

From: [Peskin, Aaron \(BOS\)](#)
To: [DPH-Cyntia.Salazar-mff](#); markwbuell@gmail.com; [Buell, Mark \(REC\)](#); [Anderson, Kat \(REC\)](#); [Griffin, Laurence \(ADM\)](#); ldgriffin626@aol.com; [Louie, Vanita \(REC\)](#); larry.mazzola@sfgov.org; [Larry Mazzola Sr](#); [Jupiter-Jones, Annie \(REC\)](#)
Cc: [Therese Oxford](#); [Preston, Dean \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: RE: Concern with Lack of Investment and Equity in Tenderloin and Lower Nob Hill Open Space
Date: Tuesday, June 6, 2023 9:45:43 AM

Thank you, Ms. Salazar.

You have my full support. I note you reference an attached resolution, but I did not receive it.

Best,

Aaron

From: Cyntia Salazar <cyntia.salazar@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 5, 2023 11:56 PM
To: markwbuell@gmail.com; Buell, Mark (REC) <mark.buell@sfgov.org>; Anderson, Kat (REC) <kat.anderson@sfgov.org>; Griffin, Laurence (REC) <laurence.griffin@sfgov.org>; ldgriffin626@aol.com; Louie, Vanita (REC) <vanita.louie@sfgov.org>; larry.mazzola@sfgov.org; Larry Mazzola Sr <ljmazzola@ualocal38.org>; Jupiter-Jones, Annie (REC) <annie.jupiter-jones@sfgov.org>
Cc: Therese Oxford <terry.oxford@gmail.com>; Peskin, Aaron (BOS) <aaron.peskin@sfgov.org>; Preston, Dean (BOS) <dean.preston@sfgov.org>
Subject: Re: Concern with Lack of Investment and Equity in Tenderloin and Lower Nob Hill Open Space

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June 5, 2023

Recreation and Park Commission
c/o President Mark Buell
McLaren Lodge, 501 Stanyan Street
San Francisco, CA 94117

Re: Concern with Lack of Investment and Equity in Tenderloin and Lower Nob Hill Open Space

President Buell:

First, thank you for your service on the Recreation and Park Commission these many years – we are both relatively new to the Park, Recreation and Open Space Advisory Committee (PROSAC) but we understand that you have been serving as the President of this oversight body since you were appointed by former Mayor Gavin Newsom in 2010.

We write to seek redress for an injustice that has gone on for much longer than but at least since

2010 – the intentional lack of investment in new park space in the Greater Tenderloin and Lower Nob Hill neighborhoods, which most city department “equity” and “high-needs” maps (including the Recreation and Park Department’s) identify as bordered by Market Street to the south, roughly Grant Avenue to the Chinatown gate, Bush Street to the north and Van Ness Avenue to the west, including the Lower Polk alleyways.

As our collective neighborhood(s) grapple with the double-whammy of a lackluster economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic and the mounting pressure to absorb more and more behavioral health services and facilities without additional city support or infrastructure to ensure their success, our communities are imploding. We look to every city department to contribute its fair share to equitable solutions that put the needs of our most vulnerable at the forefront of city planning and investment.

Three months ago, the Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted a Resolution urging you and the Department that you oversee to act with urgency to implement a plan for more equitable and flexible open space criteria for our neighborhood(s), as well as prioritizing our community for the next drawdown from the open space acquisition site. We understand from staff after discussions at the last two meetings that the Board of Supervisors still has not received an acknowledgement of your review of or response to this resolution, which constitutes a profound policy statement on the part of the City and County.

We write to you now directly to urge you to take up our call for help. We represent low-income seniors who cannot handle the steep hills to enjoy safe parks at the top of Nob Hill and monolingual immigrant families who don’t feel safe even walking to Redding Elementary or Tenderloin Community Schools, let alone the limited playgrounds in the core of the Tenderloin. We represent a growing transitional aged youth (TAY) population exiting homelessness and the foster care system and a growing trans community who are struggling to find safe spaces to congregate and activate in an increasingly hate-filled climate. We represent some of the poorest residents in San Francisco, as well as small businesses operating on razor margins, who have not been included in the City’s downtown economy recovery effort. We also represent an abundance of community-based non-profit organizations which are ready and willing to step up and help program a new park and connect this infrastructure to a positive vision for community-building and neighborhood health and wellness. What we lack in deep-pocketed philanthropic donors, we make up with in heart and genuine dedication to the community that we love.

Both of us had the opportunity to join a community walk-through of potential opportunity sites for acquisition in our respective supervisorial districts early this spring. While the majority of the sites seemed thrown together half-hazardly (one required the demolition and merger of two separate buildings, including a long-established Japanese restaurant and karaoke bar and one was the iconic Phoenix Hotel, by way of example!) there was one parcel that connects both of our districts and is well-situated to be a sizable space for a multitude of potential uses. We understand that the seller reached out to the City over a year ago to gauge the potential for an acquisition but was told the City wasn’t interested.

Now you all have the opportunity to stand up for those of us who are begging for investment and

recognition and truly follow the mandate of the Open Space Acquisition Fund, created by Charter Amendment. For all the many reasons outlined in the attached resolution, we are asking that you prioritize this neighborhood (which has been deprioritized and kicked down the road year after year) for the investment it so desperately needs – and deserves. Please move the acquisition of the 989 Post Street forward and please adopt new and more equitable open space acquisition criteria for the long-term planning of the Greater Tenderloin and Lower Nob Hill.

It is leadership like this that will ensure we can advocate in good faith for the Department's capital plan asks and budget or for the next Rec and Park bond – or even for the additional homeless resources we know that the Mayor wants to continue to concentrate in our neighborhood. As the Mayor's representative(s), we beg you: please don't turn your back on our community. We need a champion now more than ever.

Sincerely,

Cyntia Salazar
District 5 PROSAC Member & 1st Vice Chair

Terry Oxford
District 3 PROSAC Member & 2nd Vice Chair