



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

December 1, 2011

Mr. Bill Wycko
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Dear Mr. Wycko,

On November 16, 2011, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) held a public hearing and took public comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the proposed Beach Chalet Athletic Fields Renovation Project. After discussion, the HPC arrived at the comments below:

- The HPC believes the proposed project is inconsistent with the Golden Gate Park Master Plan and conflicts with the City's General Plan policies.
- The HPC agrees with the finding that the proposed project will cause a significant impact to historic resources and spatial organization of the western end of Golden Gate Park.
- The HPC disagrees with the finding in the DEIR and believes there will be a big change to the aesthetics of the park. The HPC believes that the proposed project will adversely affect daytime and nighttime views of the area.
- One Commissioner believes bringing night time lighting is the biggest impact of the proposed project and is more problematic and impactful than replacing the existing natural fields with artificial turf.
- The HPC believes the DEIR did not adequately address safety of visitors not traveling by car and that the proposed project is "elitist" given this part of the park is not accessible by public transportation, thus does not serve the needs of all the people in the City.
- The HPC believes the mitigation measures should clearly state that the park should be designed to be as naturalistic as possible and to match the semi-wild feeling that currently exists in this part of the park.
- The HPC does not believe the circulation path is adequately discussed in M-CP-1 for the plaza and playground.
- The HPC believes the changes made since the previous proposal is in the right direction but needs more information about the design of the area between the soccer fields and parking lot as well as the planting material.
- The HPC believes the best preservation alternative is a combination of parts of preservation alternative no. 2, 3, and 4 which is to improve the soccer fields at Beach

Chalet as well as to seek an off-site alternative. The proposed off site alternative holds real potential when considered in a larger context of fields in this part of the city

- Believe that greater investigation could/should have been made in drafting the DEIR to improve use, maintenance and safety of grass fields—better drainage options, turf type and maintenance methods.
- The HPC prefers to maintain the natural fields and believes switching to artificial turf is a troubling precedent.

The HPC appreciates the opportunity to participate in review of this environmental document. We believe there are reasonable compromises to successfully achieve the goals of recreation and the preservation of Golden Gate Park’s historic character.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles Edwin Chase". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Charles Edwin Chase, President
Historic Preservation Commission