that I wanted to come and introduce myself. I'm known at City Hall as Ace on the Case and that's why I'm here today because I'm on the case. I'm also here to talk about what's going on in the Recreation and Park in my community which is the Western Addition and the Fillmore which I call the Fill No More because we can't fill it no more. But I'm here to talk to your director. We have about three or four parks in the Western Addition one of them I want to talk about and I'm glad that trend was reversed because it seems that we have problems with this Department going to switch over a system that's been very dedicated in the Hamilton Park which is named after Hamilton had to be with the redevelopment and by the way Commissioner my first time ever I never knew that you knew Mr. Herman or else I would have been at you a long time ago, I really would have in a way of just to get research because that's what I'm about, research. I'm a young historian. You're going to hear people come up here talking about other things and I would call them double OGs. Well, I'm an OG I'm 63. I was born and raised in the Fillmore. I experienced and got a chance to see it. I got a chance to document it but right now I'm talking about the Recreation and Park. Now I know that you reversed that in the sisters staying at Hamilton. We had problems because there was no process, we knew nothing, next thing you know we had a meeting that said you wanted to get rid of her or send her to another place. Now, in our community in the Fillmore when we get ready to talk about. It's the Fill No More. No more businesses, no more nothing. I'm 63, I've been working on this for 20, 30, 40, years. What do I go back and tell my kids, my grandkids, my great grandkids that are still alive today. See, I'm part of what in the Bible the C's, God's blessed me to see my children raised up and my kids and my grandkids. So we're going to talk about some historical stuff here today so I thought it was my duty, my moral obligation to get up and let you know who I am because I only recognize Ginsburg and Eric, I've been knowing Commissioner Eric for years and I wanted to come and see what it looked like and I'm glad I see somebody that looks like me. It's going to be a very interesting meeting and I've got 29 seconds. You know I'm an expert at this and I've been called a lot of things but I tell everybody don't call me late for dinner. So my name is Ace, I'm here, and I'm hoping that our community could come unitedly and speak because there ain't that many of us. I mean there's very few us particularly in the Fillmore.

Albert Sandoval: Good morning. I'm from Visitacion Valley, born and raised, I've been voting for your guys' bonds since 1985, Mary Burns, Joel Robinson, and not much has changed. Last time I came here I lost it and I have all the books here from 2000 every year for the recreation for the youth and not much has changed in the southeast but thank you for the Palega Playground, we appreciate that. So, I'm here regarding ADA compliance, I know nobody wants to talk about it. I have friends that—I have a neighbor who has tunnel vision, he cannot see any peripheral vision so he walks down and he falls so he can't go no more, now he's gaining more weight like me. I have a new knee. I have friends in wheelchairs, little kids in electric wheelchairs, they can't maneuver, these are hills. We have some of the steepest hills in McLaren Park especially in the Portola District than anywhere in San Francisco except maybe down by Filbert and all that. So I'm here to speak for the ADA community. We need some accessibility. I can go on. There's a lot of elderly, people have strokes, they can't lift their leg up that high. So I brought you like in Tiny Tots show and tell. This is our path, it's fallen apart. It's asphalt. It comes right from where I'm talking about, right next to the playground. The placard parking spot is not labeled by the roundhouse or by the children's playground. This is all Federal law, state, city, but it's always the money issue. We don't get the money. I went around and I started looking at parks. I know that you guys are making things ADA compliant. I'm aware of

that but Louis A. Sutter Playground is not one of them. I put in a report, I called 511 and you won't believe it but they said that now it's on the back burner, no longer being addressed. I printed this out this morning and basically I asked for the constituent state that the parking lot Louis A. Sutter Playground has an ADA parking spot, it's not ADA standards, the space is too small, wheelchair van, so on and so forth. Bottom line is I did a tracker and it says on 10-18-2007 agent finished. It says case closed, Wednesday, October 18 at 2:55. Resolved per PSA manager. Thank you for your feedback. Your suggestions will be considered for implementation with the next site renovation project if feasible. I'm getting educated, I'm going to agitate and I'm going to organize. Thank you.

Misha Olivas: Good morning Commissioners. I'm here for two reasons today. First, we've been before you a couple times and there were questions raised about funds that our Friends of the Park group are getting donated as a result of development projects in our neighborhood so I'm here to invite you. We have a Halloween carnival that we offer free to the community, we serve over 300 kids and families from SOMA at this event and so this is an opportunity for you to come out and see what we do with these funds. As you know, SOMA has a lot of various issues not only with pedestrian safety, we have the highest number of sex offenders in San Francisco and so it's not a safe place for young people to trick or treat and have that quintessential childhood experience. So this is our way of trying to provide that for them. And so that leads me to my second point, in that neighborhood there is a Recreation and Park employee who dedicated many years of his life to serving that community, serving the young people, getting them engaged in sports and positive recreation activities as an alternative to everything else that's out there waiting for them and so I'm here to speak on a resolution that Supervisor Jane Kim introduced on Tuesday to name the batting cages that we fought for at Victoria Manalo Draves Park after Tim Figueras. His over 30-year commitment to SOMA youth has resulted in so much change for so many people in that neighborhood and we serve kids that were served by Tim, kids of kids of kids whose lives were impacted and they're only sending their kids because they know that we maintain that contact with him. Since Tim has retired his job was split into three different jobs and those have not all been filled yet but that's just an example of how much he did and how much he gave and so we feel that it is especially timely and important that we make this move to honor that commitment. I think I'm not a person who is super scared of the change in San Francisco but I feel as if these are the examples that we need to lift up not only to inspire young people, to have that level of commitment for their community, but also to inspire new resident that are moving in to let them know that they can do it too and so lastly I have my own kids and I know the sacrifices that they make for the work that I do and so I think that not only would this honor Tim and his legacy but it would also give a nod to that sacrifice of his family and his own kids for all that he gave for SOMA.

Heather Phillips: I am coming before you this morning as a 14-year veteran of SOMA. I've lived and worked there. I've had the honor to work alongside of Tim Figueras and most importantly I'm coming to you as a baseball coach in SOMA. We thank you for your help in getting the batting cages built and Victoria Manalo Draves Park, it has been a huge asset that has been brought to our community and we look forward to using it and to seeing it utilized for many years to come. But we are here to request that we honor those batting cages with the name of the person who has really fought for baseball in our community for the last three decades. Baseball is a passion of Tim's but what he's more passionate about is helping families and helping young people. There isn't a better person that comes to mind when you talk about a community hero.

The Commission meeting recessed at 10:30 a.m. due to an emergency evacuation drill.

The Commission meeting reconvened at 11:24 a.m.

Commissioner Buell: We'll return to the meeting now.

Heather Phillips: I would just say that this resolution that Jane Kim has introduced in order to name these batting cages after Tim is something that the community wholeheartedly supports. Tim is a humble guy. He's actually here today and I'm a little worried he's here to object but we won't let him. It's not just the folks who are able to be here at City Hall, we were able to put out a petition in the last week that has already gained over 500 signatures. Tim is really a piece of the heart and soul of SOMA and he has given so much to our community and this is just a very small gesture in order to give back to him what he has given to SOMA and so we hope that you would consider the resolution and move to keep a piece of our community history in SOMA.

Richard Fong: Commissioners an idea that was brought before me with the Geneva Car Barn and it's not yet up in the design any of that yet but I wanted some of you to keep in mind that it can also be used as an art collection play area and that at a later time I'm going to be before Phil Ginsburg that information from different locations

throughout the United States that already have such and there will be income generating for the Department so in the offices they were planned I don't think it would take too many of those offices out and you have an art display play area, there's slides that you can go down, you can walk around there and it has different parts. It's almost like at Golden Gate Park you have the Portals of the Past, a piece of artwork that came out for Sacramento Street, so in a preservation earlier artwork and designs of buildings they can also be put into this particular structure and you can keep in touch with what San Francisco in the earlier days would have been all about. That's about all I wanted to say in public comment. I'm going to be getting more information from Terry. I thought I would have had it today to give some people the information but we didn't connect up. Thank you very much.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Albert Sandoval: Neutral. Good morning Commissioners. After this you don't have to deal with me no more today. So this shows you just a little draft. You see this here, this is a little draft which is very hard to read on the internet, I couldn't find it. This has to do with the trails. I did go to the meeting just so you know and I have been participating over on Sunnydale. This is McLaren Park, just happened a couple of nights ago. They sent these little cards around. I felt a little annoyed because I thought they were railroading me to follow their agenda and pass what they needed but I really care about the pathways for transportation. This is a map, it says McLaren path and trails. So the issue is here, bottom line. And we also have trees. What happens is that we have very few gardeners in Louis Playground at McLaren Park and they are doing a great job with what they have, the tools and training, their expertise. Without them the park wouldn't be what it is and I want to recognize all of the staff over there in the southeast district. That is more important than what I'm telling you now. Here you can see the tree roots are starting to overtake the pathways. This is right by the ADA playground. You can see how the roots are starting to come up. So basically tree conditions, dead limbs on living trees, dead standing trees, dead trunks, over a dozen and they got bugs come flying into my house. There's hangers, they call them tree limbs four and half inches or larger on living trees. So the criteria, the appearance, tree appearance, all sidewalks, park trees are ten-foot zone boarding asphalt pathway and concrete pathways. It says new plant guide for the budget strategic operational plan, surface quality, paved surface is free of irregularities and grade greater than half an inch, 0.5 and is free of cracks and holes greater than two inches in diameter and depth. These are all facts for your guys' website, S.F. park maintenance standards, August, 2006. So I did just want to say that the sidewalk maintenance standards accountability quality control procedures to provide compliance to improve Department operations, June 1, 2005, September 30, 2005, San Francisco park maintenance standards park evaluation reports copy page. You have a metric system and that is concerning to me because I don't know if that actually involve McLaren Park. The pruning, path intrusion causes paths to be less than five feet. I looked at the literature, five-foot and wide most, that is concerning to me. That's like false news to me. Impedes, prevents clear access. Park evaluation score is hardscape asphalt pathways, unstable, unsteady, maintenance needed, sidewalk at outside park cross park, protrusion, tree roots on path, path plaza, surface quality of asphalt paths. Thank you very much, Albert Sandoval. I hate to do this but somebody's got to do it.

Marvin Lambert: I don't really understand what's going on with this agenda Item 5 but this is why I'm requesting now that Item 5I be removed from the consent calendar and placed on the general calendar which can be either for today or a later meeting. Can you confirm that?

Commissioner Buell: My understanding is this matter was heard in its entirety at committee with extensive testimony. It would take a motion of a Commissioner to pull it off the calendar. The Chair—is there a motion to remove it from the consent calendar? I don't see any motion. You can speak to the issue now, you have the rest of your three minutes.

Marvin Lambert: That's not my understanding but I will follow up on that technicality that a member of the public can request that the item be removed and there's some extenuating circumstances here. Of course I oppose this project. Was that my time being taken there while the President was speaking?

Commissioner Buell: We'll give you time back while I asked for a motion.

Marvin Lambert: Okay, you going to put the time back, it's still running?

Commissioner Buell: When the beeper goes off, I'll give you an extra minute.

Marvin Lambert: Oppose. Thank you. So this project apropos your comment about the Operations Committee was actually withdrawn by the sponsor more than three months ago because it could not receive a certificate of appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission. In the interim period I submitted on behalf of the Bush Street Cottage Row Historic District an alternate culturally inclusive project proposal to Recreation and Park for use of the same area of the park. This project would place an interpretive sign in the park which speaks to its full sign and not just one single purposed interest and I made that comment earlier, the current project that you're considering is severely lacking in equity and inclusion and perhaps forward thinking as well. There's been no explanation as to why this original proposal has been revived and placed ahead of mine. There has never been public notice of Recreation and Park's intention to move forward on the project that's on your agenda or acknowledgment of the significant opposition from people who actually live within or near the historic district. This project should also be reviewed by the Arts Commission in that Zen gardens are considered evocative works of art. The revised proposal that you have before you is aimed at avoiding the COA resulted in a plan to unsafely pile rocks on an existing vertical three-foot high wooden retaining wall which is just three feet from the sidewalk via a sloping retain. However, this new plan where they got around the certificate of appropriateness only exists in verbal form. I've done a records request, there is no documentation of what the current plan is and how it changed to get around the Certificate of Appropriateness, no written documents, all verbal assurances to planning staff. In addition, there's been no justification given as to why the Zen garden needs to be placed in the proposed place in that garden. I've submitted a written statement to you. There's several other problems with the project proposal as you know that I mentioned in this letter. Thank you.

Mary King: Oppose. I live in the Bush Street Cottage Row Historic District. I oppose the placement of the Zen garden at the bottom of Cottage Row Minipark. Many people in this neighborhood have been working with Recreation and Park for the last 25 years to try to beautify what redevelopment left behind. We had numerous meetings with park personnel to discuss plans for the future. We had many, many cleanup parties. Now, without proper notice it seems that a group with very little relationship to the historic district is being allowed to dictate how the park is going to look in the future and in a way that is not consistent with the city's mantra of cultural inclusiveness. Although there's been no scale drawing provided the project appears to include stacking rocks in front of an existing wooden retaining wall three feet from the sidewalk. How will park visitors especially children be prevented from using the rocks as a playground? If approved this installation will be built on a hill. What if one of what is being referred to as smallish boulders happens to roll out of its position onto the sidewalk or over a child? We've been called racist for opposing this installation. That's an easy accusation very much like calling news you don't like fake news. I prefer another R word, realistic. This proposal has very little to do with the Issei and even less to do with Zen. The Issei, like all other immigrant groups with one notable exception, came here voluntarily looking for a better life than they could have in their home county. Why not add something beautiful to the existing landscape like a symbolic weeping cheery tree that people of any culture or religion or orientation could appreciate rather than spending \$50,000 on new landscaping? Finally there is already in existence a large beautiful serene protected garden dedicated to the Issei just two and a half blocks to the east between Sutter and Post and Laguna and Octavia. This garden was created by a council of neighborhood churches and contains a large obelisk type monument with the following inscription—this project is dedicated to the great Issei pioneers whose perseverance and humility has made possible the assimilation of Japanese in the American Society. The Cottage Row Minipark proposal would be a redundancy and would also seem to refute the inclusive tone of this inscription. The last quarter-century has seen the cultural makeup of the historic district continue to evolve. On the one hand many of the newer arrivals can be considered immigrants. However, they are more a part of a new common globalized culture. Living in this small area there are now individuals born in such disparate places at Pakistan, Ethiopia, Taiwan, Brazil, Romania, Germany, New Zealand and others. It's their park too. They own homes in the historical district and it's their park too so we need to include everybody in the park.

Nancy Crane: Oppose. Good morning. I've lived in the neighborhood for 32 years. One of my neighbors was not able to come today so I'm going to read her letter. I've lived around Japantown, went to school there, our temple and church are still there, my father had his restaurant there. I still live just outside the boundary lines at the corner of Fillmore and Bush for over 60 years. The park in question—she is against it as well as I, this proposed grant. I would like to take an eraser to the boundary lines of this District. The lines blur the complexity of our neighborhood. My neighbors growing up on Bush Street were white people, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino and African American. My girl scout leader lived near the Grand Central Market. First I thought the Zen garden would be a great idea but talking to other neighbors made me realize that the small park and that area belongs to so many different people through the decades. As one of my African friends told me the ones who really have a say in the matter have been

relocated and scattered through the District. Japanese-American are lucky, we have an area we can call Japantown and we can live in this historic district but the rest, the gay leader who preserved the District, the African American community, the Jewish population, or the Chinese grocery store I used to go to or Marcy the Filipino lady who used to do my mom's hair, those who once thrived in this area don't have a place anymore. Can we be a voice for them and recognize their contribution? I saw my grandparents playing with their grandchildren yesterday and a few days ago a young couple were having lunch in the park. I see people reading in the park. The park is very small but I'd prefer to keep this space open as possible so anyone can stop by and just enjoy the park. I have nothing against the Zen park in terms of being a nice idea but the problem is that children cannot play there because it would be unsafe and it would be difficult in terms of just being a nice place to relax and get away from the hustle of the neighborhood. I prefer a plaque to honor all the people and events that took place around the area and so anyone can see how unique and evolving our district is. A beautiful cherry blossom tree, a colorful Japanese maple and other items would be appropriate. At this time I think we should show that we are a great city because we are so diverse and that we recognize and accept this diversity as an asset and a blessing to the little park. Make our ancestors proud that we learn from our mistakes and from the history to share and respect.

Janice Bolaffi: Support. Good morning, thank you for the chance to speak. I live on Bush Street and I have lived there for almost 33 years. I think I am very much in favor of this garden as it has been proposed. I think those who are in opposition think that it excludes. It doesn't, it includes, it opens it for everyone and there's absolutely no reason at all that I can see where having a Zen garden it excludes anyone. I will use it as much as everyone else. I live on Bush Street. I can walk to four parks including this one. Well, I am blessed to be able to do that. I have a community swimming pool. I have a public library and I was very busy in raising funds for the renovation of that library and that was a true community effort. Just go to the library and look at the bricks that were dedicated to those people who were active. So this is including, this is San Francisco. Thank you very much.

Andre Bolaffi: Support. Good morning ladies and gentlemen. It's still morning. This has nothing to do with being a racist or race or anything else. I also live with the boss on Bush Street and I've lived there for 33 years. People who are objecting to this project really puzzle me because it's ironic that for 34 years since Ann Bloomfield nominated back in 1982 the area as a National Register of Historic places no one raised the issue that they got the facts wrong and it was erroneous because it contained flowery language. All I can tell you is those who are opposing it enjoyed it for the past 34 years. Historically it took 74 years under President Ronald Reagan to officially apologize to the American-Japanese community and I don't want to go another 75 years to look at this and be called a racist or anything else. I think we ought to do the right thing. It's a beautiful little proposition and it doesn't hurt anybody, it doesn't invade anybody. So I would urge you to seriously consider all the facts and approve this project. Thank you.

Matthew Blaine: Support. I'm talking about Items C and B instead of Item I on this. I was unable to make the Capital Committee earlier this month and those are two bond approvals for trail projects, one in Golden Gate Park and one in McLaren Park and as the Chair of S.F. Urban Riders who represent all the mountain bikers in the city we're very glad and excited that the Department has been searching for additional grants and glad to see this on the consent calendar.

Richard Fong: Support. Good morning Commissioners. I'm back again and I want to say a few more comments about 5E. I mostly want to commend the work that's been going on, it would be Sandra Lee Fewer and others and they brought in all this kind of fundings to San Francisco and it's an opportunity to hold that they would keep up such good work and be able to take care of the dog play area which was around for a long time and never really got pushed for fundings and everything else and now that it's come in I've spoken with the people who are going to be dealing with the design and so forth, and Toks and other people, so I hope one comes and reunites because these same people they gave me a certificate of recognition. I thought that was real good and a certificate of honor. We got that for the Betty Ann Ong where I'm a councilman. So if we can keep pushing for these kinds of fundings and San Francisco will be better for it. There's one other item I wanted to look at. I've been hearing a lot about the Cottage Row. I was here when they first came up and got dumped back to argumentations and committees and so forth but I did get that little piece that was kind of cute. I kept it at home and I was always hoping that there would be a commemorative place where people can actually sit down and try to relax and vent out any of their angers and get back into that germane way of living. So I had thought that you're going to have a polygonal type of seating place around a tree that would grow there and they can also have better seating arrangements. I myself would be in favor of getting past the Commission according to Chapter 31 today and of course thank you.

Commissioner Anderson: I had a question that was sparked by the comment of the gentleman who came up a couple of times and brought up issues around ADA access in certain parks, sidewalk conditions and parking lot conditions. I just was curious when we hear something like that what are our next steps because those seem like serious considerations.

Phil Ginsburg: I can ask Denny to summarize in a few more details but we actually have a very robust regular and steady ADA program where we work with the Mayor's Office on Disability and the City Attorney's Office. There are some legal issues involved but we are in a constant state of investing and ensuring that we are not just meeting ADA requirements but that our parks are accessible. The gentleman that pointed out some crumbling pathway in McLaren—parks are in a constant state of renewal. He's right. So we'll take a look at that spot and see what we can do to fix that. Everything has a useful life. Part of our program involves a project called Project Lifecycle which is to understand all our capital assets and identify preventative maintenance opportunities and life expectancies for different classes of assets. But we actually budget every single year and make investments in our systems specifically on accessibility issues.

Denny Kern: That's exactly right. The way we accomplish or take care of what we call deferred maintenance is basically two-fold. Capital Division holds a large part of it and they take care of deferred maintenance at some sites that are under the bond program and are completely renewed there and then on the operations side we have in the general fund capital budget there are specific lines we have to address smaller projects of deferred maintenance of which hardscape and pavement is one of those. And we've got a lot of conditions around the park system that do have very challenging and long deferred hardscape maintenance issues so to your questions when we do have something like this brought up at the Commission that certainly focuses some attention on it and we look and try to prioritize that particular work that's brought up against all the other things that were not mentioned at Commission which may have an equal or greater priority to them.

Commissioner Anderson: I appreciate that. Would it be possible to in serious situations like this I can only look at the picture and it's only in the context of that comment but is it possible to post a sign or put up a sandwich or something that says we're on this so people know that you acknowledge that it exists and you're working on it because otherwise we kind of get the reputation that we're not paying attention and we don't care.

Phil Ginsburg: I don't think we have that reputation. When we do an active deferred maintenance program or project and my team knows it is very important to us that we put out some signage to say that we're working on a project and we don't just kind of circle it with yellow tape. That is something that we do. We do have sandwich boards when we're doing deferred maintenance projects that last multiple days. We have a very big park system fortunately with lots of pathways, lots of roadways and there are going to be emerging issues like that that happened pretty frequently and it's one of the reasons why we work as closely as we do with the Mayor's Office on disability and why we have some of the systems we have to evaluate our pathways. My operations division is on this, they'll take a look at Louis Sutter but we're constantly categorizing what is a problem what may seem egregious in somebody's eyes may be a lower priority than other projects for a certain reason. So it's a balancing act.

Commissioner Anderson: I appreciate hearing that. It's nice to get that out into the public. Thank you everybody for bringing it up.

On motion by **Commissioner Low** and duly seconded the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

RES. NO. 1710-001

RESOLVED, That this Commission does approve the following animal transactions for the San Francisco Zoological Society, which were processed under Resolution No. 13572.

DONATION TO:	ANIMAL SPECIES	PRICE TOTAL	DUE
Oklahoma City Zoo and Botanical Garden 2000 Remington Place Oklahoma City, OK 73111 405/425-0252	1.0 Temminick's tragopan <i>Tragopan temminickii</i>	NIL	N/A

Minnesota Zoological Garden 13000 Zoo Blvd. Apple Valley, MN 55124 952/431-9278	0.2 Temminick's tragopan <i>Tragopan temminickii</i>	NIL	N/A
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DONATION FROM: Squirrelmender 6516 Affirmed Place Moorpark, CA 93021 805/551-2328	0.1 Virginia opossum <i>Didelphis virginiana</i>	NIL	N/A
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RES. NO. 1710-002

RESOLVED, That this Commission does increase the base construction contract with Bauman Landscape and Construction Inc, for the West Sunset Playground Renovation Project (DPW JO# 3207V(R)) by the amount of \$246,498.11 (2.5% above the base contract) and add 78 calendar days to the contract setting the new substantial completion date at October 21, 2017.

RES. NO. 1710-003

RESOLVED, That this Commission does: 1) adopt a resolution to apply to the State of California for a Habitat Conservation Fund Grant for the Oak Woodlands Trails Improvements Project in the amount of \$250,000; 2) recommend that the Board of Supervisors retroactively authorize the Recreation and Park Department to accept and expend the Grant; and 3) authorize the General Manager to enter into an agreement with the State to administer the Grant funds.

RES. NO. 1710-004

RESOLVED, That this Commission does: 1) adopt a resolution to apply to the State of California for an Outdoor Environmental Education Facility Grant for McLaren Park Trails Project in the amount of \$250,000; 2) recommend that the Board of Supervisors authorize the Recreation and Park Department to accept and expend the Grant; and 3) authorize the General Manager to enter into an agreement with the State to administer the Grant funds.

RES. NO. 1710-005

RESOLVED, That this Commission does: 1) adopt a resolution approving the applications for a total of \$3 million in grant funds from the California Natural Resources Agency for the Golden Gate Park Dog Training Area Project (\$2 million) and Lake Merced Improvements Project (\$1 million); 2) recommend that the Board of Supervisors authorize the Recreation and Park Department to accept and expend the Grants; 3) authorize the General Manager to enter into agreements with the California Natural Resource Agency to administer the Grant funds; and 4) direct staff to move forward with the design and environmental review for the projects.

RES. NO. 1710-006

RESOLVED, That this Commission does authorize the Department to enter into a license agreement with the Civic Center Community Benefit District for the public purpose of installing and operating a food and beverage kiosk on Joseph L. Alioto Performing Arts Piazza (Civic Center Plaza) for a period of up to nine years with terms substantially the same as the term sheet dated September 25, 2017.

RES. NO. 1710-007

RESOLVED, That this Commission does authorize the Department to enter into a framework and support agreement with the Randall Museum Friends for a period of up to nine years that is substantially in the same form as the draft agreement dated September 25, 2017.

RES. NO. 1710-008

RESOLVED, That this Commission accept and expend a cash grant valued at up to \$17,680.00 from Serena and Alec Perkins to replace the goals at the Julius Kahn Playground basketball court.

RES. NO. 1710-009

RESOLVED, That this Commission does Discussion and possible action to accept an in-kind grant valued at approximately \$56,000.00 from the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California to install new landscaping in the southern, front ornamental bed in Cottage Row Mini Park to honor the Issei (first) generation of Japanese people in San Francisco. Approval of this proposed action by the Commission is the Approval Action as defined by S.F Administrative Code Chapter 31.

SAN FRANCISCO ZOO

Tanya Peterson: Good morning, I'm the Director of the San Francisco Zoo. As President Buell mentioned earlier the San Francisco Zoological Society was grateful to be able to offer staff expertise and free admission to those impacted by the fires. Also, as nature would have it we had a somewhat of a small miracle on the day of the fires, three tiny flamingo chicks were actually born over that weekend. It is hard to raise these chicks in captivity. This isn't a frequent occurrence and the exhibit is named in honor of now-past Charlotte Mayland. So, we feel Charlotte reminded us all that nature will go on. So, we were thrilled to have these chicks born over that weekend. This year the society has been working on an expansion and remodel of the primate discovery system center which is now 30 years old. We most recently opened a \$1 million exhibit and we're bringing in additional animals. These are blue eyed lemurs. Lemurs are the only other primate except ourselves that have blue eyes so we're pleased to bring in these super models if you will of the lemurs. In addition, we have brought in other animals from Madagascar. I know the pictures may not reveal it but these are actually frogs, the red tomato frog and the one on the right has already earned the nickname of Heirloom. These two are rare frogs and we're thrilled to respond to the frog conservation crises going around the world. In addition to the fire victims we also hosted those who serve during Fleet Week and we were please to see a most energetic crew at the zoo for several days. So we thank our military for visiting the zoo during that week. The weekend after Scaregrove we'll be hosting Boo at the Zoo. This is a daytime event versus Scaregrove. This will be free with admission or zoo membership. And then as you walk around we are a zoological garden and we lately have been working on attracting migratory birds and insects in an effort to be a zoo without borders. There is also an insect crisis. One out of five insects are under threat of extinction. I realize not everybody is a bug person but already in this century 160 insect species have been lost. Remember that insects include the beautiful Monarch butterfly. So many of these gardens are picked for their efforts at attracting endangered insects and birds. So please come visit these pocket gardens we call them. Lastly, they really do exist, reindeer are on their way. Santa is releasing them from upper state Washington and they will be at the zoo mid-November for the holiday season. That's concludes my report.

This item was discussion only.

JUSTIN HERMAN PLAZA

Sarah Madland: Good afternoon Commissioners. I'm the Director of Policy and Public Affairs for the Department. The item you have before you is quite simply a resolution passed by the Board of Supervisors. It was co-sponsored by all members of the Board and as our President said the sponsoring Supervisor, Supervisor Peskin, should be here shortly to speak about it.

Commissioner Buell: I think also that it's worth mentioning while we're waiting for him that I know there are people here who will be advocating for different names. The item before us is really to consider the Board's resolution which would remove a name and put a temporary name of Embarcadero Plaza on the property. So, I don't want to discourage any of you from testifying about who you think anything should be named after, I just wanted to alert you that there wouldn't be a decision by this body to give a particular name to it if the Commission proceeds to take a name off of it. It would end up as Embarcadero Plaza for the time being.

Supervisor Peskin: Support. President Buell, Commissioners, Aaron Peskin from the Board of Supervisors here to share a few words with regard to Justin Herman and my own personal research into this issue. When Mr. Herman passed away I was eight years old but growing up I learned the legacy of redevelopment and this issue of the naming of the plaza has been around for a long time. As a matter of fact when I was first on the Board in 2001 there was a similar resolution which I don't know why it never moved, it never got a committee hearing, and that was reintroduced recently and co-sponsored by every member of the Board of Supervisors and passed unanimously. In the course of the introduction of that resolution I started doing a little bit of my own research particularly by reading a book that was recently published by a woman named Alison Isenberg called Designing San Francisco Art, Land, and Urban Renewal in the City by the Bay. And it gave me a much more nuanced understanding of redevelopment, some of the great things that redevelopment did and some of the lasting legacy particularly as it related to the Fillmore and Western Addition. When this came to committee I tried to express some of those understandings and I appreciated the letters from Art Evans and others who knew Justin Herman and were part of the Redevelopment Agency and tried to express that understanding. The resolution I think maybe should have been changed to [audio difficulty] of that. I spoke to the late, great Sun Reporter editor Thomas Fleming whose own views of Justin Herman and redevelopment evolved over time as quoted in Ms. Isenberg's book. I was also careful to note that this was not just about one man, this happened under three Mayor's with dozens of members of the Board of Supervisors in a

very different time where the public was actually much more supportive. We've learned a lot. I think it is time to turn that page in this chapter of history. This is in no way as I expressed to you in the letter that I wrote you on September 29 about demonizing Justin Herman the person but that era has come to symbolize a lot of hurt particularly in communities of color and low-income communities and I think that symbolically it is time to turn the page and move on to the next chapter of history. Thank you, Commissioners.

Commissioner Buell: Supervisor, before you go, as you know you and I have had conversations about this and I plan to make some comments later but I want to get your approval to recommend one item on this and that is in your resolution there is a quote that poor people shouldn't be allowed to live on this land which implies the Western Addition. That quote comes out of Chester Hartman's book, I could give you page number and the meeting in fact was a meeting of lawyers around land use in Yerba Buena Center and whether or not there should be onsite or offsite replacement housing for those people. Do you have any objection that the record reflect that?

Supervisor Peskin: I do not and as I told you in our personal conversation—I mean interestingly enough that resolution was drafted before I read Ms. Isenberg's book, before I had conversations with you, before I read Mr. Evans' letter and yes had I to write that resolution over that comment which was made was taken out of context. I think you Commissioner were in the room when those words were uttered and I regret that it was not contextually given the due that it was met. It obviously looks like a very mean-spirited comment. It obviously was done in a different context and the record should reflect that.

Commissioner Buell: I appreciate that. Thank you very much and thank you for coming to appear before us.

Supervisor Peskin: Thank you for dealing with this difficult issue.

Barbara Thompson: Support. I'm here to request David Johnson's name be placed on Justin Herman Plaza, the Embarcadero Plaza, thank you. I'm going to talk about David and his work at the University of California San Francisco. I have known him now for over 50 years. I was employed through the UCSF, David was one of the people that worked to retain employees at UCSF, he worked in the Department of Human Resources. You're going to hear a lot about his work as a photographer. I want to talk about his work - a person that came to San Francisco, not only worked as a photographer but also worked to maintain and do retention in keeping African Americans and other races that were not represented at the university and bring students onto the campus. We did not have a lot of African American students in the Department of Dentistry, Pharmacy, Nursing and the graduate Department. So David was one of those people that helped to organize the black caucus, was very instrumental in making sure that we maintained a steady flow of students to come to the University and stay there. This man has worked in civil, Federal and also State government not only as a photographer, he has worked all over the United States and is published throughout the nation. I would like to focus more on David being known to us as a person that really tried to help racism stop in this city. Racism was running rampant at UCSF back in the 60s and you can learn more about that by probably reading books and Dr. Feely did a study who was Chancellor at the time on the black caucus and how David was able to assist in making sure that some of the racism stopped. So I won't take up a lot of your time but know that it's more about him not being just a photographer but also being a humanitarian and helping this city to grow and some of the racism did stop and I want to thank David personally who is here in the audience today, he's 91 years old. Thank you.

Michael Johnson: Good afternoon Commissioners. For full disclosure I work for the Recreation and Park Department in the Park Ranger Division. I just wanted to put that out there. Hi boss.

Phil Ginsburg: It is an honor to have you here.

Michael Johnson: Support. I know we are here to consider several things. As Supervisor Peskin was mentioning about turning the page, I think that his comments are very valid. This is the time I think. It's a great time to be I think reconsidering things, to reconsider the changes that have happened in San Francisco, there are many. I've known Mr. Johnson for approximately 60 years, he's my father, and he's done a lot of interesting things. He's done a lot of great things. I think there will be a time to talk about that, a time to bring more of that forward but I think right now I think the idea is to open the door and this is something that one of the quotes that he has too is that the person he studied with, Ansel Adams, at the School of Photography opened a door for him and many things happened because of that, many ideas were remembered, many images, many spirits, many stories of the city were

preserved because of one opportunity like that, a door being opened and I think as Supervisor Peskin was saying as we turn this page and open the door I think that we'll have consideration of a few different names, I know, that are being proposed for this. I think you'll know where I fall down on that one and I can come back again and tell more stories about things that happened along the way that would illustrate that point but right now I would fully encourage you to start that process by the shift to the name change.

Ace Washington: Support. I went down to my Supervisor in District 5 and it seems like she's missing in action, she should have been in the Western Addition at the midtown last night because the audience was there maybe she shouldn't have been there because I don't think she would have liked what they were saying. Anyway, let's get back to—so I know this is just the beginning of the process so therefore I won't view my total views right now but I'm here for the process of changing the name off the top. I'm 63 and I'm probably a little bit older than the gentleman's son there but I've been in the Fillmore ever since I was born, okay, and I brought my family back to the Fillmore when I was 18. I got married when I was young because I got kids, they got kids and my kid's kid's got kids so I'm a paw-paw in my family, I'm a great-grandfather, they call me paw-paw in my family and I tell people in City Hall please don't call me late for dinner, call me any other name. But right now I just wanted to express that this is the first step of the process. I think you all are doing a wonderful thing as I praised Supervisor Peskin for doing what he did. He didn't happen to be my color but he did that, a legislator. I'm very disappointed that my two sisters didn't do it. I'm also discouraged that Willie Brown didn't do it because Willie Brown was around back in them days before I was down, back in the days he was there. He stepped foot here and then the establishment accepted him as their man. In my book as their negro, as their black man that's going to bring what they want. And you see what he's done for us, people say where's Willie Brown? No, I want to talk to Governor Jerry Brown. This is his last time around. He knows what's going down. The black population is going down here in the city by the Bay and pretty soon everybody is going to have to hear what I got to say. See, because I took pictures too for the last 20 years in the Fillmore. I don't know if there's anybody got more pictures than me in color. You can go ask somebody. But I'm not here to impress you all but I am to impress on you all how important it is what Supervisor Peskin did, strip that name. It brings darkness. If it gets me from being passionate. I never met the man. You're the closest thing I think—I never met him. If I knew that when I got into the game it was Hamilton but when I got involved with redevelopment it was [unintelligible] he gave us hell. So I know I'm not up here to give you the history. I could give you a history of a younger generation that the generation under me needs to hear. My name is Ace and I'm on this case.

Candace Sue: Support. I'm the director of communications and marketing at SFMTA and I've taken time off of work today so I could come down and speak to you all. So thank you first of all Commissioners for hearing this item today. I want to also extend appreciation to Supervisor Peskin for bringing the item forward. This renaming is important to us. Me and my sister here are the stepdaughters of David Johnson and we're representing many of the family members of David Johnson who couldn't be here today because they're working, they're struggling to stay in this city that they love and that they're dedicated to. They are teaching our children, they are driving our buses, they are working in our parks. You heard from Michael Johnson, they are working in our hospitals. The legacy of David Johnson continues to serve this city today. I want to quickly show a picture of David, you can see that fine looking gentleman in the middle there and perhaps you recognize Mayor Brown and Carlton B. Goodlett as well, a contemporary of David's. I do want to spend a moment to talk about Justin Herman. I will not vilify Justin Herman. Working for a city Department I understand that decisions that are made every single day can be very difficult decisions. He was a man of the times and his vision may have supported the views or a ruling elite at the time but I will say no matter what his intent of the intent of the policies of the time that the impact of the policies viewed and through the lens of history were hurtful, were destructive and frankly they should not continue to be celebrated today on our city's iconic waterfront park. The symbolism of changing the name cannot be underestimated. The park was named in the 90s after the freeway came down and long after the damaging effects of redevelopment were known and how they affected many communities, the African American community included. Personal friends, personal family members of mine, of yours, affected by this and you heard from that today. This meeting has been all about that. Today in 2017 in the face of boldly resurgent white supremacy boldly wracking our country and make people question what it means to be Americans San Francisco must stand forward and remove the symbols of systemic racial inequities that have impacted the city for generations. Commissioners, we believe the plaza should be named to represent people and their struggle, their struggle to matter, to be counted not because they were elites, not because they gave, but because they gave their blood, sweat and tears for this city. For that reason I respectfully urge you to change the name to David Johnson Plaza. David Johnson dedicated his life to his art. He has a body of work that represents the jazz era Fillmore civil rights struggle in San Francisco and beyond. You'll hear a lot about his

work as a photographer. He did so much more than that. He sued the city in the landmark case of Johnson vs. S.F. Unified. He made sure that children from poor districts had the opportunity to go to schools that would serve them better than the ones in their District. David to this day continues to fight and advocate for those who are voiceless. He advocates for Laura's Law to this day and 91. He's not a famous man. He is not a privileged elite man. He may not be a man known so well here in City Hall.

Khedda Keene: Support. Good afternoon Commissioners. I work for the Federal Government. I am the senior stepdaughter of David Johnson. I don't have a lot more to say other than what my sister said but I just want you to know that this is what David Johnson is and this is what he represents to the Fillmore, it's really simple, it's really obvious. His photography meant so much in the 30s, 40s, 50s, when other people could be doing pictures of flowers and trains David wanted to get the feel of the people and the human struggle and racism and the poor and people that were disenfranchised. I know this meeting is about renaming the Justin Herman Plaza and I am not here to say anything negative about Justin Herman. I just want you to know how important David Johnson is to the city of San Francisco and especially the Fillmore District.

Chelsea Eng: Support. Good afternoon Commissioners. I'm joined here with my father Russell Eng, we wanted to speak together and David Johnson is a loved member of our family but we come to speak to you as natives San Franciscans, as artists and educators. I was born here at Kaiser Hospital and I went to Lawton School out in the Sunset District. I also did my first dance classes through San Francisco Recreation and Park and I teach in the Dance Department at City College of San Francisco. I resonate very much David Johnson's legacy as he worked to desegregate the San Francisco Unified School System and has contributed so much to the world of the arts here in San Francisco.

Russell Eng: Support. I don't know what I can add that hasn't already been said. As a native San Francisco, retired school teacher, taught fine arts, there are two points I'd like to make. One is that I think David Johnson is a living legend, his body of work speaks volumes. His pictures that chronicled the jazz era in the Fillmore, the civic rights, the city, it's just absolutely incredible. I think his work is stunningly beautiful but probably the most important thing for me is the idea that he fought for the children, he fought to allow children to get as good an education as they can get by choosing the school that would best suit their needs and as a former educator I am totally behind that idea. We have to be inclusive, we have to provide an education for all students regardless of race. This is absolutely critical to a free society.

Chelsea Eng: In conclusion, we speak in support of the renaming of the plaza to David Johnson to honor the man and legacy. He's been an agent of change for the city of San Francisco.

C.S. Gordon: Support. I don't have a lot more to add. I met Mr. Johnson in a senior choir which we both sing in and was delighted to attend his photography retrospective a couple years ago and actually purchased this book. I would like for you to take a look at it. I want it back.

Commissioner Buell: I promised her during the fire drill that we would not damage this book. Gently look through it.

C.S Gordon: For me David Johnson is a photographer. There is so much more to the man that I didn't even know about. At this point I think he's one of my contemporary heroes, that's for sure. But as an amateur photographer myself I recognized the exquisite beauty to his pictures and I also see him as a historian, a person who chronicled a time and a place that no longer exists because it was essentially razed and people were displaced. So when I look at these picture I look in the faces of working class people, of people living ordinary lives and in the second half of the book you'll see people who lived not so ordinary lives as part of the civil rights movement. But I fully support changing the name of the Justin Herman Plaza at this time, I do believe it's time and I think it's time to reflect the diversity that San Francisco publically prides itself on and I am aware that there will be other names put forth but I believe that David Johnson holds the unique worthiness to have the plaza named after him. He has lived in San Francisco, he's devoted so much time and energy to it and I think you're see that reflected in these pictures of an area that just doesn't exist anymore but for his pictures. Thank you.

Linda Ojeda: Support. Good morning or afternoon. I would just like to say that anytime you name a street or park or structure for someone they have to have made some kind of an impact in that area and David Johnson certainly has done that. I just received this today and I'd like to read just a couple notable facts about David. David Johnson is a notable photographer who documented the jazz area Fillmore and civil rights movement in San Francisco. The first African American to study under Ansel Adams he is part of the golden decade of photographers who emerged from the California School of Fine Arts. As a community member he battled the unjust redevelopment policies and enacted under the leadership of Justin Herman and other civic leaders in that primarily disenfranchised minorities and low-income people. David has forged a legacy in San Francisco and especially the Fillmore District. He lived there, he had a business there, he raised his family there. He took photos of everyday life, historical photos that are now worldwide. He took photos of blacks, whites, young, old. Iconic photos that are now at the Library of Congress. David so deserves to be recognized for his historical photojournalism in the area of the Fillmore District and I hope you will consider him as you think about it. I know that's not what you're voting on today but as you move forward that his contribution to the Fillmore, to San Francisco, is just unparalleled.

Janice Lee: Support. Hello Commissioners. My husband and I have only known David and his wife Jackie for the last two years when we met them at housing that was in the Western Addition but we were so touched and moved by them as a couple as people that we've got to know them much more in the last couple of years. I am a second generation native San Franciscan and I'd like to see the plaza renamed after somebody who can truly bring the city together. The plaza is one of the gateways to the city so there needs to be something there that encourages people to visit the neighborhoods. My husband and I do work in the Fillmore District maybe for the last eight years and that's how come we also are very familiar with the neighborhood but I'd like for you to consider as you move forward with these decisions too that we live in a very visual world and as a world-class photographer and a San Francisco documentarian David Johnson is that person who could connect the neighborhoods, it being San Francisco and the Embarcadero being a gateway he can connect to downtown and Fillmore and I think you see that probably in the book that's going around too. I know I learned a lot about David and his work from the book so I just wanted to say that I fully support the plaza being named after David Johnson.

Commissioner Buell: Thank you. Before we call on the next person I know Commissioner McDonnell has to leave for an appointment down at the peninsula and I know he's like to make a couple of comments.

Commissioner McDonnell: I appreciate it and I appreciate all who have come to share their testimony on this item. As a native son of the city growing up in the Fillmore I'm not old enough to remember the glory days that Mr. Johnson's work has captured. However, what I do recall is the experience of hearing all of the stories, the monuments or remnants that remain that spoke to those days and quite candidly the pain of the destruction that was that movement of the redevelopment agency. And so certainly without demonizing anyone I certainly appreciated the comments around difficult decisions at difficult times made by a bureaucracy, debating whether they did it right or wrong I'll put that aside. I will say that there have been many moments like these when I feel like the city candidly finally gets it right, finally takes a right step in the right direction and I hold this moment as one of those moments so even though I do have to leave I certainly hope that the Commission will move this body of work forward. The first step is to change the name, the second step is to identify many worthy members of our community like Mr. Johnson who have been incredible stalwarts in our community both capturing in this case as well as leading in many ways the continued evolution of what started as a civil rights movement and while we have made lots of progress we still have a long way to go. So thank you so much.

Commissioner McDonnell left the meeting at 12:24 p.m.

Commissioner Buell: Let's continue with the public testimony.

Wyna Barren: Support. I am a retired San Francisco Unified School District educator. I worked for over 35 years as a teacher, counselor, and administrator in the San Francisco Unified School District. I'm here in support of the renaming of Justin Herman Plaza to the David Johnson Plaza. I want to speak to the fact that David is a notable photographer and you've heard I think instances of where he was the first African American student of Ansel Adams but he's done more than that. He has been engaged with the community as a civic leader and also as an advocate for children in the San Francisco Unified School District. I think that so much of the contributions of African Americans in San Francisco is not known as working for those many years there's been so much that has not been recognized of the African American contribution to the development of San Francisco. I think also that the

naming of David Johnson Plaza instead of Justin Herman is the perfect place because so many—it's sort of like a gateway to San Francisco and all the people who are visiting should know about the contributions not only would it represent David but also all the under-represented African Americans who made so many contributions to San Francisco. It's taken many years for even [unintelligible] to be recognized as the early history of San Francisco and so I think some of the people who have come later like David Johnson who's done many things for the development of San Francisco he engaged in the community, he had leadership in so many different ways. So I think he would represent also so many unrecognized African Americans who have been fighting for justice in San Francisco.

Lenore Chinn: Support. Pardon me for some of the perhaps redundant comments, people beat me to the punch, I've actually known David for a number of years through my late uncle a local photographer Benjamin Chin. I'm a local artist and a former member of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission. I'm here today to join friends, family, and the arts community in supporting the name of the Embarcadero Plaza in honor of our local hero the eminent photographer David Johnson. David is among an elite group of photographers who studied in the first school of photography at the California school of fine arts now known as the San Francisco Art Institute established by Ansel Adams and shepherded by many of the luminaries of the West Coast photographers notably Edward Weston and Minor White. He is among a handful of this generation who remain and are vibrant to the communities in which they move. Collectively they have been dubbed the Golden Decade of Photographers. His iconic oversize 1946 black and white photograph looking south on Fillmore an aerial view taken in one shot from a scaffold near Post Street hangs prominently in the lounge at the 1300 on Fillmore in San Francisco, an homage to a bygone time and place. A small dedication can be seen on the pavement nearby on the side of the Panda Express. A few samples are now on view in one of the kiosk museum displays downtown on Kearny. In 2010 his work was shown at the SFO Museum. They wrote Johnson diligently documented the street life and jazz club scene of San Francisco's Fillmore District, a neighborhood that developed from the second great migration of southern blacks to the West Coast during WWII. Johnson focused his work on socially relevant issues facing urban communities, especially African American. He photographed numerous subjects in the Fillmore neighborhood including social groups, musicians, children, students, shopkeepers, religious leaders and daily events. Many of these photographs were created during that time. Johnson is an important chronicler of African American life in San Francisco during the mid-20th century. His images, formed from a career spanning more than 60 years, are in a collection of the Library of Congress and more recently part of the Bancroft Library and UC Berkeley. Now at a youthful 91 still actively photographing and continuing to make an enduring contribution to the history of American photography. I'm proud to call him a friend I urge you to give due consideration to honor his legacy. His contributions to the richness of our city's history and the American cultural landscape is significant in naming it David Johnson Plaza at the foot of Market Street would be a fitting tribute to a man whose dream began so long ago.

Art Evans: Oppose. I wrote a letter to each of you and I was thankful to Mr. Peskin for mentioning it. I also thought his remarks were useful in this consideration. I think before starting I'll mention to you this is the second time I've spoken before the Recreation and Park Commission, the first time was around 1969 and at that time I was asking for approval to build Vaillancourt Fountain. That was a heavy lift and I suspect I have a heavy lift right now. In any event, I'm urging you to either vote against this resolution or to table it and obtain a little more information. There are a lot of people who knew Justin Herman and his contribution to San Francisco who for various reasons have not spoken up and this is a very legitimate—and I don't wish to demean it in any way—a very legitimate dialog and I know there have been public opportunities but people have not spoken up. I also recognize we're living in a period of unparalleled recognition of inequality and the need to make things right but we really need to be very careful not to just follow the herd and go along, Justin Herman was one of the most extraordinary civil servants in the history of San Francisco. There is really no question about that. Unfortunately for reasons that are not really known to me a couple of publications came out and a television program that started to demonize him and we've had 40 years of unending negative comments about Justin Herman and nobody has stepped up. I suspect some of us should have. One of the most vocal criticism and they're justified in the Western Addition—I only have 30 seconds? I would urge you to do a survey of people who knew about his activities and his contributions before you vote for this, thank you.

Male Speaker: Support. Hello, thank you for listening to us. I'm a San Franciscan, moved here with my mother when I was five in 1952, a single mother that lived in the projects down at Fisherman's Wharf. I'm a new friend of David Johnson. I haven't known him for 60 years or maybe even 60 months but I'm a fellow photographer and sort of an educator and I think it's very important to recognize historical documentary photographers. What would we know about the migrant farmers in the southern states during the depression without Dorothy Elangs migrant mother

and other photographs from that era. Even today when you read the newspapers maybe even today we read about child labor around other countries in the world. A century ago Louis Hines documented child labor down in the south in the cotton mills or newsboys in New York City. Think about educating the children to San Francisco about the 1906 earthquake without photographs. We need to recognize and support and celebrate the documentary photographers in our city and our country and the world and I fully support planting the seed about renaming the plaza for David Johnson. Thank you.

Glenn Issakson: Oppose. I was in service in the Redevelopment Agency in the 1960s and worked closely with Justin Herman. I was his assistant and eventually deputy director. It was during the course of this, counting back it's almost 50 years since then and as Art said there's very few people now who even were around to know Justin but I was one and I do know what occurred in that period and there is no matchup between what actually occurred, truthfully, and what some of the urban myths are concerning him and the agency. I echo Art's urging for an unbiased fact-finding so as to diminish or eliminate the vilification, the demonization of Justin as an individual and by implication the acts of the Redevelopment Agency. I can assure you that those acts were taken in good faith by people who were very decent, who were very progressive, even liberal even by today's terms. I'm pleased to hear Supervisor Peskin recant quite a bit about the tone of the resolution of the Board of Supervisors. I assume he's speaking for all the Supervisors when he says that would be a beginning step but just a beginning. An unbiased look at the history is now in order if you're going to take the kind of action that's been requested of you do it fairly, let's get out of the lynching mode that we've been in. Justin's been lynched over and over, it's enough. No need to continue, thank you.

Ann Trisha Kimou: Support. I'm the granddaughter of David Johnson. Thank you so much for having this item on the table and I'd like to represent my comments in support of renaming Justin Herman Plaza. My granddad is truly amazing. He is a role model for my family, for myself, and a lover of family. As today sometimes it feels like our nation is in such a time of separation it feels like we really need more connection to me made more prevalent and in the face of what we're facing right now in political terms and I feel that my grandfather David Johnson really represents that accurately for San Francisco especially a place that prides itself on being one of the most diverse cities by the bay. I think that even though separation is so relevant and kind of in the air with the nation we're also in a time where we want to feel more connected, we have ride shares and Facebook thought sharing, even photo sharing. I think most people would say that connection and togetherness is at the heart of the human nature and what we really need and my father represents that. He's, the like I said backbone of our family and definitely the pillar of our legacy. I'm a native San Franciscan myself, proud to be one, I've recently needed to move out in order to purchase something of my own but for my grandfather to still have so much soul and represent so much soul here in the city I think that renaming Justin Herman Plaza with his name would be beautiful and a reminder to me that this is still my home. Lastly, I'll just say that being his granddaughter I am very proud to be part of his bloodline and a part of someone who is a living legend. Thank you.

Commissioner Buell: Before I call on other Commissioners I want to read a statement and it should be self-evident then why I wanted to introduce my comment first and then let others say something. First, let me say in meeting David Johnson today it's a real honor sir and I admire your photography and the legacy you have left for San Franciscans. I'd also say to Art Evans that if you want your entire remarks in the record give them to the clerk and we'll make sure they get in the record so that we left nothing unsaid from your perspective.

In 1966 I went to work for the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency as an administrative assistant in the executive offices. In April of 1968 I was drafted into the Army and spent all of 1969 in Vietnam. When I returned to San Francisco my earlier position with the agency had been filled and Justin Herman hired me as his personal assistant. It is therefore ironic that this resolution by the Board of Supervisors to remove his name from a city park would come before this Commission now. Let me say at the outset that I share the sentiment that the urban renewal approach to the Western Addition in the 1960s and 70s seems very misguided. I believe that the mass demolition of housing and the subsequent relocation of the residents had profound negative consequences on that community, not the least was the separation of residents from their places of worship and in more subtle ways the destruction of relationships built over years between residents and the local commercial interests. By example the corner grocery store that when circumstances found a resident running short of cash would extend credit until times improved. The local mechanic who could make sure the car kept running so folks could get to work and not fall farther behind. There are many, many examples of the fabric of a community that get disrupted in such a dramatic way.

It's important however to put these plans in some perspective. These were Federal programs largely created to address much older and deteriorating cities on the east coast and elsewhere. The Federal government had strong inducements for cities. They would provide two-thirds of the funding and we're talking million of dollars here, two thirds of the funding and the local city would pay one-third. The city's payment could be made in the form of local improvements, thus you see the widening of Geary Street and the widening of Webster Street in the Western Addition. Have you ever wondered why Webster Street widens for about eight to ten blocks and then comes back? There was some long-term planning involved but this was taking advantage of public works programs to pay the city's one-third.

Justin Herman didn't singlehandedly think up and implement these programs. He served under three mayors, a Republican George Christopher, a liberal Democrat Jack Shelley and a centrist Democrat Joe Alioto. They all supported the agency's work in the Western Addition. During Justin's tenure there were over 20 members of the Board of Supervisors and this was before term limits or district elections, so there were 20 members of the Board of Supervisors over that period of his tenure and they too supported and approved the redevelopment plans as did Planning Commissions and a variety of other agencies that participated in these programs.

You might be surprised to know that when the Human Rights Commission staff requested that Justin set up a goal of a program to achieve employment in the agency that reflected the makeup of the community he advised them that he would have to let a number of African Americans go and hire Caucasians to meet those objectives. Because the programs were primarily in areas like the Western Addition or Hunters Point he believed very strongly in hiring from the communities that were being affected by these programs.

Justin was a leader in the nation by instituting urban design as a criteria when judging bidders for development rights in varied projects. He was a leader in requiring large commercial developers to devote one percent of development costs of public works of art. The Embarcadero BART station was under his administration and funded from tax revenue bonds by the agency. He raised private money to pay for Eloise Westbrook an African American leader in Hunters Point to go to Washington to lobby for legislation that recognized the cost differentials in the West Coast. It was simply more expensive to build here and all the Federal regulations made it very difficult to meet those objectives. When St. Mary's Cathedral burned to the ground on Van Ness Avenue he promoted the idea of rebuilding it atop Geary and Gough and oversaw the land swap with KRON TV. He said great cities build their cathedrals where they're visible to everybody. He was a recipient of the Silver SPUR award and his name is on the annual award given to the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. He worked six days a week and I know personally that he turned down many lucrative offers in the private sector. When he died the Chronicle editorial cartoon showed giant shoes being carried out of his office by two workers, the implication was that they would be very hard to fill by anybody. Was he perfect? By no means but he cared passionately about his work and he left this city with many positive contributions. He resisted the pressures of downtown to sell off blocks in the Golden Gateway one at a time, he held out for a master plan that could plan the entire area and thus the Embarcadero Center. He resisted local hotel barons and downtown interests who wanted first bids on hotel sites near the convention center at Yerba Buena. He believed in opening the bidding nationwide.

I would leave you with these two other thoughts. One is that he built thousands of units of affordable housing, far more than anyone before him and far more than anyone that has come after him. This city should be enormously grateful for that vision and determination and I also looked up the census numbers in San Francisco just as a reflection. The African American community in 1960 represented between 10 and 11 percent of the population. It grew to 13.4 percent during his tenure in 1970 and was just below 13 percent in 1980. There was very little change after the initial growth. So the concept that somehow—and I admit to you that I think that the Western Addition approach was an ill-advised one. I think it had some very damaging long term effects. But the reality is he has been demonized for things that he personally certainly would in fairness be accused of but he was really passionate about trying to make San Francisco a better place.

Commissioner Low: Thank you Commissioner Buell. I think those comments of Justin Herman Plaza reflect a complicated situation and I just want to reference back to our naming policy which requires extraordinary circumstances and great reluctance if we're to change a name and I do think in this situation with the Board of Supervisors resolution urging us to rename Justin Herman Plaza to Embarcadero Plaza that that is an opportunity for us to open the door and to entertain and discuss—have that robust discussion on the renaming of that plaza. So I would move to support the motion.

The motion by Commissioner Low to support the Board of Supervisors resolution removing the name of Justin Herman from the plaza at the Embarcadero and Market Street, and to name the plaza the “Embarcadero Plaza” pending any further action by the Commission failed by the following vote:

Noes: Buell, Anderson, Bonilla

Ayes: Low, Harrison, Mazzola

Absent: McDonnell

Phil Ginsburg: To those who are here I—the debate happened fast. I just wanted to offer one comment which is we live in a world where dialog right now is so sharp and so awful on most issues and I’ve had the honor of sitting in this chair for a number of years and watched dialog on issues with nowhere near the historic significance or rawness of this particular issue. I have watched dialog that has been awful. I have never been more impressed by a conversation, the quality of the conversation, the gracefulness of the conversation in which on a really difficult and raw topic and on all sides of the issued whether you worked for Justin or were impacted by—your family was impacted by redevelopment and it gives me a lot of hope for our future and for the children that I’m raising and I wanted to say thank you.

OPEN SPACE CONTINGENCY RESERVE

Denny Kern: Good afternoon Commissioners, Denny Kern Director of Operations. This item is discussion and possible action to allocate the expenditure of \$180,000 from the Open Space Contingency Undesignated Reserve to expand the existing PUC road repair project for Middle Drive West into a project that achieves a complete repave of Middle Drive West from MLK Drive to Transverse Drive. Commissioners, this item is in support of our strategic plan, Strategy 1, inspire public space. And specifically, Objective 1.2 strengthen the quality of existing parks and facilities.

Commissioners, you may recall in June of last year you approved a memorandum of understanding between the Department and the PUC to execute an extensive recycled water project and groundwater project within Golden Gate Park to diversify San Francisco’s water supply portfolio and to achieve the Department’s water conservation goal to utilize recycled water for landscape irrigation and other non-potable uses. Since that time these construction projects have progressed and to date two water mains have been installed in Golden Gate Park by trenching beneath Middle Drive West from MLK Drive to Transverse Drive a road length of approximately one mile. These water mains one of which is to deliver recycled water from the Oceanside plant where it will be manufactured to the Golden Gate Park central pump station reservoir where it will be stored and pumped into our irrigation system. And the other water main from the new construction central well next to the central pump station which will then deliver groundwater out of Golden Gate Park as part of the water system improvement program of the PUC’s for the West Side groundwater basin. As I said, both of these main installations have been trenched and constructed beneath Middle Drive West and are now complete. The final part of this project is to then repave the trans sections of Middle Drive West from MLK Drive eastward to Transverse Drive. If you’re not familiar with Middle Drive West it is an east-west roadway through the central section of Golden Gate Park and is in a very compromised state due to an overly patched asphalt surface. It has not been repaved in decades. The PUC project contract will repave approximately one-half of the width of the roadway for the entire length of the trench work leaving the other half of the roadway width in its compromised condition.

So that brings me to why am I standing here before you this afternoon. The Department proposes to take advantage of the PUC’s paving contract to extend this repaving to the entire width of Middle Drive West and for the entire length of the trenching project. In so doing we leverage the sunk costs of the PUC project and obtain an extensively repaved roadway in Golden Gate Park at a fraction of the normal cost. The PUC has estimated that the Department’s cost to expand their repaving contract at \$357,826.88 and rounding up for possible unforeseen conditions we propose this cost to be \$360,000.

To fund this project, we propose to split this repaving cost between an allocation from the Open Space Fund Contingency Reserve, again specifying that to be the undesignated reserve and the Fuhrman Bequest which is a fund solely for the improvement of Golden Gate Park. The resultant cost of the Open Space Fund Contingency Reserve would then be \$180,000. The current balance of the Open Space Fund Contingency Reserve is \$902,670 and the

current balance of the Fuhrman request is \$2,629,558. So there are sufficient fund in both funds to cover this split cost. If approved the expanded paving project for Middle Drive West would be executed in December of this year. Our recommendation to you is approval.

On motion by **Commissioner Low** and duly seconded, the following resolution was adopted:

RES. NO. 1710-010

RESOLVED, That this Commission does authorize the expenditure of \$180,000.00 from the Open Space Contingency Reserve (Undesignated Reserve) to expand the existing PUC road repair project for Middle Drive West into a project that achieves a complete repave of Middle Drive West from MLK Drive to Transverse Drive.

NEW BUSINESS/AGENDA SETTING

Commissioner Low: I would like to bring to the November Operations Committee and to the full Commission the naming of the batting cage at Victoria Manalo Draves Park in honor of Tim Figueras.

ADJOURNMENT

The Recreation and Park Commission meeting
adjourned at 1:03 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,

Margaret A. McArthur
Commission Liaison