

PRESIDIO TRUST PUBLIC BOARD MEETING – February 7, 2011

NOTE: The following is the best transcript available of the public Board meeting of the Presidio Trust Board of Directors held on February 7, 2011. It is based upon an audio recording of the meeting.

[Start of recorded material]

Nancy Bechtle: Good evening, everybody, and thank you so much for coming to our first public meeting of 2011. We certainly have had a beautiful weekend in the park, and I hope all of you were out there enjoying yourselves. It's actually gorgeous out there right now. Actually, it's gotten dark since I've come in here, but it was really beautiful.

I would like to start with the approval of the minutes, which have been received. Would somebody like to move approval?

Male Voice: So moved.

Female Voice: Second.

Nancy Bechtle: All those in favor, please say "aye."

All: Aye.

Nancy Bechtle: Opposed? Okay, the Board Chair's report. First of all, I want to thank Frank Dean of the National Park Service for being here, and Greg Moore. We have just a terrific partnership with the three main entities right now. There is a whole lot going on, and it is a pleasure to be working with both of you.

We have been through a long process on the Main Post. It is nearing its conclusion. And we will possibly be signing a ROD. We have decided now we're going to listen to the testimony tonight, and we will deliberate on it and probably discuss this during the next week.

The discussions have been contentious at times. There are strongly held feelings. That's kind of the good news and the bad news; people love the Presidio. They may love it in different ways, and it just – sometimes people can agree to disagree. We will consider everybody's different point of view and make a decision. We need to bring this process to a close after tonight and move forward.

Many organizations have signed onto the Programmatic Agreement, which would guide new projects and vision for the Main Post. We appreciate your signing up to help us ensure that the projects are designed with sensitivity for the historic landmark.

I am truly so pleased to see so much preservation going on, and look forward to Rob's report about what is going on in the park. Our partnership with the Visitor Center is terrific. Noreen Hughes is sitting right over there; she has been hired by the three partners – the Trust, the National Park Service and Conservancy – and she is going to give us an update later on in the program.

El Polin Springs just keeps getting more interesting. Excuse me, I'm sorry. As we re-vegetate the area with native species we are also finding more under the ground – evidence of early settlement near the spring. Eric Blind, our principal archaeologist, will fill us in. I'm sure you've seen a lot of the articles in the newspaper about things that they have found in all of these digs. They're being very careful, digging around, but they have found some very interesting things.

I am very lucky that I walk through the Presidio so often. And marvel at how beautiful and varied it is. It's no wonder so many of us love it, and that's what brings us all here tonight.

Again, welcome.

Are there any other comments from any Board members who'd like to add anything to this? We have three new Board members that are just wonderful additions to our Board.

The next item on the agenda – if I could find the agenda – is the Executive Director's report. Craig?

Craig Middleton: Thanks, Nancy. I will also say welcome to everyone. Given the weather today, you could be camping. It's just so beautiful. So thank you for being here instead.

I want to reiterate what Nancy said about the Main Post, that we're nearing the end of the compliance process on this Main Post Update, which will amend the Presidio Trust Management Plan Main Post section. And our intention in preparing this Main Post Update has been to create more public uses rather than office uses in the Main Post by encouraging uses that engage the public while reducing overall square footage, to undertake activities that would make history and archaeology come alive in the Main Post, make it evident and understandable to the public, and to preserve important historic sites and buildings. While employing 21st century green technology wherever we can. The Main Post Update is not on tonight's agenda. We're not officially in a comment period. But I expect that a number of those present in the room would like to speak about the Main Post, and I just wanted to say that we welcome your comments and thoughts tonight and they will be part of the record.

I point out that the Main Post engagement has been energetic, and has spanned about three years. And during this process, many of the elements in the original Main Post Update have changed as a result of consultation and conversation. So I'm pleased that where we're tending to head is in a place that reduces square footage from the levels that were anticipated under the Presidio Trust Management Plan, protects and preserves historic resources, makes history more legible, and welcomes people to the Presidio and provides for their overnight accommodation.

I want to acknowledge and thank those of you who have participated in particular in the consultation on the historic preservation issues. This has been a couple of years of hard work, and we really appreciate everyone who's been involved. It's been a good discussion, and it's resulted in an agreement signed by most of the parties involved in the talks that sets out certain additional steps and reviews that will occur in order to safeguard the historic integrity of the landmark if and when projects proceed.

Thanks to the agencies, the National Park Service, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the State Historic Preservation Office, and thanks to the groups – the National Trust for Historic Preservation, San Francisco Architectural Heritage, Neighborhood Association for Presidio Planning, Laurel Heights Association, Cow Hollow Association, Marina Community Association – for signing the Programmatic Agreement. And thanks to all the organizations who, while maybe not signing yet the agreement, participated and participated with a lot of integrity and a lot of energy and a lot of commitment. So we appreciate that.

There is a lot of construction and rehabilitation going on in the park, and I wanted to publicly thank all of our tenants and residents who have been the ones to bear most of the noise and inconvenience related to this construction. And Doyle Drive, work on four of the iconic Montgomery Street barracks, preparation for a spring greening of the Main Parade, remediation work on numerous sites throughout the park but most particularly in the El Polin area, and

those residents have really borne a lot of noise and discomfort. So we really do appreciate it. I promise you that this will be a temporary condition and thank you.

As you know, as a result of the partnership with the Conservancy and the National Park Service and with the generous support of the Haas, Jr. Fund and other generous donors, we have been building a terrific number and a terrific quality trails and overlooks. The park trail. The cemetery overlook. The batteries to bluffs. The ridge trail improvements. The Presidio Promenade. And we hope to soon add improvements to the coastal trail along the bluffs. We know the trails are popular. But I was surprised to learn that on just three trails during one month, trail counters counted 24,000 hikers. I think that shows that the Presidio is an important destination for recreational enthusiasts, and we add to that the 3,000-plus kids who camped out at the Rob Hill Campground this past season. So it is a popular place, as we all know.

And people are coming out in large numbers to see art along the trails. Temporary art based on the wildlife inhabitants of our park. Surveys indicate that over 7,000 people have come to the Presidio to see the habitats – the Presidio Habitats – art installations. This is a temporary exhibit that opened on May 15 and will last for about a year.

And Andy Goldsworthy's spire just seems to get more and more magnificent as the trees around it start to grow, and eventually will

obscure that spire. So thank you to the artists, and to Cheryl Haines and the FOR-SITE Foundation for bringing the art and Andy Goldsworthy to the Presidio.

Now from the sublime to the mundane. I did want to say something about the budget, and the federal budget situation and how that may affect the Presidio. I think it's probably no secret that there is a lot of uncertainty as to federal appropriations, even for the year that we're in. We have been advised, in fact, to prepare for up to 30 percent cuts this year in appropriations starting in March.

There is much evidence to suggest that cuts will be made in all discretionary spending, and while I would defer to Frank Dean to talk about how that might affect the Park Service, I can tell you that for the Trust, funding in these last two years – this is 2011, 2012 – is critical, because these last two years are the final two years of funding for the Presidio Trust. We're supposed to be financially self-sufficient at the beginning of 2013. So we're looking at that situation in Washington very carefully, and need to be very mindful of maintaining park revenues and keeping an eye on costs.

If there is any good news in the midst of this recession and in the budget cutting environment, it is that construction pricing is lower than we had anticipated. So that is one of the reasons you see so much construction going on in the Presidio. We're trying to take advantage of this advantageous pricing.

The other good news, I think, is that despite these constraints we are making progress in park-making. And trails and landscapes. Forestry. And the work that will be described tonight by our staffs is proceeding well and proceeding apace. This speaks well of our partnerships, and again thank you to Greg and Frank for being here and for all that you do. And to our staff and our volunteers. So thank you all.

I think in the interest of time I'll stop there, and see if there are any questions from the Board.

Nancy Bechtle: No questions. Any questions anybody? Are there any questions?

Craig Middleton: Should we turn to partners?

Nancy Bechtle: Yeah. Should we invite – who's going to go first? Frank?

Frank Dean: Thank you. Thank you, all. It's great to be able to join you and participate in the meetings, and share what's going on in the rest of the park. I think it's a good thing that we are able to join you, and learn from each other about some of the good things you're doing, as well as some of the challenges that we all face that are common to us all.

As I said, I was glad to be here. And I joked before we came out to join you all that I asked Craig if he was going to join me at my dog management meetings that are upcoming. He didn't take me up on

that [laughter]. But I'm going to continue to work on him, in the spirit of partnership, Craig.

The first thing that I wanted to mention tonight is the Land's End lookout, which is out by the Cliff House. This is a new Visitor Center facility that we're hoping to start construction on in May. We're very excited about this. Some of you may recall there was a Visitor Center in the old Cliff House complex. When that was rebuilt several years ago the Visitor Center went away in the new design with the promise that we would have another one someday.

Well, that day has arrived thanks to the Parks Conservancy and the Goldman Fund, who underwrote the new construction. So we've got just about all the approvals done, and we'll be building a building – if you know the old Merrie Way parking lot which is above the Louis' Restaurant area, that has been restored. This new building will be right at the edge of that parking lot, looking right out at the Pacific over Seal Rocks and the old Sutro Baths. It'll be quite a nice facility.

It's fairly modest in size; about 5,000 square feet. And it'll be accommodation, sort of like the Warming Hut. There will be a mix of information, food service and retail, which is a nice mix to draw people, both visitors and locals, to the site. The design is still evolving, but it's pretty stunning. It's sort of a glass, transparent building. As you come over the hill down Geary Boulevard you

look right through the building to the ocean. So it's going to be very nice.

Ocean Beach, just turning the corner there, we have a new planning effort underway with the City of San Francisco and SPUR – the local regional planning group. The independent group is convening that planning effort, and the attempt is to try and spruce up Ocean Beach and make that a better experience for the visitor and the resource. So given what we've been able to accomplish at Land's End, I think we have a tougher challenge ahead at Ocean Beach but I think we can do some good things down there.

Further south, Rancho Corral de Tierra, the new park acquisition, will be coming to us in March. That's next month. And it's a 4,000-acre parcel, which is just north of Half Moon Bay. And we're excited about that. That'll be the largest acquisition to the park in a number of years and it'll be a southern gateway to the park. So we have several trailheads planned there for sort of a soft opening this spring and summer.

And I mentioned the dog management plan. This is a draft plan, emphasis on draft. It's gotten quite a bit of attention in the media. That's out for a 90-day public review period right now, so we're looking for comments.

A little bit of history on this – we have a current policy which allows for dogs to be off-leash if they're under voice control, and

the preferred alternative that the Park Service has unveiled is that we would continue with that in a more limited way. So you could still take your dogs to certain areas off-leash, but the rest of the park you would have to have your dog on a leash.

The idea behind this was that there is increasing visitation to the park. We are the second most visited national park in the country. 14.5 million people last year visited the park. Yet we are also adjacent to 6 million neighbors, many of whom have dogs. There are 100,000 dogs in the City of San Francisco alone. So we have a challenge here, and we also have national policies that we have to uphold that apply to all National Park Service areas. And yet we have this dilemma.

The park has gotten so much busier over the years than when it was first open. We've seen the rise of commercial dog walking, which didn't exist when the park was established. If you've been out on a nice day recently you can see there are a lot of – it's busy. And sometimes people are feeling concerned about where they can go with their dog and where they can't. So we're trying to bring some clarity about this issue, where you can take your dog safely. And if you're not interested in being around dogs, where you can go as well to have that park experience. That's the plan. We have a series of public meetings coming up in March; there are four meetings. The goal again is a little bit of clarity to the issue and provide a variety of experiences to the public.

The other big thing is again, emphasis on draft. So the plan can evolve. It can be shaped by the comments, and there is a Web site that you can go to, the Park's Web site, and there's a link to it.

The other big issue I wanted to mention to you is coming up in the future, but it's the America's Cup sailing race. That's been approved, as you read in the papers probably, for San Francisco in 2013. There will be sort of preliminary races in 2012 in the summer in the Bay. This will be the first time this race – the 34th incarnation of the race – will have been held within an inland body of water such as San Francisco Bay. So for the first time you'll be able to see the race fairly well from the shore.

So they're expecting record numbers, maybe upwards of 250,000 at the finals. And where do you think they're going to watch that race from? Well, it's going to be from the park. Crissy Field, Marin Headlands, Fort Baker, Marina Green. We're working with the City of San Francisco to plan this, and figure out how it's all going to work and how visitors can know where to go and not disrupt some of the areas that we've protected and preserved such as Crissy Field. Some of the restored areas there are pretty sensitive habitat.

Craig mentioned the federal budget. It's still a little bit of a mystery as far as what's happening even this year; we're halfway through the budget, and we're entering what's called a continuing resolution which is kind of a way that the government sort of kicks it downfield until they pass the budget for real. So that means that

you're based on last year's funding. But there's a chance now with the change in Congress that they might actually try and intervene and make some cuts this year, halfway through the year.

So we're a little bit worried about this. We don't know what's going to happen, but we'll know next month when the continuing resolution comes up; it expires. They have to either extend it through the rest of the year or pass an actual budget. And then the following year, 2012, which begins for us fiscally in October, there is still a bit of uncertainty about that as well. But I think we're going to be okay in the Park Service world anyway. But it looks like a lot of the domestic agencies are facing significant cuts given the federal deficit and the interest in trying to trim that down.

The last thing I wanted to mention was the Presidio Visitor Center. I know Michael and Noreen are going to speak to that in depth in a moment. But we've been working with the Trust and the Parks Conservancy on a joint effort to plan the location of the new Visitor Center. Some of you may know that the Park Service by law is the lead on interpretation of the Presidio. It's actually the only thing the Park Service retained by law when the Presidio Trust Act came along. But I think it makes sense for us to work with the Trust and the Conservancy to come up with a better opportunity and a better experience. I think working together we can come up with a better solution.

The building that the Visitor Center was formerly in, Building 102, one of the barracks along Montgomery Street, was closed for seismic retrofit. We've been operating in temporary quarters at the Officers' Club right now, and that's actually closed last month for some other project work, the Heritage Center. So I think after some of the construction dies down at the Presidio Parade Ground we'd really like to figure out – as that construction is underway we're doing this planning which we'll eventually come back to you on and get your thoughts on how this option might work.

But one of the statements that I think we came up with early on and that we've all bought into is that the Presidio and the park are extraordinary places, and we believe that the Visitor Center should be equally extraordinary. And I think by working together we can do that. But we also have some hard questions and decision to make.

The Park Service has a building, a 40,000 square foot building, that we currently use and technically manage, and if we're going to give that up we have to move to someplace that will be equally dynamic and extraordinary. So I'm confident we can do that, and it's something that – it's one of the top priorities of Greg and I and Craig, and we would love to reach consensus on that. And I'm confident we will, and I think as a side of that the Trust recently has begun to engage the Park Service on their Heritage Center planning and the plans for that facility. So I think that's a good sign of our partnership going forward.

So, I look forward to working with the Trust and the Conservancy in that effort and all the challenges that we face and the opportunities that come along, because I think we've – together, I think we can do great things. So thank you all.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much, Frank. Thanks so much. Greg Moore, please, from the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy.

Greg Moore: Good evening, everybody. It's great to be here with the Presidio Trust Board and staff, with Frank and his team, and with the members of the general public who are here tonight. We're in a historic building here at the Presidio – it's usually hard not to be in one – so I looked for a reference point in history for February 7 tonight. I found one. 118 years ago on February 7 the Secretary of War authorized an appropriation for the repair of the boundary fence of the Presidio. And for the painting of the gates and picket fences at the Presidio entrances. And he allocated \$1,983.37 for that activity [laughter].

So it's interesting to think, 118 years later we're still all involved in the care of the Presidio. And its interpretation, its enhancement and its betterment as a national park site. At the Parks Conservancy we continue to be incredibly honored to work with the Trust and the Park Service, with members of the public and with friends of the park to make the Presidio the best it can be, and to continue the conversion from post to park that began 20 years ago now.

This last weekend if you went out in the Presidio you saw how much has changed in 20 years, and I think this park gave the Super Bowl a run for its money. There may have been more people in the park than in the Super Bowl Stadium. And here in the Presidio if you saw the hikers, the joggers, the history buffs, the nature buffs, the recreationalists of all kinds and backgrounds, if you just wandered a little bit of Crissy Field, you can see how much the public has embraced what these national parklands stand for.

So it's great for us to continue to be in this journey with all of you, to continue to create a great national park here at the Presidio. We're also lucky that so many of you give so generously of your time and effort. Thousands of volunteers help the Presidio out last year, and in the past few years as we've been working with the Trust and Park Service to raise funds for the Presidio we've brought in about \$25 million in contributions to help improve this national park site. Tonight I'd like to just give a few more recent highlights of what we've been up to in this partnership, and to begin by saying that with many things here at the Presidio the programs delivered and the projects completed are a collective accomplishment of the Trust, the Park Service, and the public who lend such a generous hand in the work that we do.

Many of you know the Crissy Field Center. That continues to be a very robust program sponsored by the Conservancy, the Park Service, and the Presidio Trust. Our goal is a simple one – to

engage youth in this national park, particularly young people who may have limited opportunities to visit national parks. Last year we served about 22,000 youth with a total of about 160,000 hours of programming, bringing young people to the Presidio and giving them a national park experience here throughout this national park site.

We've actively worked also with the Trust on the Project WISE Program – watersheds inspiring student education. That serves high school kids, and I want to thank the Trust for providing the transportation services that bring kids to this program here at the Presidio.

Craig mentioned camping at the Presidio, which is a relatively new program funded by the Presidio Trust and operated as a partnership with the Conservancy, the Park Service, the Trust, and Bay Area Wilderness Training. This program – who would know what it would become? But it is one of the fastest growing here at the Presidio, last year serving 3,600 camper nights and scheduled to provide about 4,400 camper nights next year. These are kids getting their first camping experience and beginning to explore nature and the broader world around them.

We're also looking forward to hosting a youth environmental summit here at the Presidio in late March with Rob Hill being a very central part of that summit.

At the Presidio Nursery once again a joint venture of the Trust with generous funding from the Trust and operated by the Conservancy, over 500 volunteers gave about 20,000 hours of time last year to about 150 different programs of the nursery. The educational programs there reached about 800 kids, 365 of them from underserved schools, and the Presidio Nursery grew 50,000 plants last year. 50,000 plants for 22 habitat restoration sites throughout the park, including 67 new plant species being grown right now to assist in the El Polin restoration work that the Trust has launched.

Volunteers continue to be so important to the Trust, the Park Service, and the Conservancy. 8,800 volunteers last year bringing 75,000 hours of time to the Presidio. In fact, if you look at the calendar for the upcoming week there are ten separate volunteer events. So if you're looking for a reason to get out in the park, we have some for you. If you want to lend a hand through volunteering.

We continue to be an active partner with the Trust and the Park Service in many projects here at the Presidio. The Presidio Trails and Overlooks program, raising money and helping with design and implementation and working actively now on the coastal corridor from the Golden Gate Bridge down to Baker Beach. We're also helping with the El Polin restoration work, the planning for the Visitor Center, and various restoration projects here in the Presidio.

And I think sometimes the Presidio has moved so quickly when you think about it in 20 years how much change has happened, how much positive change, that we sometimes forget our own collective accomplishment. This May we have a reason to remember the restoration of Crissy Field – it's the tenth anniversary of Crissy Field's restoration.

And I can remember the ramshackle shape that Crissy Field once was in, and the beautiful parkland that it is now, and how many of us enjoy it, and I want to take a moment to acknowledge two people at the front table who were instrumental to that success – Charlene Harvey, who chaired the Campaign for Crissy Field, the fundraising campaign; and Dave Grubb, who chaired our project committee at the Conservancy before joining the Presidio Trust Board, helping us achieve that community accomplishment.

So we plan to have a few anniversary celebrations. We'll invite you to once again take stock of what we can accomplish when we work together.

Ten years ago the theme for Crissy Field was Help Grow Crissy Field. Today the theme continues to be Help Grow the Presidio. We still have a wonderful national park in the making here; really an enduring resource for the American public. And I'd like to close just by thanking everyone for their dedication and commitment to this amazing landmark, and for your generous spirit and the public service you bring to this place. Thank you so much.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much, Greg. There's always so much going on around here, and I can't believe it's ten years. Since it opened? Wow. Okay. Now we have some project updates. The Visitor Center update – Noreen Hughes is with us. It's just a pleasure to have you, Noreen, with the three groups. Noreen.

Noreen Hughes: Thank you so much for allowing me to take the opportunity to share with you the progress that we've made in the last three months. As you've heard, the three agencies are working together and we have engaged somewhere between ten and 25 people from all three agencies in the planning for this facility. I actually have some images to show you, so I don't know if you want to turn around to see some of them or not.

I'm going to try to make this somewhat brief, but I wanted to share with you some of the ideas and aspirations for the Visitor Center that have emerged from our planning process. One important one is that we want this Visitor Center to reflect the unique characteristics of the Presidio itself. It became a national park in part because it has a treasure of nationally significant historic and natural resources.

So one of our primary goals is to get people out to experience these assets in the environment, rather than keeping them in the Visitor Center. There is an incredible array, as you've heard, of destinations where you can experience the historic sites, the centers

for engagement, the trails and the overlooks, and the Visitor Center should reflect this.

The other unique feature about the Presidio is that for 200 years it's had a history of housing communities here, from military housing now to national park residents, and it's always been an incredible asset to the local community. So again, the spirit of that should be infused in the Visitor Center.

I put some of these quotes up here because we've met on several occasions with community groups informally – the NAPP group and people from the Parks and Presidio – and we've shared with them some of these early ideas about the Visitor Center. But we also asked the people that were there to talk about memorable experiences that they've had as visitors. So I'll just point out two things that have come to light.

One, we know we're going to have a diverse group of visitors, and we need to provide for people that on the one hand may want to get lost and discover things on their own and on the other end of the continuum people who very much appreciate orientation and often docent-led tours. The second thing is that authenticity is a theme that has emerged time and time again. Many of the people who spoke of memorable experiences talked about coming upon something that was the real thing – often an unmediated experience – and there is just no lack of authentic destinations at the Presidio and we should take advantage of that.

There has been a lot of general support for the idea of the Visitor Center being like a general store and having that warmth, and a place that encourages repeat visitation. So we envision an environment that reflects the spirit of the Presidio and one that provides an introductory experience for visitors who may be there for the first time, but also provides grab-and-go food service, interpretive retail, a space for community gathering and other visitor-serving amenities.

So for visitors who may only go the Presidio Visitor Center and not go into the Presidio, we want them to get a sense of the importance of this place and its history, and also its significance as a national park and as a gateway to the Golden Gate National Park Recreation Area.

The Visitor Center should reflect park values, and ideally engage visitors so that they become future stewards of the park. We've heard a lot about the interest in personalized service and contact with staff. I think everyone knows that it always makes for a great experience if you're talking to a staff person that's knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the place. So to that extent we're hopeful that staff can really work with visitors to help them craft a person itinerary, if you will, that reflects their interests and allows them to create their own experience with the Presidio.

It's also become very important as we think about it, to promote connections among the many people who live and work and go to school at the Presidio every day. I personally was stunned by the numbers – like 7,000 to 8,000 people. So to the extent that we can promote other tenant organizations and support their successful operation by highlighting their organizations as destinations, and to the extent we could make the Presidio Visitor Center a place that locals want to go to on a regular basis, I think we'll be very successful.

It's envisioned to be a one-stop orientation. Basically, a place where you can go, become inspired, get information, get the tools to explore the park – whether it's maps or watercolors or binoculars – you know, if you've come in for one thing and you've come in because you like military history, we want to just show you the whole array of things there are to do here and encourage you to come back.

So in a nutshell the concept for the Visitor Center is to be inspired to shop, grab and go. Given the Presidio's uniqueness as a national park, its resource for the local community, and its being a community in its own right, what we're hopeful for is that we can encourage a very diverse audience of people that will become part of this community and make the Presidio a part of their everyday lives.

So the general message is “Welcome.” We want to welcome you to the Presidio; it’s here for you. And I was going to just give you a little bit of a sense of where we’re going next. We’ll be rolling out for community engagement some public workshops in the next few months, where we can give people the opportunity to have a more in-depth dialogue and be part of the development process. We’ll be continuing to develop the concept and within a couple of months I think we’ll start to dive in to where exactly this Visitor Center should be located. And then by the end of this phase we will have a business plan that outlines the staffing requirements, the funding sources, the operations, so that by early summer we should be finished with this phase and know what this project is, where it’s going to be, how we’re going to fund it, and how we’re going to run it.

So let’s see. That is it for my presentation.

Nancy Bechtle: Great. Let’s see if there are going to be some questions for you. Are there any questions from the Board for Noreen?

John Reynolds: I’d like to make one comment, if I may. Not so much a question, Noreen, but I had several discussions through the day with different people about this project with the Park Service and the Conservancy, and here at the Trust. And in one of those discussions it suddenly dawned on me that the concept – the idea of a national park Visitor Center – actually is about a 60-year-old term. It came about in the 1950s, and before that museums were the

structural contact or place where people came to a national park before they experienced the national park or during their experience.

So we changed the museums, which have been about 60 years in existence, to Visitor Centers, which have been about 60 years in existence. And the discussion was sort of a little bit about right here we have the opportunity, and you're taking the opportunity, to rethink in a modern era what a visitor center is. And it's easy to think that it might only apply to an urban place like this, but I think that's not true. It applies to national parks everywhere.

So I hope that you involve – as you go through this, all three of the groups go through it and the public – that they think about how is it we try to connect a park to its people in the next 50 years. Because whatever happens will probably last about 50 years whether it should or not. So I don't think we need to be stuck in last year's, last half-century's, definition of a Visitor Center, and I hope you stretch that for us.

Noreen Hughes: That's great. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Are there any questions from the public? Amy?

Amy Meyer: Noreen has come as she said to People for the Parks and Presidio, and helped by Michael Boland and Howard Levitt and Doug Overman from the Trust Conservancy has gradually brought out

ideas from people and presented ideas to us of what she is trying to do and what we want to see.

And I found, John, your comment very helpful just now. What you said. Because even ten years ago the tools we had, for example, with the Internet didn't exist the way we exist today. And if you look toward 50 years, you'd say, "Oh, boy." We're really going to have to [unintelligible].

My basic question was this: In talking about the Visitor Center we've been talking about its contents. My feeling has always been that form followed function. In other words, the site that would be chosen and the size of the building that would be needed would have to come about once we had a sense of what it was that we were going to do in it, and what we were going to leave to the Heritage Center or leave out in the field.

I don't know quite who to ask this of, Nancy, so I'm asking you and Craig – well, I'll start with the two of you. Because especially some of the concerns that developed during the development of the PA and the MPU, are we going to have an opportunity to review some alternatives to the site of the Visitor Center in the environmental assessment process?

Craig Middleton: I'll take a stab at it. But first, about the next 50 years – I think it's telepathy. I think that's what the next thing is.

Nancy Bechtle: Sounds less expensive.

Craig Middleton: But your guess is as good as mine. Our plan is to have public comment or public discussion – dialogue and discussion – about alternatives in terms of site as well as program. I don't know whether it becomes a formal environmental assessment process or what the actual NEPA process is, but the key point for us is that there be public involvement in the Visitor Center discussion.

Amy Meyer: Well, because the MPU does not contain a site for the Visitor Center because it's still coming along, and because that will be affected and affect other things in the vicinity, I would like to say that I think it's really important that there be an environmental assessment on the site and that some of this be put in a formal process so that people can really look.

I mean at this point the two sites that I've heard – the old Goldman Fund Building which is the former Burger King, and the bowling alley site – these have been two that have come up, and there may be others. But we have no idea yet the size or space. I think it's really important that the discussion of alternatives have a form around it, and that form is usually the environmental assessment process.

Nancy Bechtle: I think – Noreen, didn't you talk about community engagement? What is the process, and how close are you?

Noreen Hughes: We haven't planned an exact date, nor have we specified one of the workshops to be about the actual location of the Visitor Center. We have been in the process of developing criteria, and it's actually really important criteria because this has to be so fine-tuned to be successful. So we're trying to create a process that has enough logic to it that it's not just a matter of personal opinion, but that it's sort of bulletproof and that we've really outlined the criteria.

We've evaluated all these buildings. We've sized it accurately, and one of the criteria for instance is high visibility. In order to really be successful, it's got to be somewhere that people can identify it as a Visitor Center. So we can have 12 different sites on the table but not all of them are going to fit that. We want it to be near public transportation. So we'll have a meeting at some point.

You had spoken to me about this the first time we met, that you wanted a process. You wanted transparency. And I think we'll be able to offer you that, but I don't know in what form. I've only been here three months and I haven't been through any of these processes.

Amy Meyer: Well, I'm not expecting 12 sites to be under consideration. But there might very well be more than one that would be good, and one might be better than another. And that's what the environmental assessment process is for. So there is transparency. So that's what I wanted to tell you about.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you, Amy, very much. Okay. Thank you very much, Noreen. Obviously to be continued. It'll be a longer process.

The El Polin Spring update. Eric Blind, please.

Eric Blind: Hello. I'll just try to give you a brief update about our work out at El Polin, especially those things that happened this fall and will be upcoming. Again I will show some slides. You may want to turn and view the screen, and I'll try to address it both to the members of the Board and the public.

That's just who I am [laughs]. So there are a couple of stories that got picked up by the news especially this fall. I just wanted to highlight a couple of the many stories. One was of this underground tunnel that connected Mountain Lake to the growing City of San Francisco during the Gold Rush. These grand ambitions kind of foundered before this could become a successful project, and it kind of fell into folklore. But recently during some of the remediation work on the southern side of El Polin Springs we uncovered evidence that in fact this tunnel was constructed between this area at least and Mountain Lake, if not between the Presidio and the growing City of San Francisco. The story I'd like to focus on this evening is the one on the right that's covered by the Chronicle and others about the area of El Polin Springs and some of the light it's shedding on this early colonial period here at the Presidio.

Just to kind of set us in the mood and give a little bit of a visual reference, especially for the public, this is the Presidio as it existed in 1816. This was painted on a fall day. As you can see, it was a fortified square, and essentially a much different Presidio before the forest, covered in dune scrub. On the right-hand side of the picture is where the Golden Gate Bridge would be today.

Just as it is today, a short walk from the Main Post – at this colonial period a short walk down the hill towards the east – would bring you to the area that we call Tennessee Hollow, but an area where much of the fresh water in the Presidio flows.

Here is a map in 1820, drawn by the recollections of the last Mexican general, Mariano Vallejo. And you'll see in the upper left-hand corner he illustrates a path that leads from the Presidio, and this is actually where we get the name "El Polin" from. You can see he's got it labeled on the upper right, what's called an ojo de agua, a freshwater spring. And near that spring are the casas de Marcos Briones y Miramontes, two adobe dwellings down there.

Now to fast-forward a couple hundred years [laughs]. You may remember about seven years ago we partnered with Stanford University, and we uncovered evidence of those very adobe residences that General Mariano Vallejo remembered back in the early colonial period, or the late colonial period. And one of the things we recognize are not only are there these archaeological resources right there at the surface, but as we opened up the

excavation so that it became a public venue for people to come and engage with the park and understand a little bit about some of those buried colonial-era and Mexican-era history, but also allow the kids to understand how archaeologists go about researching that there are elements of that buried history.

This became kind of a new and fundamental aspect of our aspirations for El Polin. How do we involve this aspect of the Presidio story into the ones that we already contemplate for El Polin, especially those around natural ecology and restoration of that freshwater spring and the riparian corridor?

So we've been working with this design to try to – this is a more recent iteration of this – trying to figure out what El Polin Spring will look like in the future. I have two kind of key aspects that we wanted to see, that need to be accomplished in the design is the daylighting of the spring where it currently goes into a storm water sewer; we want to bring that up to the surface for the ecological benefits, of course. And then on the northern end of MacArthur Avenue a way for vehicles to turn around and school buses to turn around so you can eliminate the vehicular traffic from the loop.

These are the two areas for impact in the design, so these are the areas that just this past spring we went out and did some archaeological excavation so we could inform that design and figure out what may be hit depending on how much excavation is done to accomplish those two objectives.

Luckily for us, Google Earth decided to update their imagery right while we were out there, so we have these nice aerial photos of the area. And I just want to talk about the one on the top left is the area vaguely around the school bus turnaround – the vehicular turnaround. On the right, that is currently where the freshwater spring goes down into the storm inlet underneath the road.

So these are the areas of impact. In the area where the storm water drops in currently, and where we're looking to daylight it, this is where we found, about a foot beneath the surface, evidence of what the colonial families out here were doing in this very area, trying to capture that fresh water from the spring. While our immediate purposes were just to figure out what may or may not be impacted to this project, this is now starting to factor into the design of the area.

This is essentially – here's another view of it – a feature in which the colonists were bringing the fresh water into this feature. It could have been used to wash clothes or in other ideas it could have been used as kind of an early refrigeration to keep some of the elements like eggs and milk and cheese cold from the cool spring waters.

On the – sorry, before I go on - interestingly enough, this colonial feature was made of these recycled bricks. Some of them broken roof tiles; some of them broken floor tiles, which shows that there

were a lot in the area. Which kind of brings us to the other site on the top left there, where the turnaround is destined to go.

This is an area where it looks like – just another foot or two beneath the surface we had found what looks to be the remnants of a kiln where they would have been firing some of these ceramics. The picture on your right, you may be able to make out some of the brick masonry that's still kind of preserved on the ground – that's on the upper level. Then about five feet beneath the surface is kind of a standing level around what seems to be a kiln.

Again, we were leaving the area preserved for now to come back and try to do some research in the future. But these are, Noreen was mentioning earlier, these are the authentic remnants of this early colonial period at El Polin at least.

For us, I think this kind of sets the stage for a greater ambition out here at El Polin. We're beginning to think about this more and more as kind of the premier site to do outdoor education at the Presidio. There are so many connection points out here, whether that be the ecological richness of the Presidio, whether that be this colonial history – even the Gold Rush ambitions of a water system. They all kind of converge down here in this El Polin area.

So as we continue to use this site, you could imagine the time in the future where as visitors come out to the area you could interact with an archaeologist trying to understand that history through

excavation and continue to expand the program that we've begun to develop in that area to bring schools out to the site to help them understand these aspects of the Presidio's history and how they impact California history, and work with our partners. The picture on the upper left is a program we run with the YMCA and summer camps on experimental archaeology where the kids actually make their own ceramics. This was before we knew there was a kiln out there; now it's even more appropriate. So, this is now adding in this other element to the El Polin ambitions. That's essentially the update.

Nancy Bechtle: It's so interesting, you think about the different layers of history that are right here that you would never have imagined. In one of the early pictures you showed it looked like there was a lake near El Polin. Is that true?

Eric Blind: There was a spring. We think they were working with the environment in such a way that they could create reservoirs to capture that water and have a freshwater source that would have enough volume in it to supply the fortification.

Nancy Bechtle: What detective work [laughter]. Are there any questions from the Board? Any questions from anybody else? Thank you so much. Really interesting.

Our next report is the annual preservation report from Rob Thompson.

Craig Middleton: Before Rob starts, I wanted to – I see Robert Sindelar out there – I just wanted to thank you for doing these camps because they really are bringing kids here in large numbers. As you've told us before, they're kids from all over the City and all over the Bay Area. It's really great. Thank you.

Rob Thompson: Good evening everyone. Members of the Board. My name is Rob Thompson. I'm the Deputy Federal Preservation Officer here at the Trust. And I've been asked to give an overview of the historic preservation activities during the last calendar year of 2010.

The first thing I wanted to point out before I go into a summary of what was really an enormously productive year is that preservation here at the Presidio is truly a team effort. It draws on the expertise and resources of many of the departments here at the agency. It counts on community input. It counts on support and suggestions from our partner preservation agencies at the National Park Service and Office of Historic Preservation, so it really is a robust program that draws on a lot of really tremendous resources and we're grateful for that.

Just a quick background. I'm only going to be able to touch on a few highlights from last year because of time constraints. But a quick overview of the architectural heritage and historic resources we have here at the Presidio that we are tasked with working on.

This is, as many of you know, among the greatest collections of military architecture in the entire country. It's a National Historic Landmark with over 460 contributing resources. And this represents a huge variety of building types and styles, in addition to other resources such as archaeological sites, historic roads, historic trees, historic forests – it kind of goes on. But it's a wonderful, wonderful collection of resources here and makes for a very dynamic and exciting place to work.

Our preservation activities can generally be summarized in four categories: preservation planning, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse, maintenance and stewardship, and education. And I'll touch on some highlights in each of those categories as I go on.

Craig gave a really good summary of the Main Post Update, which was one of our major planning efforts for the calendar year, so I don't have a lot more to say about that other than we really look forward to engaging interested parties and our partner agencies as we start to implement these projects and that we've already begun on a couple of the pre-planning documentation efforts that will guide our work as we go on.

In the area of rehabilitation and adaptive reuse, which is kind of the core of our preservation program, in 2010 we initiated 16 preservation building projects, and we completed 25 over the course of the calendar year. And this adds to a total number of more than

300 historic buildings that have been rehabilitated at the Presidio since the Army's departure.

I'm only going to highlight a few of these. Among them, Buildings 101 and 103, the latter of which is pictured here. But truly the crowning achievement of the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse for 2010 was the Public Health Service District, the rebirth of that district. This is a district where the buildings primarily date from the 1930s, and the centerpiece is Building 1801, the main hospital building. It was constructed in 1932 and then expanded with these wings you see on the right side of the image in 1952.

As I think most people know, the decision was made through consultation to remove the 1952 wings so that the original 1932 facade could be revealed and restored. This was also a federal historic preservation tax credit project, which meant it was subject to the highest levels of scrutiny and standards. And I think the results truly speak for themselves. This is just a world-class adaptive reuse project and is really now the centerpiece of this revived district.

Just on the other side of this same district are the Wyman Avenue homes, built primarily in 1932 as well, but also there are some earlier buildings here. Seven single-family and duplex officers' family housing, which until recently was the last unrehabilitated residential neighborhood in the Presidio. So the rehab of both the buildings and the landscape was truly a milestone in the Presidio's

efforts to preserve our historic buildings. And as I understand it, almost all of these buildings are now leased and the neighborhood is just gorgeous.

Another rehabilitation and adaptive reuse highlight from 2010 was Building 926. It was constructed in 1921 as one of two hangars in the West Crissy Airfield District. It's now home to an indoor trampoline gym, of all things, known as The House of Air. Really a tremendous project here. They did a particularly nice job, I think, with the interior, which is now filled with – in addition to lots of bouncing children and exhausted adults – a really nice interpretive display at the front of the building here, that details the aviation history of the district.

Another key aspect of our preservation program here is maintenance and stewardship. This is less like the showstopper projects like 1801. It is the painting. The cyclic maintenance. The roof repairs. The foundation repairs. All the really important pieces of the puzzle that keep our buildings healthy and keep the occupied buildings going in perpetuity. A lot of work was done in the Public Health Service District last year, but the real focus of the effort and the most impressive piece of the work was at Fort Scott, where we concluded a multi-year effort to maintain and stabilize all of the historic buildings in this district, including roof repairs, concrete spall repairs and new painting. For anybody who hasn't been up there recently, please do visit. The buildings are just looking better than they have in decades and are really in great

shape to sit and wait out the decision-making process that will lead to their eventual reuse.

Then finally in our education efforts, through partnerships and collaborations the Trust was able to bring over 100 preservation professionals to the Presidio last year from all over the country. And we focused on a variety of topics. And in many cases were able to spotlight Presidio projects as examples of best practice in historic preservation practice. It's always a really exciting element of our work to bring people here to learn about the field.

Our work was recognized – or Presidio projects I should say – were recognized with two California Preservation Foundation preservation design awards in 2010. The first was for the Fort Scott cultural landscape assessment, a documentation effort; the other was for the Walt Disney Family Museum, which is shown here in Building 104.

This was, as you may know, one of the first Montgomery Street barracks buildings to be revitalized on the street. We've now got three more – four more I should say – under construction, so we're looking forward to this really important, iconic landscape coming back together based on the work we did last year. Thanks very much. That's my report.

Nancy Bechtle: Great. Thank you, Rob. Questions from the Board? Great project. Questions from the public? Okay. Thank you very much.

Rob Thompson: Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: There's sure a lot going on [applause].

So I think we will just go right into public comment now. The first person – oh, just a moment. Okay. The first – we do a former Board member first. Amy Meyer.

Amy Meyer: I came to speak tonight about the Wherry housing. The Wherry housing was promised, back when I was on this Board, was going to be taken down in a series of takedowns in 2010 one-third; 2020 the next third; and finally in 2030. We've learned that this isn't easy to plan. We need to focus on how we can do something about it.

I've been encouraged by comments in recent times, among others from Michael Boland that he's taking a look at the overview. And I've been encouraged by a group of people, several of whom are ill tonight. Apparently they have the flu and so are not here, which is quite frustrating. But the idea is let's get some of the Wherry housing down.

Having worked collaboratively to find out where we could get the most improvement of habitat and the best use of, reuse of the land, then make the selection in a way – it's not going to be one-third. But a segment of this housing could come down, because it could

make an enormous difference. I know one other person is going to speak, and so I'll let her talk about the nature of the difference. What I want to talk about is the approach. And the approach would be please to plan a place where this housing will be replaced. Because it's supposed to be part of the total amount of housing that's on the Presidio. One of the ideas that's been suggested has been the area behind the pilots' housing near the bridge, which is rather schlocky and which could improve considerably.

To plan it, to build it, and only then to close the housing. That it will be replaced and taken down so that hopefully there will not be a month's rent lost. And so I want to approach the Wherry in the spirit of increasing habitat and replacing it in an orderly way that is best financially for the Trust. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much, Amy. I forgot to mention that everybody who wants to speak has three minutes. There will be a sign over here – two minutes. Pardon me [laughter]. Sorry about that. You'd probably like to have three. But it's two. You'll get a warning at one minute and 30 seconds. Thank you.

Next we do a City official. Commissioner Charles Chase, from the San Francisco Historic Preservation Committee.

Charles Chase: Good evening. My name is Charles Chase. Currently I am the president of the Historic Preservation Commission for the City of San Francisco. Being that you have preservation in the report given

today I wanted to give you a few comments from the perspective of historic preservation in the area and how excellent the Presidio is accomplishing its responsibilities in historic preservation.

I also want to speak personally about the participation that I had as a peer reviewer for the Public Health Service Hospital activities that the Trust went through to see that building go through not only its public process but the design process, and working with the community in a very positive way to resolve the issues that came about as seeing an underutilized portion of the Presidio come back to active is obviously an increase in the number of people and activity. And I believe that the Trust needs to pat itself on the back for having done that incredibly positive job in working with the public in that arena.

And then finally I'd just like to say that as you work towards the development of the park, especially the Main Parade Ground, that the active use of this park for not only its tenants, its excellent staff, and the visitors alike, should balance the resources, preserve its excellent history as well as provide an opportunity to gain the services necessary for everyone to enjoy the park. Thank you very much for the opportunity.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much, Commissioner. We have another commissioner, Andrew Wolfram. San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission.

Andrew Wolfram: Hello. I'm Andrew Wolfram with the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission. I'm also the leader of Perkins and Wills preservation and reuse discipline. And in my professional capacity I've been working with the Presidio, or we've been working with the Presidio, since 1999 as Perkins and Will; before that we were SMWM.

We are very proud to have been the authors of that award-winning project that you just saw, the Fort Scott Cultural Landscape Assessment. We're currently working on the archaeology center on the Main Post, and we are especially proud of having been the architects for the rehabilitation of the Public Health Service Hospital.

I would like to especially commend the work for that project. Many people said that that could not be done, that the hospital was too derelict, that it was too far gone, that the project was too expensive. And you had the foresight to really push that forward, and it is an extraordinary neighborhood. It is a sustainable neighborhood. It's one of the greenest developments in any city in the country because of the extraordinary project they have completed.

One thing I've been struck by in 12 years of working with the Presidio Trust is your extraordinary staff that you have here. The incredible professionals among your staff. You've got amazing planners, preservation architects, historic architects, conservators – and they have a very high level of professionalism.

The other thing that really sets them apart is that these are the people that see things built. You've got some people – the project manager on City Hall working for you here. You've got people who have many decades of experience with the National Park Service. You have an extraordinary staff that takes their work very seriously, so I'd like to commend you for that as well. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. Rita Semel, from the Presidio Interfaith Chapel.

Rita Semel: I'm Rita Semel, and I'm chair of the board of the Interfaith Center at the Presidio. And I just wanted to say a couple of things about the Interfaith Center. But before I do, I want to say that we are delighted to be a signer of the Programmatic Agreement, and a concurring partner. And it is a great pleasure to do that.

But I want to talk for a moment about the Interfaith Center, because as I've been watching the events going on in Cairo these past two weeks, as I guess all of us have, it occurred to me that the Presidio, once an Army base, is now this incredible place that we've all talked about, and we've seen the wonderful pictures of changing an Army base into a place with an Interfaith Center among other things – lots of other things for all the citizens to enjoy.

And I am not sure that that has ever happened any place else in the world other than the United States, and I'm not sure that we really

appreciate what this place is. We have a lot of visitors at the Interfaith Center sent to us by the State Department from all over the world, and they're always astounded when you tell them that this is a place that was an Army chapel, and the Army chapel welcomed people of every faith or no faith. And that we continue that tradition. That's something else that I think we can be very proud of.

So I thank you for the opportunity to serve the Interfaith Center, and for the cooperation we've received from the Presidio Trust. Thanks so much.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. Thank you for what you do with the Interfaith Center. Ezra Cattan.

Ezra Cattan: Good evening, everyone. My name is Ezra Cattan, and I moved to San Francisco about ten years ago from the East Coast after graduating urban planning school. And at first my relationship to the Presidio has been of recreation and entertainment, and after ten years in the City as a professional urban planner – I've never worked directly in the Presidio, but it's always called to build a context for transportation work and urban forestry work – the historic preservation work that I've done with my clients.

I'm new to Presidio and its politics, and I know that there are a lot of passions and debate over it. One of the things that occurred to me and that I wanted to just impart to everybody, in my innocence,

being green to the politics, is that the Presidio was built to be impenetrable. And I understand that a lot of the debates that are going on – there are strong convictions and I think that’s exciting, and it’s necessary, and I think it’s great that the Presidio Trust is facilitating those conversations. With that said, it having been built as a place that’s impenetrable, I don’t think it needs to be that way anymore. And I hope that the advocates on either side, whatever people are advocating for, don’t approach their advocacy with an impenetrable mindset. And that we can just be a community together, and build a great park and a great experience moving forward. Thank you, everybody.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much, Ezra. If I mispronounce people’s names, please forgive me. Anthony Veerkamp.

Anthony Veerkamp: Thank you. Good evening. I’m Anthony Veerkamp, and I’m Director of Program for the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the Western Office. It’s also the first time that I’m getting to wear reading glasses [laughter]. It’s all downhill from here.

I speak tonight on behalf of the National Trust and also San Francisco Architectural Heritage, whose staff was unable to be here tonight. Both the National Trust and San Francisco Heritage recently signed the Presidio Trust programmatic post update, Programmatic Agreement between parties.

Our decision to sign the PA was not taken lightly. Back in 2007 we were alarmed and dismayed by the proposal for a contemporary art museum, along with other developments in the very heart of the Presidio. We believed then, and we still believe, that had those projects been implemented the historic integrity of the National Historic Landmark District would have been severely compromised. Fortunately, after more than three years of consultation and with significant input from a range of interested groups the Presidio Trust has developed a plan that both our organizations believe represents an acceptable balance of the Presidio Trust's historic resource stewardship responsibilities and other management roles.

Noteworthy accomplishments of the consultation process include removal of the incompatible contemporary art museum from the undertaking, the improved massing reduction of size of the lodge, the elimination of the proposal to subdivide the Presidio Theater and the development of an updated cultural landscape report to guide future planning decisions.

San Francisco Heritage and the National Trust would like to note that in our experience it is rare for a federal agency to conduct as thorough a consultation process as the Presidio Trust has done in this case. That is not to say that our work is done. We will continue to be actively engaged in the design development of the proposed lodge to minimize its impact. In addition, we will continue to advocate for the retention of Buildings 40 and 41.

We look forward to working with Presidio Trust staff and Board and partners to identify a solution that not only retains this important layer of [unintelligible] history but enables the archaeological resources that lie beneath to be interpreted and revealed. Thanks very much.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. Gary Widman.

Gary Widman: Thank you. Gary Widman, president of Presidio Historical Association. I'll say a couple of things, and we'll disagree, but please understand that my thoughts are offered with the idea of trying to do you a favor, and trying to help your final decision.

I'm glad that you said that you would put off your decision for a week. And I urge you particularly those who have the management experience and ability to scrutinize things to look this over very carefully before you undertake to sign it. As we used to say in Washington, everybody is entitled to their opinion, but you're not entitled to your own facts. And you're not entitled to your own law.

Your responsibility is to be a trust for the public to take the property – the most important property that was given to you – to hold it in trust and to prevent development on it. I mean read Section 101.5 before you sign this.

You are supposed to protect that, and you're supposed to, in other sections of the Presidio Trust Act, support the historic resources and the Golden Gate Recreation Area purposes. The SEIS and the MPU that we have seen does not do that. Those are facts that you have to deal with.

On top of that, there are other duties that are being neglected here. The National Historic Preservation Act requires you to do the maximum, to the maximum extent possible, to avoid damage to the National Historic Landmark District. That's not a procedural requirement; that's a substantive requirement. And it appears to be ignored, if you are going to build a 14-building hotel in the Main Post area.

So there are other problems. The Environment Impact Statement has many problems, some of which were written in letters to the Trust. Some of those letters have never been answered. One of the issues is the very point that Amy brought up, that it's not difficult to – the EIS was supposed to consider alternative uses for the hotel site, including the Visitor Center, when you knew that a Visitor Center was in the offing.

Thank you. I gather my time is up. I'd be happy to meet with any of you during the next week if you so desire.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much, Gary. Doug Kern.

Doug Kern: Good evening, everyone. I'm Doug Kern, a 17-year volunteer here at the Presidio cleanup program, and I'd like to talk to you a little bit about that program tonight. Let me say how grateful I am for all the work that the Trust has done over the years and continues to do in the cleanup program. For the amazing amount of money that we're spending and effort that we're putting into this project.

I want to note that we're moving at great speed as well, on both of the projects right now. So with that, our communication I think is going down, and there could be some improvements in the results of the final projects. I want to note at Fill Site 1, Landfill 2 – these are sites immediately behind El Polin Spring that was mentioned earlier in your presentation – we spent millions of dollars there and removed a huge amount of contamination. It's wonderful.

Awesome accomplishment. We've left the site highly armored, so we have terraces and other unnatural features that I really want to encourage the Trust to eventually restore the land consistent with a national park.

At Landfill E, work has begun and we've removed a lot of trees that were actually planted in [wakes] for decades. Those trees were shredded, and spread around the Presidio, possibly spreading contamination, so we really want to encourage you to investigate that and perhaps talk to us a little more before you go so quickly. Also at Landfill E, the Pop Hicks ball field, we found out through East Bay MUD that perhaps you were going to bring in 1,500

truckloads of waste soil. We didn't find that out from the remediation program, so you might want to check in on that issue.

My time is up. One last thing on Mountain Lake. Congratulations on your settlement agreement with Zurich, and I don't know all the details but I really want to encourage you to do great work with that at Mountain Lake and do a complete, full cleanup. Thanks very much.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. Linda Crawford.

Linda Crawford: Good evening. I'm Linda Crawford with the Interfaith Center at the Presidio, and you can see why I work with them. Having just met Rita tonight, she's quite the inspiration. Our chapel of course is just right up the hill.

I'm the campaign and project director for the chapel rehabilitation project, and I've also been an active member of the Section 106 process as a consulting party. And it has been quite an educational journey for me. When we talk about buildings and the issues around those, I'm very pleased to have been able to work with the Trust and some of the other agencies, and I really want to acknowledge Rob Thompson and Chandler McCoy, who have been absolutely fantastic – walking us through the process over the past two years about the project and how it can and cannot be done. So we are really looking forward to the record decision so we can get back to fundraising.

But the issue around – not the issue, but the great outdoors of this park, in addition to its wonderful 800 and some buildings – I’d just like to read just a real quick portion of a letter from a friend of mine who is on the Board of Trustees of the Cathedral School for Boys.

“I wanted to let you know that my husband and I spent a wonderful afternoon visiting all the exhibits and the Presidio Habitats last November on Thanksgiving. It was a gorgeous day, balmy and sunny, and we enjoyed ourselves thoroughly. We loved the colored map which showed us the many choices that they had.”

She then goes on to talk about how wonderful the signage is, and the trails, and how well they’re marked, and talks about her favorite exhibits there. And she’s looking forward to bringing more friends back before it closes down in May. She says “Best regards, Charlotte [Unintelligible].” Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. By the way, if you haven’t seen Presidio Habitats, it’s very interesting. Mark A. Sherman, please.

Mark A. Sherman: Hi. My name is Mark Sherman, and I’m here tonight representing the Cow Hollow Association. I also serve as a delegate to [unintelligible] from the Cow Hollow Association. Tonight’s comments are made on behalf of the Cow Hollow Association. We have three main points we’d like to discuss. The first is the hotel

complex, the second is the history museum in the Montgomery Street barracks, and the last is Buildings 40 and 41.

The Cow Hollow Association has already gone on record with the Trust in opposition to the hotel complex of new construction in the National Historic Landmark District, Main Post. And we reiterate that opposition here tonight. The Trust itself has called the Presidio the most important historic landmark district in the nation. It deserves to be preserved as a historic district and not developed as commercial property with the hotel and restaurant uses of no historical integrity.

Our second point relates to the history museum. The Cow Hollow Association would like at least two of the Montgomery Street barracks buildings to be dedicated for use by the general public. The Disney Museum and the Center for the Prevention of Violence cannot be counted as general public use because at least in the case of the Disney Museum, it has admissions fees of \$12 and \$20. And in both cases the use is not consistent, and unrelated to the history of the Presidio itself.

Interpretation is what the National Park Service does with historic resources. Where better to interpret history than in the heart of the Historic Landmark District, and the signature historic buildings in the Montgomery Street barracks? The National Park Service has a rich trove of historical military items that it could use for a museum. One barracks could be dedicated to military history, with a

recreated barracks showing how the buildings were originally used by the military. An adjacent barracks building could be dedicated to the cultural history of the Presidio.

Our last area tonight concerns Buildings 40 and 41. Both of these located on El Presidio play an important part in what the Presidio is all about. Because it was here in this small part of the Presidio that all chapters of the Presidio's history are represented. All in the same spot. The archaeological work on the site of El Presidio is unearthing Spanish, Mexican and U.S. Army artifacts. It was here that the Spaniards erected El Presidio garrison in 1776. And it was here that the U.S. Army built the Officers' Club in 1846. And these were the military barracks in the Second World War.

I think my time is up, but it's the duty of the Trust to preserve and protect these buildings and their important location, while at the same time displaying the surrounding features of the Spanish Colonial period, El Presidio. Thank you very much. Thank you for your services.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. Paul Wermer.

Paul Wermer: Good evening. My name is Paul Wermer. As I was listening here tonight, I heard a number of phrases that resonate. Experience the historic sites. Different layers of history. And adaptive reuse. And these sort of weave together to bring some thoughts to my mind about programming and sequences of activities in the Main Post.

Buildings 40 and 41 play into that. There is a verticality of history. There's a vertical dimension in the Presidio. And Buildings 40 and 41, located on top of original Presidio walls, illustrate that marvelously. And that's a wonderful teaching tool, and I encourage you to consider that opportunity when you evaluate the restoration of those buildings. Experience the historic site plays into the adaptive reuse. You can experience the exterior of the buildings very well. And it is a wonderful educational, especially with respect your strong green and environmental components, to use that to show adaptive reuse, both in buildings – or as they showed in El Polin Springs – building materials to capture water. Another version of adaptive reuse, and very informative.

But in experiencing history, it helps to see the original space and its use. And that's an incredible teaching tool. It went from relatively rustic, essentially camping out, conditions for the soldiers, to the Montgomery Street barracks, to the World War II barracks. Those evolved, and the living conditions evolved. And those talk to an understanding of health, of what makes people work, of changing social conditions.

Before you make decisions on all of the historic buildings and their interior use, consider where you can use the original restoration – restoration to original conditions – as part of this teaching tool to the public. It reaches children – and I remember my childhood far better than photos and text. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. I'm going to read a few names in a row. First, Carol Brownson. Then Charlotte Hennessy. Then Jan Blum. Carol.

Okay. Carol is not here. Charlotte Hennessy. Are you Charlotte?

Charlotte Hennessy: I'm Charlotte. Yes. I know it's already been recorded why I'm so interested in preserving the Presidio, so I'm going to skip that. I'm also going to skip congratulating you on the wonderful work that you are doing. I'm very cognizant of that. But I don't have time.

I'd like to know if anybody has had a chance to look at the guest book that was in the Officers' Club. And if you haven't, I encourage you to do so. I jotted down some of the comments, and this is not people from the Bay Area – this is people all over the world, all over the country.

“It's a credit to San Franciscans that this treasure is being preserved.” There were numerous Army officers and enlisted men that served that wrote, and they gave the times that they were here. Another comment, “Please keep it a park.” “Thank you for preserving such wonderful history.” “Thank you for caring about history.” “Please save this beautiful place.” “Beautiful buildings and fascinating history.”

Then I walked away I obviously didn't write them all down. There were just too many. That's why I'd like you to look at them. Then

I walked away, and I thought what is all this about? Is it about the movie industry? Is it about not “from post to park” but “from post to playground for the rich and famous?” Because if that is what it’s all about with you guys, that is not preserving history, and it’s not doing what these people want. The last comment I’d like to make is please, if you do nothing else, save the bowling alley.

Nancy Bechtle: Jan Blum, then Mary Anne Miller, then Jamie Miller. Jan?

Jan Blum: My name is Jan Blum, and I’m speaking tonight on behalf of the Sierra Club as well as part of the Presidio Environmental Council members who are down with the flu.

In the most recent issue of Fremontia, which I think is being delivered to you now, this is a magazine published by the California Native Plant Society that features the Presidio on the cover and in the article. The story recounts the absolutely serendipitous discovery and salvation of the last wild Franciscan Manzanita. It was thought that the last Manzanita had been extricated over 60 years ago during the initial build of Doyle Drive. This Manzanita was miraculously spotted by a biologist, who drove by an area recently cleared to facilitate the rebuild of Doyle Drive.

The story underscores the value of the natural assets of the Presidio, and the importance of the professional and scholarly natural resources team who are successfully restoring the Presidio’s natural

environment. And this is a biodiverse environment that is significant in the world.

The Presidio is part of the Golden Gate biosphere reserve, one of only 564 such reserves in the world. Reserves are selected on the basis of their outstanding biodiversity values, and the Presidio is a heavyweight in that. Among other biological criteria it has 300 native plant species, 16 of which are rare or endangered, and that includes five which are protected by the Endangered Species Act.

One of these endangered species is currently imperiled by a lack of space, as it surrounded by the Baker Beach housing complex, which Amy addressed earlier. There is a documented paper trail in which the Trust agreed to recover this species over a three-year phased removal of housing starting in 2010. 2010 is gone.

Members of the Presidio Environmental Council and the Sierra Club once again encourage the Trust to develop a plan and a timeline for the phased removal, and we are willing to help where we can. I wish other members had been here tonight who have specific recommendations.

We also respectfully request that we be apprised of the progress of the Trust on a regular basis. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much.

Jan Blum: I also put a letter into the record from California Native Plant Society that should be available. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Mary Anne Miller, and then Jamie Miller.

Mary Anne Miller: Mary Anne Miller, San Francisco Tomorrow, an organization that is an urban environmental organization. We have been involved in the planning for the Presidio for the past 20 years. We have all been looking forward to what will happen to the Main Post. And tonight we're congratulating ourselves, you, and your staff for all of the wonderful historical preservation and reuse that has taken place.

Now as you deliberate about the Main Post, it would seem that you really have to plug in history here. If we succeeded as a community in discouraging that Fisher Museum from going into the Main Post and we did not properly underscore how much we also thought the hotel was a terrible idea and even the doubling of the area of the theater was not a good idea.

This is because the Main Post, while it looks very austere to some people and they don't like to be reminded about military history – and I don't know anything about military history myself, but I see it as a place that describes the difference between war and the way that we live today in our peaceful and very pleasant life. I see the history as needing to be interpreted here at the Main Post – as Noreen says the authenticity of the place – and to somehow plug into this a 14-room parody of barracks, a trivialization of what the

Main Post is all about, and putting people and their cars and their bed sheets and their restaurants and their needs for staying over in a lodge – this is not a lodge. We have lots of lodging in San Francisco in the hotel rooms. So please, somehow discourage this idea, staff, that they need to vitalize the Main Post with a hotel. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Jamie Miller, and then Steven Krefting.

Jamie Miller: Hi. My name is Jamie Miller. I'm general manager of the Presidio Golf Course. I'd like to speak tonight in favor of the lodge for several reasons. One personally, and one professionally. As I was sitting through the meeting – this is my first Board meeting – I had one more selfish reason. I live in Brentwood, so I would really like to stay here tonight so I wouldn't have to commute two hours home. That would be nice [laughter].

On a serious note, though, and I'm coming at it from a point of part of the strategic plan, which I live every day at the golf course. One of them is to bring people to the park. Obviously the lodge would do that. But on a personal note, I go back to a little bit of when I was a child. I grew up in Kentucky and Mammoth Cave National Park was our biggest and only real national park that we visited. Every summer we would travel there as a group of families and the lodge was the focal point of the trip. Whether we were playing golf or taking the train around the park or visiting the restaurants, that

was the focal point of the trip. It wouldn't have been the same for my family and the families that were with us if we didn't have that.

Since moving to California in 2005 I've had many people speak of the Ahwahnee Lodge at Yosemite the very same way. I haven't been there yet, but that's what they say. If you were to go there, that's the type of environment you'd want to stay so you could enjoy the park while inside the park.

And then finally I started a new business here inside the Presidio Golf Course called San Francisco Golf and Travel, where we invite people from all over the world – I've had people from Chile, Japan, all across the United States, Canada and Europe – and we don't have any place for them to stay. They ask me constantly if they can stay inside the park. And we don't have that currently, so that would be something that would be very nice to offer them in the future.

I'd like to thank you for inviting me to the show, and I'll drop a little piece of our own history: we're the second oldest golf course west of the Mississippi. So thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Steven? And then Kari Kiser.

Steven Krefting: Good evening, Board members. My name is Steven Krefting, and while I wear a number of hats relevant, tonight I'm speaking as the convener of Presidio Environmental Council. The Environmental

Council is a coalition of about a dozen environmental groups ranging from park volunteers to the Sierra Club and the Audubon Society.

First, I'd like to commend and thank the Trust for the many positive environmental initiatives that you are undertaking. We strongly support the general direction of the Tennessee Hollow and El Polin Springs restoration project. We look forward to the exciting Quartermaster Reach restoration as Doyle Drive is developed. And we appreciate the many educational efforts surrounding the Presidio's unique habitats such as the Habitat art installation, the children's programs, and the restoration of the Rob Hill Campground.

I wanted to speak in particular, as Dan mentioned, for one of my colleagues who's down with a cold. He wanted to talk about the many Presidio volunteers that he works with, and has of course contributed thousands of hours of work to the Presidio. He wanted to express how important it was to them that the Trust fulfill its good faith in good faith. Its commitment to restore critical dune habitat in the area now occupied by the Wherry housing Baker Beach projects. By beginning to take some of those buildings down, as Amy cited, that commitment was made a number of years ago and many folks are waiting to see that begin.

Briefly at this point I'll also echo the comments that others have been making about the concerns over the Main Post and the hotel

development there. And please enforce the pet policy. I was nearly attacked by an off-leash dog outside the Public Health Service Hospital tonight. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Uh-oh. Where's Frank?

Male Voice: It's not our territory.

Nancy Bechtle: Kari? And then Janet Bolles.

Kari Kiser: Thank you for the opportunity to be able to provide public comments tonight. My name is Kari Kiser and I work with the National Parks Conservation Association. I'm going to read these comments on behalf of my colleague, Neal Desai, who couldn't get to this meeting tonight.

NPCA continues to be concerned about the process and methodology the Presidio Trust is using to construct new buildings as a part of the Main Post Update. We disagree with the Trust that their actions are in accord with legal provisions regarding new construction at the Presidio.

There are areas for compromise and working together collaboratively, and NPCA will continue to look for those opportunities. With this new construction disagreement we have, we have not identified where such a common agreement lies.

Several other problematic issues exist regarding the formulation and the [unintelligible] NEPA alternatives and the process used to reach the final EIS conclusion. The National Park Service has discussed some of them in their recent letter, and others have been brought up throughout the course of the multi-year planning process, most recently in letters from the Presidio Historical Association.

We ask that the Trust staff and Board carefully consider the comments by NPCA and the others in this waiting period and engage in dialogue so that the public input can improve the project.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide comments.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Janet Bolles?

Janet Bolles: Good evening. I feel very humble following all these important people who represent such great organizations. I'm just an elderly volunteer who's worked in the Visitor Center for the last eight years every Monday, and who had been delighted in meeting people from all over the world.

I'm very disappointed that you could not find a temporary Visitor Center, because I think of the people that get lost on the Golden Gate Bridge and wander in. We'd tell them where to go and how to find places. They're always interested in the history of the Presidio. So when planning your future Visitor Center, please stress history because that's what they want to know. They don't have time to go

on the trails or to take bike rides. They're just visitors here, but they want to know the history of this great place. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. Lesley Walsh, and then Chris Darker, and then Lisa Martin.

Craig Middleton: I might mention while you're coming up to the microphone – first of all, thank you for your service in the Visitor Center. We are aware of the need for some sort of a temporary Visitor Center and are looking at options to provide one. So we don't have one yet, but as the Main Parade begins to come to fruition, probably around September, we'll try to get some kind of a Visitor Center up.

Lesley Walsh: We appreciate that, but actually that's not my chief concern. I'm speaking for the audience that can't come and speak to you themselves, and those are the visitors who come to the Visitor Center at the Main Post.

They come from all over the world as was mentioned, and many of them of course are ex-military. Doctors, nurses, patients, kids who were born at both Lettermans, families who lived here for a long or short period, during war and during peace. When they come back, they do want a place to stay. But they don't want a fancy lodge that their retirement may not allow them to afford.

They want a bed and breakfast. They'd like something set up like one of the old BOQs where they could bundle together the whole

family in the building to show them what it was like when daddy lived at the Presidio. And sometimes when mommy lived at the Presidio.

They have a long-term relationship with the place. They haven't forgotten it. Some of them in the last eight years that I've been in the Visitor Center have visited it for the very first time since they were posted here. It's important to them, and they are proud of the beauty that this setting provides and what is also a place that they can continue to admire and love. Don't give them luxury hotels; give them simple accommodations that look like a post. It still is.

[Applause]

Nancy Bechtle: Chris Darker?

Chris Darker: Yes, ma'am. Good evening. Thank you for this opportunity. My name is Chris Darker. I'm the chief executive and business manager for United Public Employees of California, Local 792. We're the union that represents over 150 employees that work here at the Presidio. So I just wanted to take an opportunity to meet with you face to face and introduce myself. And also I have two of my staff members that I wanted to introduce you to as we're moving forward later on this year to work on a successor agreement later on this year, I wanted to also introduce them.

First individual I would like to introduce to you is my senior labor practitioner, that's Mr. Steve Allen, in the back of the room. And secondly, our other day-to-day legal practitioner and our next legal attorney for our organization, Mr. David Pritchett. Dave just completed testing for the bar and we're very proud of him. So we're looking forward to having him work in that capacity.

We're very proud as an organization to represent the folks that work for you, and I know they're very privileged to have the opportunity to do the work that needs to be completed here. They enjoy their work, they're dedicated, and they're professionals. And we hope that in the future they'll have opportunities to expand and have even more workers here moving this place forward.

As a former veteran, I can tell you that I appreciate places like this. And I appreciate folks like yourselves that put this together and make it happen. So I thank you very much. I'm glad we had the opportunity to meet.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Nice to meet you, too. Lisa Martin, then Jay Turnbull. And then Sharon Gadberry. Are you Lisa?

Lisa Martin: Yes. I'm Lisa Martin. I work with the FOR-SITE Foundation. We partnered with the Presidio Trust to bring you Presidio Habitats, which I know some people here have mentioned. It's very gratifying to hear that people enjoy that exhibition.

I'm here just as a private citizen to voice support for more art in the park. Art like the Presidio Habitats exhibition that is about the park and of the park. I'm not here advocating anything like the Fisher Museum. I believe that art in the park can be just like educational programs or the archaeological program you have here, or the volunteerism in that it provides a way for the public to directly engage with the history and the environment of the Presidio. I think that's a wonderful function. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

Jay Turnbull: Good evening. I'm Jay Turnbull. I'm a principal at Page and Turnbull. We are architects whose practice is mostly in historic preservation. And we've participated in several projects here at the Presidio since the 1980s. I'd just like to hail a number of successes in the recent past which to point to the Trust's care and safeguarding historic buildings and landscapes in the Presidio.

We've heard about preservation awards conferred upon the Walt Disney Family Museum which opened in late 2009, and for which we were architects. The Public Health Service Hospital complex which opened in 2010 is an excellent example of green design, federally certified tax benefits, and good response to neighborhood concerns.

The Wyman Avenue houses – perhaps the only group of houses on the post that had stood empty and derelict for a long period – have

reopened, fully rehabilitated, and they are one of the first LEED-certified neighborhood designs.

We're currently participating in design for the Presidio Chapel, the 1930s building that crowns the hill just outside the Golden Gate Club here. This has been a part of the Main Post review process; both the preservation and the general communities have had a chance to comment on the design of the addition to the chapel. We're confident that a solution which is sensitive to the original building and site and which meets appropriate preservation standards will be arrived at and in due course built.

We know the Trust must be completely self-supporting in a very short time, and to that end continued development really is necessary as well as activation of the center of the post. I salute the Trust, its Board, management and staff for enlightened stewardship of the nation's first urban national park. Thanks for letting me comment.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. Sharon Gadberry? And then Moira Brennan.

Sharon Gadberry: Good evening. I want to reiterate and support all of the eloquent statements that were made this evening about opposition to the hotel. And also the support for the museum at the Main Post. But I have another point to make as well.

I am a board member of three organizations who took part as consulting parties and spent hundreds of hours with fellow members, with our constituents, and with research materials trying to help the Trust to develop their plans for the Main Post. We felt that we had a dialogue with the Trust and we felt that it was a respectful dialogue.

There is one decision that's been made that I would like you to reconsider. At some point at the conclusion of all the decisions for the Main Post plans, it was announced to the groups that were participating that if they did not agree with the Main Post plans they would be excluded from all of the future planning meetings.

I can just tell you that this was a big, intimidating act. It was felt as intimidation. It was felt that these groups were being punished for disagreeing. I really don't think that's the American way. I think that it's an American way to respect dissent and also to use dissent, because our opinions, the opinions of our people and our constituents, are important to you and you need to know them.

So I really would like you as a Trust to reconsider the decision to exclude five of the groups who disagree with the Main Post plans, and to re-include them in future meetings. Thanks very much.

[Applause]

Moira Brennan: Good evening. My name is Moira Brennan, and I'm here as a public citizen. I actually work for Public Citizen also [laughter]. "They hang the man and flog the woman that steal the goose from off the common, but let the greater villain loose that steals the common from the goose."

That's from 1764. That's an English folk poem, and I think it pretty well summarizes my impression of what's happening here – moving the Presidio Main Post from the public to the private arena with the proposed development of a 14-building hotel. Is that what the 14.5 million who visited here last year want? Is that something that we as San Franciscans and members of this community want?

I think our parks and especially the Presidio are truly precious, and that's why they were saved. It's priceless. So I'd like that to be reminded.

A second issue is one of generational equity. I usually have a bevy of teenagers with me because they go to the Bay School, and I couldn't get them here this evening because they have exams and papers to write, but I think it's very important that you remember that each generation speaks through its elected representatives, and adds to those areas of parklands that it deems important.

However, the Presidio Trust is not an elected body. You do not answer to your voters or constituents in a direct way. So in your Trust responsibilities, as the leaders of your generation – not mine

and not my children's – do you have the right to second-guess the decisions and expectations of future generations? And do you in good conscience have the right to deprive succeeding generations of their historical legacy as you pursue profit? Thank you.

[Applause]

Nancy Bechtle: It looks like M. Parke? And then Bruce DeMartini, and then Barbara Wanvig. M. Parke? Bruce DeMartini? Bruce?

Bruce DeMartini: Good evening. My name is Bruce DeMartini. I'm the Program Manager for the Thoreau Center for Sustainability, a project of TIDES. I have a message from TIDES. On the occasion of today's public meeting, TIDES, the Presidio Trust's longstanding nonprofit tenant and partner, would like to introduce itself to the new members of the Board of Directors and provide the entire Board with an update about our new CEO.

TIDES actively promotes change toward broadly shared economic opportunity, robust democratic processes, and the opportunity to live in a healthy and sustainable environment where human rights are preserved and protected. Founded in 1976, TIDES offers an array of services to simplify and amplify the efforts of forward-thinking philanthropists, foundations, activists and organizations.

With offices in San Francisco and New York City, TIDES is a network of organizations focused on grant making, nonprofit fiscal

sponsorship, and shared nonprofit space. In our nearly 35-year history, TIDES granted more than \$1.2 billion to support nonprofits in the U.S. and around the globe that provide health and social services, confront issues like global warming and HIV/AIDS, support civic participation and much more.

We provide fiscal sponsorship for over 230 groups across the country working to improve community clinics in California, provide arts programs for inner-city youth, and promote adolescent nutrition. In 1996 the Presidio Trust provided the perfect opportunity for TIDES to create both a new home for itself and a vibrant space for the sustainability movement.

Through its green renovation of historic Letterman Hospital, TIDES created 150,000 square feet of quality office space for more than 60 organizations. Years later, the Thoreau Center for Sustainability is a model of green building operations and community programming. Over its history the Thoreau Center has saved its nonprofit tenant organizations over \$13 million in rent and provided a stable home in a volatile real estate market.

In addition to high quality, affordable office space the Thoreau Center fosters a vibrant community through two public art galleries, organic cafe and extensive educational programs that are available to tenants, the greater Presidio community and general public.

Thanks to the model that started at the Presidio, TIDES' shared spaces has grown to become a leader in the emerging national movement to – sorry, that's it. Maybe next time.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much [laughter]. Barbara Wanvig and Don Green, then Boyd de Larios.

Barbara Wanvig: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am Barbara Wanvig. I am here as a private citizen. My opposition to the hotel about which I have long been concerned has already been very beautifully and eloquently expressed by many other speakers tonight.

I would add to that by saying that since this is already one of the most heavily used national parks in the United States, that alone should perhaps cause you to rethink the need for overnight accommodations altogether, and certainly not a need to jeopardize the historic integrity of the Main Post with a hotel.

The second thing I would like to do is ask if each member of the Presidio Trust could respond individually to comments made tonight. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Don?

Donald Green: Donald Green. I'm with the Laurel Heights Improvement Association. I've been a longtime observer of the Trust. Craig and I have been together now since 1977. He was the first member; I

was the first public member to go the meeting. I'm an economist. I used to work for OMB; worked with the Yosemite Restoration Trust, so I'm very familiar with the Park Service and the rules and regulations you people work under.

I'm particularly interested tonight in urging the Park Service and the Trust to get together on the Heritage Center and the use of Montgomery Street barracks, at least the first floor of a couple of the buildings, so that people coming to the Main Post could walk into those buildings and see what they used to be like. I'm an old soldier in peacetime Army. But the idea of a barracks bed and a footlocker is really exciting, I think, for people, young people, to see. I know what happens at Fort Point when you have the cannons and the exhibits there.

So I would urge you to do that. And while you're planning the Heritage Center, just think a little broader. We don't know what the Heritage Center is – it's obviously got to do with the heritage – but it's not using, in real terms, a real building. So I would urge you and the Park Service to include that in your Heritage Center planning.

And the other comment I made earlier was it's not clear to me that you're going to need 200 additional spaces of parking in tearing down Herbst Hall. And it's going to be two or three years until the people move into these new buildings or the existing buildings, get their programs going, and you can determine the reaction from

parking fees, which you don't now have, and time limits. So I would urge you to wait two or three years until the need is demonstrated for this additional 200 parking spaces, which happens to be right in front of the child care center, which is not the world's greatest place.

And congratulations on most of the work you've done. There's no question that it's quite an accomplishment. Thank you very much.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you, Don. Boyd de Larios? And then Jason Wright, and then Michael Ashley.

Boyd de Larios: Hello. I'm Boyd de Larios. I have a lot of things I would like to say. I have leftover business to discuss – communication. I think that's what – we've had difficulties over the last few years communicating to the Board.

This is one of the few opportunities that the public has to address you directly. We've sent letters. We don't get responses. The response to comments which was just published gave us answers to questions that were asked three years ago. The dialogue that was mentioned earlier has not been satisfactory from my standpoint, in participation 106.

There is much that Presidio Trust should be congratulated about, and when I hear about those things it cheers me up quite a bit. But the 106 process and this process remain very troublesome. You

should have, I hope you had, access to the letter sent last week from Los Californianos. I understand that it was circulated.

I have been representing descendants – Spanish California descendants. I'm wearing my Boyd tartan tie tonight to represent my other heritages. Many of them. But in any case, Los Californianos in a unanimous vote of the board does not support what is going on here. The descendants of Anza and Portola expeditions will not sign the ROD. In my personal experience as a buyer in Silicon Valley I would have been fired for signing any kind of agreement similar to it. It has no provisions, no safety for the Presidio itself. It all depends on plans to be determined later in the future. Sign now – we'll tell you what we're going to do later. And this is a bad business deal.

So I urge you to reexamine the ROD. All of us are very tired of this process. I would not go through another three years of this. I would volunteer for a root canal every six months in place of it.

Many more things that I would like to say. The dialogue has not been sufficient. The direct contact I think that needs to occur with the Board, I would like to see that happen. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Jason Wright? And then Michael Ashley.

Jason Wright: Good evening. My name is Jason Wright, and I am a board member of the Presidio Historical Association. My main point

tonight that I want to try to make, and I've been involved with the 106 review, the Main Post update, is that part of the Main Post Update Programmatic Agreement requires a cultural landscape report and design guidelines to be completed prior to further development of designs for the Main Post.

We support the creation and use of these documents. However, the problem is that the design guidelines are preceding the cultural landscape report. It's my understanding since we haven't signed the Programmatic Agreement; I've heard that the design guidelines 65 percent review is out to the concurrent parties.

What needs to happen first is that the cultural landscape report needs to be done first, and reviewed first. Or at least concurrently. Because findings and analyses in the cultural landscape report will inform the design guidelines. So I think that the process is a little bit backwards, and that would help it a lot.

My second comment is in response to the gentleman from the golf course who was concerned about no place for lodging here in the Main Post. I just want to point out that Pershing Hall will be rehabilitated soon for lodging. And this should be applauded as a good rehabilitation of a historic building to be used for lodging on the Main Post. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Michael Ashley, and then Ursula Pedersen.

Michael Ashley: Good evening. My name is Michael Ashley. I'm a lecturer and lucky graduate of UC Berkeley, and chief technology officer for the center for digital archaeology also at Cal, and an archaeologist.

UC has been an active partner of the Presidio in many successful ways, and tonight I am here to provide my enthusiastic support for the educational programming, specifically the Presidio Archaeology Program. Presidio is a remarkable place, national park [unintelligible] for our lucky undergraduates.

Mentioned was camping; we have a residential field school – a chance for students to try out field work, but to make real contributions here at the park. It launches careers, and helps forge engaged citizenry. It's a chance to live and work in the park. The classes are always full, always intense, and always memorable.

But as you heard, California budget, Governor Brown is proposing \$1.4 billion to be cut to education. What's missing from this room are the under-25-year-olds. And what will be missing from UC soon will be qualified undergrads. So perhaps I'm speaking for them.

We take our charge seriously at a time when the promise of the California education will no longer be realized for everyone, no matter how hard they work on their AP classes or SAT exams, as the graphs are set [unintelligible].

In archaeology, 50 years is not a long time. It's a lifetime for our future graduates. The next 50 years could be defined by our current crisis. Our partnership with Presidio is creative education for K to gray. And this is what the Presidio Archaeology Program stands for. Seminal, life-changing, engaging, Trust-worthy, enduring. The Presidio Archaeology Program moves beyond the park, and is more than what lies on the surface. I want to simply thank you for your continued efforts, working together to keep making the California Bay Area one of the greatest places to live and learn. Thank you very much.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

Craig Middleton: As we're waiting for the next speaker, I just wanted to clarify something that someone said – Sharon, I think it was you – about participation. The PA – the Programmatic Agreement – sets out the roles for concurring parties, those who agree to sign as a concurring party, and those who do not – who are then members of the public. But all the concurring – all the consultation groups, organizations that decide to become concurring parties would participate as concurring parties in meetings regarding things like design review.

If you do not decide to become a concurring party, you may still participate in these meetings as a member of the public. So I would offer up Rob here, who gave us our preservation update, from my staff to explain that to anyone who needs to understand it more. But our intent is not to exclude anyone from the process.

Sharon Gadberry: Are you saying that we will receive the documents in advance as the other concurring parties will as well?

Craig Middleton: Rob, can you – ?

Rob Thompson: Like Craig said, there are clear roles set out in the agreement document for levels of participation based on what role the organization chooses to participate in. There are roles for each – the levels of the signatory parties get to see it a lot, and participate in a lot of the decisions and the discussions. Concurring parties participate a little bit less, and the public participates even less still.

But there's a role for everybody. It's very clearly outlined in our agreement documents. It's a pretty standard approach to continued consultation under an agreement document. So, please, like Craig said, be in touch. We'll be happy to answer specific questions about it, but there is a role for everyone.

Sharon Gadberry: Well, in the past we were all called consulting parties, and there wasn't a distinction made between concurring and non-concurring. And what I'd like to ask the Trust to do is to restore that situation so that you don't have two levels. Thank you.

Boyd de Larios: Excuse me. I would like to add that I'm one of the parties that has been excluded from this particular design review, and representing DAP. And we have exactly the same problem. We were

threatened, we thought, with this agreement, with being cut off. And despite what was just said by Mr. Thompson, I think there is a conflict between what he said and what you said. So I would like some clarification on this.

Los Californianos has an intense feeling about this place, and we would like to aid you. We would like to be included. We would like to tell you things that you don't know. But we cannot concur with what we don't believe in. So . . .

Nancy Bechtle: Do you want to answer that? I think we should continue with the public comment. We have a few people who have been very patient, waiting for their turns. Are you Ursula?

Ursula Pedersen: Yes, I'm Ursula Pedersen. I'm a member of an art group called Fiber Dimensions. We have 42 members, and we do fiber sculpture. And we just completed a two-month exhibit at the Officers' Club from October to December.

We are extremely pleased with the working together with Jeff and the staff at the Officers' Club. We had attendance much more so than the three previous shows we've had at the Presidio at the Herbst Pavilion. We had roughly 100 people a day. And I think that's a lot to do with the publicity that the Presidio gave us.

It was really wonderful getting a chance to exhibit, and we hope that after the renovation of the Officers' Club is completed that you would consider having us return. Thank you very much.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. We have Maurice Franco, and then Merv Silberberg, and then Zak Klein.

Maurice Franco: Good evening. My name is Maurice Franco. I would like to thank the Presidio Trust for allowing me to say a few things. I have been a neighbor of the Presidio for the past three decades, and heavy utilizer in outdoor activities at the Presidio – surfing, windsurfing, running, biking, etcetera. I would like to just remind us of what the Presidio is all about. And I would summarize it in two words: wilderness and the military. That's it. There is nothing but that.

And I would like to remind us of a couple of things that have happened historically around here. The first one was the Lucas project. The Lucas project was contentious in the beginning, and it was the project that won. And even though it's architecturally very beautiful, it ended up being an enormous development project to the surprise of many of the residents.

The other thing that I would like to remind the group and the Trust is what happened around the discussions involving the Fisher Museum, and that concept that had nothing to do with this park. And that brings me to the point of the concept of the hotel.

Here we are, Rob, with this very interesting discussion about restoring old buildings, and the other gentleman that is telling us about the excavations around Polin Spring. This seems to be a little contradictory that we're talking about adding new buildings when we are actually in the mission of preserving what is already there or excavating what is already there.

So I think that there are a lot of people that are against the idea of building new buildings and building a new hotel in the Main Post. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Merv?

Merv Silberberg: That's me. It's been very interesting tonight to be here. I have three hats. I'll express each one as simply as possible. For instance, I was past president of the Golden Gate Chapter of the Air Force Association. Crissy Field, for instance, believe it or not, is the oldest U.S. air base. I don't think a lot of people appreciate that fact. And the museum, or it should be, I think, a museum that the hangars should be part of that museum. And I object to the fact that I heard tonight, that it's being used for a gym? And I'm saying wow. All right.

Secondly, I have also my second hat which is I'm president of San Franciscans for Neighborhood Enterprise, which is a small business chamber of commerce. And I find the hotel will pay no state property taxes, city taxes, or city employee benefits, even though it

will be in competition with private hotels and restaurants on private property that do pay. That doesn't sound right to me.

And then the third thing is more personal. My third hat is that I'm a seventh generation San Franciscan, and actually related to what I thought was the last commandant of this Presidio. It was Francisco Sanchez. And my cousin was speaking here – I think he'd concur with me – Boyd was talking about what we should be doing. And I think we should be working on that. The fact is that we do owe something.

No site analysis has justified placing this large, modern hotel on a historic Main Post where the history dates back to 1776 and the founding of San Francisco. As compared to other, less destructive Presidio locations. Such an analysis is required by the National Environmental Policy Act. That's interesting.

And then we go on to the Presidio Trust has refused to consider whether a Visitor Center or history museum would be a more appropriate use of the chosen hotel site. Such an analysis is required by the National Environmental Policy Act. Thank you very much for your time.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

Merv Silberberg: I appreciate it.

Nancy Bechtle: Zak Klein, then Eric Solomon, then Scott Haskins.

Zak Klein: Good evening. Speaking as a citizen and also a partner. I had originally had a student participant in the camping at Presidio program to speak tonight; she wasn't able to make it. She's from Mission High, and she wasn't able to make it. So I put down some notes and hopefully we can [unintelligible] to the recent success of the program, and express some gratitude around that, and then a little bit of a look forward.

Among other things, parks exist for intrinsic and incalculably valuable experience of the aesthetic, ecological and historic aspects of a landscape. The camping at Presidio program is one of the most unique and [unintelligible] opportunities for youth to begin a pattern of knowing landscape through experience.

I want to express deep thanks to all the partners in the CAP program – that's all the primary organizations that spoke already tonight – especially to the Trust. And alongside that, some gratitude to the Haas Foundation for the extensive funding that makes it possible.

You spoke to the numbers a little bit. I just wanted to expand on that. Each year the program's been in existence I went from just a couple hundred the first year to 500 to over 1,000 to over 3,000 last year. And with the support of the Trust to open the campground we had a pattern of growing about 100 percent a year and this past season it was 200 percent growth. So kudos there.

And I thought it interesting to try to answer that question of why such growth. And I hear it from the teachers constantly that they don't have affordable access to get their kids on an overnight trip. All their other options are typically four digits and up – thousands of dollars as opposed to the mere hundreds of dollars, and the \$150 fee that most groups pay to be here.

Looking forward, we have some unique groups coming this coming season. We're going to host some of the original inhabitants here, the Ohlone Nation. Foundation for Blind Children. And we're going to welcome 2,000 additional teachers from Oakland USD.

My final message is we have a motto of building a program around the community, and a community around the program. And I'd like to ask the Board to stay open to the creative and very capable organizations, many of which are represented here, that offer ways for the public to participate positively in the park. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. Eric Solomon. Scott Haskins.

Scott Haskins: Good evening, Board members. My name is Scott Haskins. I'm a resident of San Francisco. And I'd like to register my support for the lodge in the Presidio. There is something special about having a hotel in a national park. A hotel in the Presidio creates a magical experience not only for guests in the hotel, but it also says

something about the place. What would Yosemite be if it wasn't for the Ahwahnee? It would be a different place.

Any great park or national park needs a great lodge. It lets people all over the world know that the Presidio is a special place, worthy of a visit. It's a service to our local community. It allows San Franciscans to have a deeper and more meaningful relationship with the Presidio.

The Presidio is a special place, where new aspects of its beauty and significance are discovered every day. Change is difficult, even small, gradual change. Please continue the hard work and difficult work of sharing the Presidio's wonder with all of us. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. Bill Sheppard and Victor Meyerhoff, then Nick Kraemer.

Bill Sheppard: Good evening. My name is Bill Sheppard and I am chair of the Neighborhood Associations for Presidio Planning, known as NAPP. Being number 38 in line here tonight has one benefit. I don't really have to worry about the time limit because it's all been said.

Consistent with other remarks you've heard this evening, NAPP remains opposed to the construction of a hotel facility on the Main Parade. NAPP would like the Trust to consider locating a history museum or an interpretive center in one of the Montgomery Street barracks.

Regarding the Visitor Center that is in its early planning stages, NAPP is favorably impressed with the collaborative process that we have observed among the Trust, the Conservancy and the National Park Service. We applaud the efforts of all three parties, and we encourage more of the same with other projects. Especially with regard to interpretation.

And we urge that the Trust take seriously Don Green's comments that you heard just a few minutes ago, about providing public access to an interpretive experience within one of the Montgomery Street barracks buildings. We think that really would be a wonderful addition to the visitor experience in the Presidio.

Also, I would like to thank the Trust for its cooperation with NAPP in being with us and addressing our questions, the ongoing dialogue that's very much appreciated. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. Victor Meyerhoff, and then Nick Kraemer.

Victor Meyerhoff: I'm really going to need the microphone tonight. Good evening. For most of you I do know, I have a prepared statement. I'm Victor Meyerhoff, proprietor of the Presidio Bowling Center for the past 15 years. I always enjoy it when I hear a comment "save the bowling center" and it gets a laugh, but that's exactly what bowling is. It's a laugh. It's a recreation.

Everybody in this room can go bowling. You may not, but tonight during this meeting 150 people have. And they're over there now having a good time. I've been sitting through this whole process for three and a half years, and I appreciate it. I mean I've been given an opportunity to speak. I think the process is important.

I find it interesting how when things change – you know, the museum is gone now, so nobody talks about that; the lodge is back on the front burner so that's really important. The tennis court is apparently saved; there's nobody here from the tennis court tonight. But the bowling center is still slated, I believe, to be closed. And that does bother me, because so many people use it.

Yes, it's my profession, but I really enjoy doing it. I like to see the smiles on people's faces. And they come there and they have a great time. And I encourage you all, please come there. See it. Talk to the people. Ask them. They would all be here – this is not their priority, to come here and speak. But thank you for the time.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. Nick Kraemer, then Ruth Tringham, and then Verna Shaheen. Okay. Matt Waldman? Oh, wait. Verna? Pardon me? Oh! Ruth. Oh, okay. Great.

Ruth Tringham: Hello. I am Ruth Tringham. I'm a professor at UC Berkeley. I'm an archaeologist. And I wanted also to offer my appreciation and congratulations to the archaeologists of the Presidio Trust.

As Michael Ashley said, we've been working in a partnership with the archaeologists for many, many years and especially sort of more recently in their revitalization with the education program for K through 12 and with the digital documentation and with our field courses – our summer school field courses that we've run for three years, and we hope to run again this summer.

The archaeologists, I think you need to be very proud of them. They're not just about excavating. They actually are very interested in the whole process of archaeological investigation and interpretation, multifocal interpretation, and then creating the community through education and presentation. I think it makes it – it's a very rich archaeology program that I hope you can continue and cherish.

We hope to also work with them for many years in the future. And I think that the El Polin project is a really interesting one in that it's representing the more non-military aspects of the Presidio, which have always been actually really very important. Thank you very much.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you.

Craig Middleton: I just wanted to take the opportunity to thank you, Ruth. We could not do this great program without you. So thank you for all your help.

Ruth Tringham: My pleasure.

Nancy Bechtle: Verna?

Verna Shaheen: Verna Shaheen. Thank you. I wanted to go on record that I am strongly opposed to the development of this hotel and theater, and want to bring the attention to the fact that there are probably some charming alternatives – perhaps viewing out the Pacific Ocean or something more appropriate that people would come to this part of the country to see.

And then also want to mention – I’m not sure who will benefit financially from this project. And to make certain that no Trustee would benefit, or a family member would benefit, or any business affiliate might benefit because it is a breach of a fiduciary duty. So I want to make sure that that is on record.

[Applause]

Nancy Bechtle: I would like to respond to that. And that is that every member of the Presidio Trust Board has signed ethics rules that we are all governed by. So I guarantee you that no Trust Board member, no family member, will ever benefit from any of the activities that go on in the park.

Verna Shaheen: Well, that wasn’t true with Fisher. [Unintelligible].

Nancy Bechtle: Matt Waldman and then Margaret Ziebart.

Matt Waldman: I apologize for my informal clothing; I just got off work. My name is Matt Waldman. I'm a private citizen. I was born on the Presidio in 1965 in the old Letterman Hospital which is now the Thoreau Center. I currently live and work on the Presidio. I'm also a Sergeant first class in the United States Army Reserves. My unit is currently based in Camp Parks, the 91st Division. It used to be based here.

I'm concerned about the Presidio and the GGNRA in general. They're not – it seems to be they're not just neglecting but seem to be deemphasizing 235 years of military history, mostly U.S. Army history. Also Spanish and Mexican history.

I understand the need for nature, diversity and art in the park. But the Presidio, by name, is martial. And I think you need to have less deemphasizing of it and more emphasizing of the military history.

I like the idea for lodging in the park, in the Presidio here. Only if it's located for example in Pershing Hall, Stilwell Hall, or that other vacant building up there by Pilots' Row. Put these empty buildings to use, as I'm sure there are plans for some of them. I remind you that the Grand Canyon and Yosemite have decentralized lodging like that. They do have beautiful central lodges, but they also have decentralized lodges spread all around different sides of the valley or the park.

One further thing – two things. Thank you for the words Mr. Middleton said earlier – I’m glad to hear about plans for reopening of another Visitor Center here in the Main Post area. I think with the Officers’ Club closing for renovation that’s something that’s missing.

One further thing about the enlisted family housing on the Presidio – Baker Beach, Quarry, MacArthur, Sanchez – all the – right across the street here is historic enlisted housing. All these others are not historic. They were built in the ‘60s or ‘70s. I know there are some plans to tear those down, but I would like to see those preserved. Just a few decades ago tens of thousands of military families were raised in those. I think that enlisted housing needs to be preserved, as does officer housing. Thank you.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you. Margaret.

Margaret Ziegart: I’m speaking as a private citizen, but one who has been involved in the GGNRA and Presidio for many years, since it was conceived. I would like to point out that there are different socioeconomic groups, and, like Fort Baker was marvelous the way it became, but it’s for a more elite organizational purpose. And I think the national park should have availability for young people and for families.

I took my family across several times visiting, and the lodges were an important part. However, this lodge is across – Building 39 also,

but Building 39 may sometime come down – it's across an entry, a historic entry into the Main Post. And I think that that should be honored as they plan to split the two units. Also, the City has like a 20 percent ratio, and I think that perhaps 20 percent of the lodge facilities should be available to low or moderate income families.

Then another thing is that the mess hall. I hope it is recreated, because that would be an affordable experience. Like some old cookhouse for an example.

The other portion of history of this, as we used to talk about it, was a Native American group of people that were here before. And I think the creek should be delineated by paving and the one that's been covered by Montgomery Street, and I believe that we should have a kiosk and other interpretive materials about the Native Americans because they did integrate and also have a relationship with the new people in the park. Thank you very much.

Nancy Bechtle: Thank you very much. That concludes our public comment. Personally, I'd like to have any comments from the other Board members, but I thought this was very interesting. A very diverse group of interests both pro and con, but certainly a very varied number of comments. Anybody else? Craig?

Okay. Thank you all very much for your input. We will certainly take this to mind. Thank you.

Time of adjournment 9:10 p.m.

[End of recorded material]