



Mayor Gavin Newsom  
Philip A. Ginsburg, General Manager

**LAFAYETTE PARK RENOVATION  
COMMUNITY MEETING #1  
THURSDAY APRIL 22, 2010 7-9 PM  
STUART HALL HIGH SCHOOL, 1715 OCTAVIA STREET**

**MEETING NOTES**

**INTRODUCTIONS/WELCOME**

- Greetings and ground rules reviewed by meeting facilitator, Tina Garcia.
- Mary Hobson, RPD Project Manager, provided an overview of the 2008 Clean & Safe Neighborhood Park Bond including overall bond objectives, budget and scope.
- Mary introduced and explained the roles of the Lafayette Park renovation team, she then explained the scope of work the bond will attempt to achieve in Lafayette Park and that it will mainly focus on the parks infrastructure including but not limited to modernizing the out dated irrigation and drainage systems, rehabilitating landscaping, improving park accessibility, and repairing deteriorated stairs, retaining walls and paths. The scope also calls for renovating the tennis courts, modernizing the children's play area, and providing for basic user enhancements like signage and site furniture. Mary explained that Lafayette Park budget is one of the biggest in the Bond at \$10,200,000 with \$7,714,200 going to construction alone. She then outlined the baseline (preliminary) renovation schedule, which is 6 months of planning, 12 months of design, 16 months of construction, and finally 4 months to close-out the project. There was then an explanation of the public input process.
- Mary then introduced Lynne Newhouse Segal, President of the Friends of Lafayette Park (FoLP), who described the long history of FoLP as the primary advocacy group for the park. She proceeded to introduce other members of FoLP.

**FRIENDS OF LAFAYETTE PARK/OTHER SPECIAL GUESTS**

- Steffen Franz: explained the importance of the dog owner perspective in shaping the renovation plan.
- Dede Kramer & Corrina Bonoma: explain their roles as head of the playground committee and their goal of raising funds to enhance the playground component of the project.
- Shila Clement: spoke on the various landscape and infrastructure issues to be addressed by the renovation project.



- Art Persyko: wished us a happy Earth Day and spoke on the needs of the tennis players who use the courts.
- Mary introduced Bill Barns, aide to Supervisor Alioto-Pier, and Karen Kidwll, Director of the San Francisco Parks Trust, who were also in the audience.
- We then heard from Anderson Pugash, District 2 representative on the Parks, Open Space Advisory Committee, appointed by Supervisor Michela Alioto-Pier.

### **BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

The meeting attendees and Project Team split into small groups to discuss in detail four primary user/interest focused topics related to the park renovation. These included; 1) Landscape and General Infrastructure needs, 2) the Children's Play Area and Picnic facilities, 3) the Tennis Courts and other Active Recreation uses, and 4) the Dog-Play area. Participants were encouraged to participate in more than one discussion group to get a feel for all the needs of the park.

**LANDSCAPE BREAKOUT SESSION:** Discussion led by FoLP's Shila Clement. Project Team participants included Will Kwan, Project Architect, and Marianne Bertuccelli, Neighborhood Services Area Manager. Group comments are summarized below:

- Matt, a Biology teacher from Stuart Hall High School, would like to establish a recognized native plants garden in the park.
- Community garden- with exclusively native plants so they don't have to be watered as much in summer thus bypassing any additional strain on the irrigation system.
- Restore retaining walls to match the already existing columns in the park
- Craig a 45 year resident wants RPD to keep the parks "Romantic English Garden" landscaping in mind while in the design process
- Pollard (cut back nearly to the trunk) the existing eucalyptus to allow more light in the park
- Kiosk or plaque in the park with historical photos specifically of the old house that used to be in the park
- Rotating public sculptures or some sort of art space on the west end of the park.
- The main concern amongst this group seemed to be the homeless who sleep in the rhododendrons at night
- More picnic areas throughout the park and more comfortable benches
- Widen the paths as to allow for authorized vehicle accommodation
- People would like more attention paid to the North east end of the park
- Move garbage cans/maintenance shed
- Wants to keep the park green and not make the same mistakes that were made in union square
- The group also seemed very adamant that all the park furnishings match or carry on a similar theme.

- Consider improve sprinkler heads or methods to protect them from almost constantly being broken by cars

**PLAYGROUND BREAKOUT SESSION:** Discussion led by Dede Kramer and Corrina Bonoma from FoLP. Project Team participants included Landscape Architects Jeff Miller and Maya Nagasaka. Group comments are summarized below:

**What people like about the current playground:**

- Warm setting protected from wind
- Swings and Slides
- Sand: encourages cooperative play
- Surrounding trees: natural landscape
- Paths for bikes
- Good visibility
- Proximity to the bathroom
- Adjacent Lawn
- Fenced lawn area: well protected for youngest children
- Good area for youngest children

**Issues of the current playground:**

- Play structure: unsafe and outdated. Tunnel equipment is a problem for undesirable use.
- Need play structure/playground for children of all ages: Current play structure is used only by toddlers, not enough play for older children.
- Separation of play areas of various ages is needed but should not divide the area.
- Size of play structure is small: need a larger playground area. Would like to see a comparison with other play grounds (i.e. Alta plaza's new playground)
- Lack of theme and color
- Lack of places to sit: need places for parents to sit and watch their children.
- Need a more imaginative play area – would like to see natural play area, use of topography.
- Trash cans: current location is a not desirable and would like it to be removed somewhere else.
- Sand: parents need to clean it up before their children can play.
- Nearby residents concerns about noise in the playground.
- Need larger grass area for children to run, kick ball.
- Current location of picnic area: can it be integrated into the play area?
- Adjacent asphalt area is a gathering place of dog owners: unsafe for dogs to be too close to children?
- Need amenities for dogs (water/disposal station) for parents with kids and dogs

**Ideas for future play ground:**

- Use park topography for embankment slides.

- Create an imaginative and more natural play area.
- Larger playground area needed to meet current standards.
- Create a playground distinctive from other playgrounds.
- Make use of materials in the playground
- Provide play areas for children of all ages. Add a play structure for older children.
- Keep play areas for different ages separate
- Integrate picnic area into the playground
- Create a water/creek play area (possibly hand pump)
- Provide a playhouse that is safe and open
- Consider renovating the maintenance building as a clubhouse useful to the playground and for neighborhood events
- Provide more swings
- Consider creating a playground theme
- Make use of color
- Add seating areas for parents
- Larger grass area for running and kicking balls
- Incorporate historical elements
- Swings in the meadow area for older people

**TENNIS BREAKOUT SESSION:** Discussion led by Art Persyco from FoLP. Project Team participant was Mary Hobson, Project Manager. Group comments are summarized below:

- Court resurfacing needed- priority should be longevity, low-maintenance. Rebound Ace surface recommended.
- Provide new fencing, gates, wind screens and net posts.
- Provide player amenities like a clock, benches, broom box, more garbage cans, etc.
- Provide a drinking fountain.
- Provide court lighting to extend hours of use, timer activated. Shield lights to reduce impact to neighbors.
- Trim overhanging trees to keep leaves and debris off the courts, and perimeter landscaping should be designed to reduce water runoff and debris going onto the courts.
- Provide better signage; no dogs, no bikes, tennis rules, etc.
- Players should be able to reserve courts (but not by fee); perhaps through an online reservation system.
- Enforce rules regarding private tennis lessons for profit prohibited.
- FoLP and SFPT should look at raising money for courts; stage a tennis event, seek special donations for court improvements and maintenance.
- Provide space in the park for other active recreation; volleyball, croquet, croquet, and circuit training.
- Provide more trails and bird watching opportunities in the park.
- Provide additional multi use court; basketball

**DOG-PLAY BREAKOUT SESSION:** Discussion led by Steffen Franz from FoLP. Project Team participant was Stephen Childers, Park Gardener. Group comments are summarized below:

- Investigate implementing a policy for off-leash times for parks; ex. 7-9am + 4-7pm
- Use lower meadow for dog run
- Utilize native plants for boundaries instead of chain link fences
- Provide three different dog areas for big/small/both
- Install Solar lights
- Provide fencing barrier to reduce dog's access to street
- Needs More water stations/bag boxes and disposal stations
- More signage is need in park
- Improve drainage for existing dog run
- Improve Safety through a) lighting b) slope C) separation of big and small dogs

#### **WRAP UP**

- A representative from each breakout group reported on the key issues and comments generated during their discussion.

#### **GENERAL QUESTION AND ANSWERS**

- Q) Where exactly is the majority of the Lafayette Bond money going?  
A) It is expected that the renovation will focus primarily on addressing park infrastructure needs; irrigation, drainage, pathways, etc.
- Q) Could there be an emergency generator pit in the park?  
A) This is possible, but not practical. Emergency generators require a fuel source, typically an underground fuel tank, which is very expensive. An alternative solution would be to provide a connection point for a mobile (truck mounted) generator.
- Q) What if they could use renewable energy to power the generator?  
A) We can certainly consider that option.

#### **FINAL THOUGHTS FROM RPD**

- Mary asked the group if they would support the incorporation of a concession stand with snacks and various other items available for purchase. The group seemed open to the idea.
- Mary asked the group if they would support promoting the site as a location for events. The group seemed open to the idea.
- The meeting wrapped up with Thanks to all that participated, and a promise that the Project Team would be back during the summer to present design ideas for the Community's input.