

Public Comments November 12 to November 26, 2013

Please.

The only proposal of real value has been that from the Chronicle's Mr. King--viz., using the existing Palace of Fine Arts and leaving the proposed site alone.

The rumor that you are favoring George Lucas's grotesque retro-baloney proposal is disheartening in the extreme. It is not in keeping with the 21st century of San Francisco. The exterior is laughable. The proposed contents are vulgar beyond belief.

Please.

Tom McNamee

The Presidio Trust should do the most ethical thing and honor the pact between the previous board and George Lucas -- along with the \$3 million Mr. Lucas then set aside -- for a museum of digital art. This was all detailed by former Presidio Trust board member Bill Reilly at the last public hearing.

Lucas agreed to the set aside while he was seeking approval to build the Letterman Digital Arts Center, which has significantly helped the Presidio's mission to become economically self-sufficient. The proposed museum will further strengthen The Presidio's future viability and become not simply a local or national draw, but an international one as well. I remind you that people from Japan and elsewhere scrambled to get to the Marin County Fair some 25 years ago during an exhibit of costumes, models, art and props from Lucas' Industrial Light and Magic division. The Treasures from ILM exhibit ran for less than a week but attracted tens of thousands.

Since then, Lucas' exhibits have traveled the world, always attracting a large and appreciative audience - a diverse audience that includes everyone from pre-schoolers to great-grandparents. The educational aspects of the traveling exhibits have inspired thousands of teens to pursue careers in both the arts and the sciences.

Based on Reilly's testimony, the digital arts museum wasn't something George Lucas thought of on his own -- but he recognized the suggestion had merit and quickly said that he would do it. He signaled his commitment even over his counsel's more cautious response of "let's take our time and consider this."

Now, Mr. Lucas is offering a priceless gift of art as well as all the money needed to build a world-class cultural institution and give it a strong capital foundation to survive for generations.

The Presidio Trust should graciously accept Lucas' precious gift. It should honor San Francisco's past and present role in cinematic history and keep a native Californian's world class collection of illustrative art in California.

Thank you, Leo N. Holzer

I was wondering if there was any news. I did stop by for the meeting in the fall. I did hear some of the comments and listened to the presenters. I have to say I was a little bothered by the Exchange. It sounded like they only were wanting to do things for those who already go there, and it didn't sound very welcoming for bringing more or new people to the space which I thought was part of the intent. But I may have been wrong.

It does look as if the Cultural Arts group is already fully funded, am I correct in that?

Anyway I was just wondering if there was any developments. Thank you and the Trust for all your efforts in working to make the land available to as many people as possible.

Peter

Please, please, do not select the Lucas proposal. This is a horrendous design, and we do not need another monument to Lucas' ego in our park. Of the three, the project that I would select would be the GGNC one. But better still, couldn't the site be left as open space? After all this is a PARK. Not everything has to be monetized.

Thanks, Lothian Furey

Thank god: rich and influential people (the Hasses) have spoken out to at least delay construction of something to replace the Sports Basement. Forget the Lucas thing (haven't we already decided that rich people can't use the Presidio as the site for their collections?).

But at least the Lucas proposal is understandable. The other two--not so much. The mealy-mouthed descriptions of the purpose and use of those proposals is impenetrable as well as nauseating; it sounds like advertising for an expensive spa. If something cannot be described in straightforward language, one only assumes that the author is hiding something. Like the fact that it's just an empire-building scheme for some nonprofits, added and abetted by the definitely profit-making motives of architects and such.

Stop--at least delay.

Nancy O'Brien

I am somewhat stunned about the never ending narcissism of wealthy people who need a museum on public land to memorialize themselves. Perhaps a statue is more appropriate? I like George Lucas and respect what he has done but I think his museum is a terrible idea for the Presidio/Crissy Field, completely out of place and should be put downtown. Why would you force the Fisher's to put their art in the SFMOMA and yet you are going to build Lucas a museum, which would create the same traffic issues that the other proposal had. Art should be in a museum downtown with the opportunity to take transit or alternative modes, not driving to an art museum in a national park.

The Presidio Exchange is a more appropriate use for that space and the Golden Gates National Parks Conservancy has a track record of creating great public spaces, and something that fits with the presidio and is a benefit to the public. I hope the Presidio/City of San Francisco will not be bullied into submission by powerful interests and think long and hard about what really is the best use of this beautiful land that will benefit the public and create the best use of space. I am confident there are other ways and places for Mr. Lucas to create a memorial to himself.

Thank you,
Jody Littlehales

I am a native San Franciscan and use the Presidio often for running, biking, kite flying and other out door activities with my family.

I think George Lucas Proposal is HORRIBLE for the presidio and for San Francisco. I encourage you to consider other alternatives and not be bamboozled by big name supporters.

1. George Lucas Previous development has turned into a for profit real estate park. He no longer owns or has any employees there and the space is leased out to other businesses at profit to his development company and with no control tot eh presidio.
2. Can we trust that the museum will be free or will we need a disney land park hopper pass?
3. The design is not in sync with the surrounding. The mass is too big and the style is non consistent wight he environment.
4. It is only a branding exercise for Lucas / Disney and not a NATIONAL park.

PLease reconsider!!
Daniel Kahn

I know you are carefully weighing the pros and cons for the proposed designs for the Sports basement site. I'd like to stress my feelings that the Lucas Center is misplaced in such a unique and natural setting. I believe that all the guests will be better served to visit a a place that reinforces their connection to the unique place they are visiting; one that well features the outdoors and views.

Thank you
Carla Crane

I hope that the comment below is NOT what is driving opinion at the Presidio Trust.
I dare say Crissy Field is not often visited by the people mentioned. And even if they were to attend an opening of Lucas's museum, I doubt they will be taking advantage of what Crissy Field has to offer and was intended for originally.

Most of them don't live in SF.

I implore you to NOT be obviously influenced by money.

"In an email sent to the **Presidio Trust** — which is currently picking between three proposals for cultural institutions for San Francisco's Crissy Field — **Ron Conway**, an investor in "Star Wars" director **George Lucas**'s proposal for a \$1-billion museum of visual storytelling, shared messages of support from tech giants including **Steve Jobs**' widow **Laurene Powell Jobs**, **Twitter** co-founders **Jack Dorsey** and **Biz Stone**, **Yahoo** CEO **Marissa Mayer**, and others, as well as football legend **Joe Montana** and parachute pants popularizer **MC Hammer**. The Trust's board is due to review the three final proposals in a meeting on Tuesday. [[San Francisco Chronicle](#)]"

K. McKenna

PLEASE keep Crissy Field as wonderful as it is now. Let George Lucas build his monument somewhere else - the Palace of Fine Arts seems like the perfect place. Let the GGNPC continue to oversee this magnificent space and create the PX in the Sports Basement space.

Arlene Halligan

Hi! My name is Elizabeth Creely. I just called and left a message but wanted to write an email, too. I hope this email and my comments in it, make their way to the board of the Presidio Trust. I understand they are considering proposals for the Sports Basement site.

My comment is short: please select the proposal put forward by the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy. It's an organization that has done so much-as you undoubtedly know- to preserve and provide stewardship of the Bay Area's beautiful wild/undeveloped land, and frankly, it's 100 times more relevant to the Presidio and to those of us who live in this city than a museum by George Lucas. The bay Area is the epicenter for innovative work to restore degraded habitat and advance meaningful and long-term environmental protection. The GGNRA is a wonderful organization. Please select them.

I didn't even know that they had a proposals before the board until I read this morning's Chronicle.

Is there a better place for public comment? I think it should be solicited- it is a building on land held in trust for the public, after all.

Elizabeth C. Creely

As SF citizens and tenants of the Presidio, we urge you to reject the intrusive, stylistically inappropriate, overscale, and curatorially weak Lucas proposal in this key site near Crissy Field.

The Crissy Field recreational area does not need such amenity, since it is already humming with life, but the eerily empty Main Post does.

In either location, the current Lucas design would be a blight. George Lucas can afford a better architect and the people deserve a more thoughtful approach to the use of the Sports Basement.

Please, please stop the Trust from making the terrible mistake of approving this horror on Crissy Field.

Sincerely,

Diana Ketcham
Andrew Hoyem
THE ARION PRESS

Please, please, please don't okay the Lucas museum proposal for Crissy Field. John King's article in the *Chronicle* today (Monday, November 18th, 2013) outlined the objections better than I ever could. For my own satisfaction, I'd just say that this hulking, tasteless monolith of a building is not merely stylistically mediocre and inappropriate, but also completely fails to make an argument for why a privately funded museum deserves to occupy a breathtakingly beautiful and literally priceless Bayside parcel of a public park.

Better yet, please consider the wisdom of the Haas Foundation's suggestion to table any further discussion and approval of a building for this site at least until all the work on the transit corridor is completed. Perhaps if the pressure of an imminent decision were removed, the Trust and the public could revisit the fundamental question of whether the natural splendor, uniqueness, and ecological and historical significance of the Crissy Field site is in fact best served by any construction at all.

Respectfully,
Chris Cullens

Just wanted to voice my support for the proposed Presidio Exchange. I fear that George Lucas's design is not appropriate for this inspiring, natural location and feel that the Exchange would instead contribute to the timeless aesthetic of this beautiful stretch of our city.

Thank you for your consideration,
Kelly Keever

I'm grateful the Presidio is a National Park, since no amount of heavy-weights (in terms of power) can sway a decision toward a proposal that has no place in a Park.
The Trust is endowed to use the democratic process.

The PX proposal serves the site best. It won't house permanent, invaluable collections in a tsunami inundation and earthquake zone, which, no matter what Lucas Development proposes in terms of maintenance money, is a huge liability for taxpayers.

The PX will be flexible and dynamic and could serve as an evacuation site in case of disasters, as the Presidio's open spaces have in the past.

George Lucas, through his Letterman development, did not prove up to be the Park steward he presented. He did not create a film lab where students would diligently and consistently document Presidio history. He did obliterate an important vista with a series of mostly empty office buildings, which offer illegitimate and unethical competition on public lands, to the private sector.

There are functions the private sector should supply on the exterior of a Park that interior concessions should not interfere with. It is appropriate that Pershing Hall continue to serve as a hotel, as it has for eons.

It is not appropriate for any new hotels to be built. Nor unrelated-to-the-Presidio museums. Private collections should occupy and benefit the private sector. What a boon for Modesto if Mr. Lucas would establish his museum there. It would enhance and create more visitors for existing Sf museums by establishing a triangle of sites within the region.

I understand the Exploratorium moved to a new site and now faces severe budget cuts. Please consider that in the PX proposal. It could be build over time, paying as it goes.

Thank you for listening,
Terry Keim

Please DO NOT APPROVE the highly inappropriate proposal for George Lucas to put his museum in the Presidio. There are two superb - and very appropriate for the location - alternatives in the Conservancy and the sustainability institute. John King is exactly right, and the Lucas proposal is singularly wrong.

As a 30-year resident of San Francisco who walked daily in the Presidio (until I moved to Santa Rosa), I am extremely distressed that this remaining natural preserve may be exploited for dollars in celebration of products that have nothing to do with the nature and history of the Presidio. Do not sacrifice this authentic, beautiful, and irreplaceable space to the altar of celebrity.

Thank you. - (Ms.) Jeremy Joan Hewes

I am writing because I just read the latest statement regarding the three proposed projects. Please take a moment and learn from the Lucas debacle in Marin. A few people there stopped what could have been a great facility that would have benefited the area with jobs, a gorgeous structure and more revenue for the North Bay. While I understood why people were opposed to the project on the surface, I feel they lost out and have read a lot of regretful statements that it did not go forward. Lucas' current proposal is an obvious choice. The project comes from an honest and well meaning place. George has spoken about his love for Illustration as an art form since I was a kid. It instilled an appreciation within me that I carry to this day. He has spent his career building upon the foundation of those artists before him and now he is sharing it with everyone. Do not let this opportunity become a future regret by

passing it by. This is truly a unique opportunity for everyone from the people that wish to work there, the guests who will be exposed to his collection and to the city and the Trust. I must disclose that I am a former employee and I must also confess that this is something I would travel to see no matter where it was in the country and who was responsible for it. It just makes sense that it would of course be him because he has championed this art for years. This is not a Star Wars museum. This is not a Disney attraction. I am worried that the project being perceived as such is clouding the support of people who would otherwise happily push it forward. He and Spielberg exhibited their Rockwell pieces in D.C. a few years ago and it was very well received. I have been to the Rockwell museum in MA and it is a gorgeous presentation of his work. I know your job is to make decisions in the best interest of everyone and I understand all the points that have been raised thus far but I truly think that when this museum is completed and open, everyone involved on both sides will be proud that they made it happen and even those who have doubts will come around. This is something that SF will be proud of, something to brag about. Please make it a reality. Thank you for your time.

David Iskra

As a long time resident of San Francisco (over 40 years) I support The Lucas Proposal.

- a) It is funded
- b) Its design fits The Presidio (far more than the other proposed buildings).
- c) Its focus and cultural mission are articulated and are worthy of the site and San Francisco.
- d) Its concept has broad implications and offers a unique opportunity to further cultural awareness.
- e) It includes all levels of our diverse population for education and enjoyment.
- f) It brings to our city great art and an inspirational benefactor.
- g) Its collections are of world wide significance.

Please let our city benefit from so generous a Lucas gift.

Sincerely,
Patrick Presto

I am so glad that the Presidio Trust Board has delayed the decision about the Mid-Crissy Field site and has requested more clarification and answers about the three proposals.

As someone who says Crissy Field is her favorite place in the Bay Area, I urge the Board to wait even longer until Doyle Drive and other current projects are completed before making a decision about any new structures there.

If something is to be built, then please do not give in to the Lucas Project. It is so horribly out of scale and out of place for that beautiful setting.

Thank you for keeping the Presidio such a wonderful and unique place.
Barbara Calfee

What a wonderful way to start the day by reading in today's Chronicle that the board had voted to delay approval of any of the three PX proposals and require further information before making a final decision. I was greatly relieved to hear of the board's action. It demonstrates to me that not only is the board willing to stand up to serious political pressure but that it takes its responsibilities very seriously.

I was especially gratified by the comment regarding Mr Lucas' museum proposal in that it was considered too large for the area. After the recent debacle surround Mr. Fisher's proposal for a museum on the parade grounds, one would think that a rational person wouldn't even think of submitting a similar plan that seemingly would contravene previous board action and certainly stretch the boundaries of the Presidio's mission beyond comprehension. A museum, no matter how valuable its collection, doesn't need to be located on the Presidio. There are many other locations in San Francisco and elsewhere that would be more well suited for such an endeavor. And, "if he walks, he walks." Great comment!

As a frequent user of the Presidio and occasional volunteer, I am very protective of the area and most supportive of projects like those around El Polin springs that work to restore the natural values of the park. As Mr. Hass has so eloquently stated, doing nothing on the site of Sports Basement would be fine too. There have been several revenue generating projects that have work well within the framework of the Presidio's multi-faceted goals. I would encourage the Board to continue to deliberate for a long as it need to ensure that whatever is approved for the site, if anything, it is consistent with present habitat values of nearby Crissy Field Marsh, and has as few impacts as feasible on one's enjoyment and appreciation of the surrounding area as possible.

Thank you all for proceeding in a deliberate and measured manner. I feel confident that your ultimate decision will be in the best interests of the historic nature of the Presidio and be well received by all.

Sincerely,
Michael Buck

There is no clear need for either the Bridge Sustainability Institute or for the Presidio Exchange. Our parks are awash in such buildings. Sustainability, ecology, and the restoration of the environment do not require edifices. I belong to an group that organizes a robust program of nature-oriented fieldtrips, classes, and lectures entirely online the internet. The classes and lectures are held in already existing buildings. Let's not put up any more structures in the name of wilderness preservation.

The Lucas Museum has a lot going for it, but two questions arise. George Lucas had a connection with the presidio, but does his collection? Couldn't his very interesting idea of a museum devoted to popular and electronic art be built elsewhere, preferably nearer to access by BART? I do think the design is beautiful and need not be Spanish-style. It does fit in with the history of San Francisco.

Perhaps a fourth alternative should be added: Open Space.

Morton D. Paley

Instead of letting a rich ego claim public space to display his own art work, the Presidio Trust should be open to letting the global general public display their artistic creations. The artists would cover the costs! Here's how:

In regards to using the space as an open park forum for artists from around the world to display their work -- the general public wouldn't have to fund the park or the conversion project, the artists would. Any artists from around the world that wish to put their art work on display, which there are a number of, would pay a "display fee". What better forum to show off your work than in a public open space near the most famous bridge in the world?!? The fee wouldn't be for profit, but to cover Presidio maintenance fees. With all the techies in the area, I'm sure the Presidio could get volunteers to build a web site that would allow artists from around the world to fill out an online application with samples of their work. Every 6 months new work would be on display. This would definitely work.

Please let me know if there are other emails addresses I can send my proposal to.

Thank you!
Ron T.

I have been following closely the developments along Crissy Field for, well, decades now. The restoration of the lagoon, opening of the visitors centers, development of the recreation pathways, and the redevelopment of the old hangars and buildings, plus, of course, the Doyle Drive redevelopment. And I really have nothing to complain about regarding those things. They have all tuned out splendidly. Well done! And thank you.

I do remain concerned about what to do with the old army commissary, however. And I would like to make a modest proposal: Please refuse all development plans that include buildings or museums or galleries or manmade structures of any type. Especially as the Doyle Drive overwalk -- for lack of a better phrase -- where pedestrians will be walking on grass on top of a traffic tunnel, please take the nearby old commissary site and remove the buildings, redesign the parking (cause folks will always want to drive on down to the park, so leave a few slots), and simply plant a grove of local native trees. Juniper, cypress, pines of a variety. And let some small part of the space go wild, allowing the local flowers and weeds to spring up at their own will and volition. Add a few benches for sitting and watching birds and clouds. Maybe some picnic benches. Folks can never have enough picnics. Maybe a small graveled and level pathway so folks can stroll and folks can roll (i.e., wheelchairs).

I understand that my idea is hardly ambitious and likely unoriginal -- hasn't someone else, perhaps some landscaping bigshot, come up with this notion? But simple, open, and accessible. That's all we need. It is a park, after all.

I am not a landscaper, and would be horrified to show you my backyard even. But I have visited many, many national parks and state parks, and reserves and preserves of many stripes. Grew up in the Bay Area, running all over its hills and coastlines, and love the outdoors. If you find it convenient and even a reasonable proposal, I would be happy to meet any of your folks for a short walk around the old commissary area. We can talk about it. Toss some ideas around. A crazy notion, I agree, and outside the process of the RFP, etc.

If you think that, instead, I should abide by the RFP process (fair's fair after all, right?), I'd be happy to give it a try. My resources are limited, but my enthusiasm is brimming over. Thanks for your time.

Tom McCarthy

"If he walks, he walks."

Thank you for standing for principle and what you think is correct. It is not always easy.

Toodles!

Mike Gunn

Thank you for sending the updated info on the Post Exchange Site. I like what you are doing to protect the Presidio from poor development, and, I agree with Ms. Bechtle on her hard stance against the too high and too long Lucis Building, as proposed. Also its design is enough to send any Architect screaming back into the past..I was living in SF when another group of Texas Architects fouted The Jack Tar Hotel on us. Please not again.

Keep up your good works, I love your restaurants and the new hotel. I would also like to see the Calif. Watercolor Assn. show return to the Officers Club for it's annual shows when the work on the Club is completed.

During the Korean War I was assigned to the Sixth Army Engineers and lived and worked on the Parade Grounds at the Headquarters Bldg. and spent my nights in the building now occupied by the Walt Disney Family Museum, so I keep an eye on changes proposed there.

The Presidio is a treasure that nobody should be allowed to ruin.

George Duncan

I am writing to express my **vehement** opposition to George Lucas' Crissy Field museum proposal.

For most of my 38 years in San Francisco, Crissy Field was a boggy wasteland. The Presidio Trust has done a miraculous job of turning it into one of the finest nature preserves in the Bay Area.

George Lucas' massive, pushy, arrogant proposal is in radical opposition to everything Crissy Field/Presidio Land Trust stands for.

Not to mention that his proposal of a museum to house artifacts from his inane, sophomoric films and the cloying art work of Norman Rockwell is an insulting use of this space.

PLUS!! No one seems to remember that when he won his bid to take over the space where Letterman Army Hospital had once stood, the first thing he did was start renting out the space for his own monetary gain.

George Lucas is an over-rated filmmaker and a spoiled brat. Giving him his way on this project would be a crime.

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE REJECT HIS PROPOSAL!!!!!!!!!!

Thank you for the opportunity to express my views.

Timothy Keegan

The Presidio board's comments suggest an ideal compromise that could provide a win for all the proposals.

Because the Conservancy is perfectly attuned to the Presidio mission and has a proven track record, as well as the support of the community, they should team with the Institute and absorb the sustainability goals of the Institute as a primary focus of the Conservancy scheme.

Because it's clear that the Lucas proposal relies on the grand architecture of another era to set the scene for the art, let the Lucas team focus their efforts on an exquisite restoration of the nearby Maybeck Palace of Fine Arts.

Tom Walker

The trust deserves credit for navigating the incredibly choppy political/financial, short term/long term, special/general interest, waters of the Mid-Crissy Field proposals.

Two superb ideas came to my attention for the first time in today's Chronicle:

1. instead of trying to make something new match the architecture of the Palace of Fine Arts, why not locate any of those 3 proposals in the "real" thing (\$700M can pay for a lot of retrofit!)
2. wait for five years and see how the most recent changes to the area (tunnel, parade ground etc...) do affect the dynamics and aesthetics of the whole area before doing something else (separate variables...)

I instantaneously felt much more enthusiasm for either of those two latest options than for any of the other three which have been floated around for the last few months, and each have massive negatives.

They got my vote!

Regards,
JP

Mr. Lucas:

Consider converting the existing brick stables into the most beautiful museum in the west. They are underused and will convert well to other uses.

At the Sports Basement site! Mmmmm...

Charles Leoni

I find it interesting that the George Lucas plan is having such a hard time getting approval of the trust committee. Living in San Francisco is certainly different from other larger cities, like Chicago, where they seem to move ahead with most things good for the city, while SF always says NO to almost everything.

When Mr. Fisher wanted to give his art a place in the Presidio, at his expense, with no taxpayer having to pony up, they refused him. Amazing!

Now a man who has given much to San Francisco, George Lucas, would like to have permission from the trust to put his museum of illustrative art there at his cost, those in charge seem to be making it impossible for him. Wow, most people would be saying "Thank You" mr. Lucas-but not in San Francisco, where personalities seem to matter more than what the public would love and enjoy.

Let's bring it to Chicago, where they will gladly say YES and thank you!!!

Think we will always be the city of NO until the young High Teck people take over. We are NO on the De Young Museum, yes on the garage, NO on A and B, probably NO on the stadium proposed, NO on the Fisher Art Museum, and now NO, or wait ,on the George Lucas building. (which by the way, I think it would be beautiful)

It would be nice to see this city move forward on these wonderful opportunities, but seems like personalities get in the way of progress.

I used to live in Chicago, and every time I visit, I see such progress, and cleanliness-A city much larger than SF, and doing a great job of moving forward. I am sure Lucas will be welcomed to come to that great city. Wish he would stay here.

Carlin Anton

Leave it a nice grassy hillside!!!

Barbara Stevens

FYI: The Mid-Crissy Presidio Project Is Compared to the Warriors Arena Project

The Presidio:

A spirited public debate and competition has been going on at the Presidio regarding the use of the approximately eight acre "Mid-Crissy site". Even after two years, the decision of what, if anything, will go on that site may be delayed for several more years to allow more public discussion. Links:

<http://www.sfgate.com/opinion/editorials/article/Presidio-plans-need-further-review-5002885.php>

<http://www.presidio.gov/about/Pages/commissary.aspx#.UpKv25FtfHh>

Compare the intense Presidio public review process to what is happening at the Warriors Pier 30-32/ Lot 330 project.

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC - represents the neighborhood) has been instructed by San Francisco's Mayor and Board of Supervisors to not discuss alternative uses of the Pier 30-32/ Lot 330 sites and to not discuss alternative locations for the Warriors arena. Furthermore, the BCDC staff has not entertained a public discussion of alternative uses of the Pier 30-32 site.

The public has effectively been "locked out" of the discussion of what should happen with this public land. It should not surprise anyone that the public will probably have to resort to a city wide referendum to have its voice heard.

Lawrence Stokus

I am writing to express my support for the Presidio Exchange (PX) proposal for reuse of prime national parkland in the Presidio of San Francisco.

This proposal is the only one that advances the mission critical goals of the Presidio and Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and is the only one that preserves and enhances the park values at Crissy Field.

The former Commissary site at Crissy Field--in the heart of a national park--deserves a cultural institution that is energized by and responds to the interests and passions of all our communities. With its open design and its constantly changing programs, the PX is best suited to reflect the needs of all visitors--local and from afar.

The Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, the sponsor of the PX, has played a key role in preserving the Presidio and transforming Crissy Field, and is best suited to continue the revitalization of this iconic region.

The legacy of Crissy Field and the Presidio Trust is at stake here with your upcoming decision. Thankfully, the PX proposal is before you, and is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to complete the reuse of nationally significant waterfront property. I urge you to select the PX.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
National Parks Conservation Association
on behalf of 12 individuals.



November 15, 2013

Presidio Trust (attn: Commissary Project)
103 Montgomery Street, P.O. Box 29052
San Francisco, CA 94129
Submitted via email to commissary@presidiotrust.gov

Dear Presidio Trust Board of Directors:

On behalf of the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA), I offer these comments on the Presidio Trust's (Trust) efforts to develop a cultural institution at Mid-Crissy Field. NPCA and its members care deeply about the protection and enhancement of the Presidio, and have engaged in nearly all major projects affecting the Presidio since it became a national park. This current effort at Mid-Crissy Field represents a major action on the Presidio and directly impacts the Presidio, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and the millions of people who currently visit Crissy Field. We appreciate this opportunity to once again present our comments, and we look forward to actively participating in this planning effort as it moves forward.

NPCA is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that was formed in 1919, and with its more than 800,000 members and supporters throughout the country, works to protect and enhance America's National Park System for present and future generations.

Clearly, the Mid-Crissy Field site is one of America's most treasured and iconic landscapes, with a deep connection to the region's natural, cultural, and historical values and resources. The sheer number and diversity of proposals reflected the great interest in the opportunity to develop the site.

After closely reviewing the three final proposals and considering applicable law and policy and the public interest at stake, we believe the choice is clear. Only the Presidio Exchange (PX), sponsored by the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, meets each of the Trust's stated goals and its program is truly responsive to the mission and vision of this national parkland environment.

Along with more than 2,800 NPCA members who have already weighed in to support the PX, we urge the Trust to select the PX if a choice is being made from the three proposals. We would also support the “wait and see” outcome suggested by the National Park Service and the Evelyn & Walter Haas Jr. Fund.

The PX proposal, which is the only one that connects to and makes use of the outdoor attributes of the site, could not exist on real estate outside of this specific Crissy Field national park site. Through community engagement and buy-in, the PX offers innovative and fresh programming leveraging the site-specific resources found at the Presidio and Golden Gate.

The other two proposals, while interesting in their own ways, do not meet all the Trust’s criteria and could exist comfortably and succeed on real estate anywhere in the greater Bay Area. This underscores the two proposals’ programmatic disconnect from and inconsistency with this prime national park land, managed in the public trust to further the mission and vision of the Presidio and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area that it is within.

Importantly, the Lucas proposal fails to connect with the outdoors, the Presidio, the iconic site, or its history. The clear lack of programming that furthers the site specific and park goals makes this proposal unfit for the Mid-Crissy Field site. This major void is not something that can be corrected by “tinkering with” – the core foundation of the Lucas program simply does not meet and further the most basic goals for this prime national parkland and the Presidio. Additionally, we continue to remain deeply concerned about the Lucas proposal’s building scale and design, which are inconsistent with established law and policy.

We greatly appreciate and support the comments provided to the Trust by the National Park Service – comments that we believe build on the Trust’s planning and help to further refine the desired goals and expectations of this site. The Park Service’s comments and questions raised in their letter solidify for NPCA that of the three proposals before the public, only the PX rises to the challenge to meet each of the Trust’s six goals. The design of the PX respects and responds to the surrounding landscapes and meets the standards set forth in the Trust’s policies. The programmatic content, rich in national park-relevant themes, leverages Bay Area culture, technology, and the arts to reach broad local and “tourist” audiences. Importantly, a community-based partnership process would drive programmatic content, and the content would drive the physical build-out of the building. The Conservancy’s partnership-based approach has led to a strong and deep philanthropic base that would no doubt be energized and expanded to realize the PX as a major contributor to “a park for all forever.”

We agree with comments submitted by the Evelyn & Walter Haas Jr. Fund that the PX is the best choice before the Presidio Trust at this moment and is the only proposal to meet and further Trust goals. However, we also would support the “wait and see” approach which allows the tunnel top parklands to be developed and

inform the desired visitor experience of the Mid-Crissy Field site in a smart and comprehensive way.

Lastly, the Presidio Trust is in a deliberative process. Recent news reports, if correct, suggesting that the Trust is making deals to select the Lucas proposal strains the credibility of this planning effort on public land. Amplifying this public anxiety is the fact that the Trust has yet to develop and release any third-party verified renderings of the proposals, and allow public comment on them. The Main Post Update planning process significantly strained relationships between the Trust and the park community – we urge the Trust to avoid repeating this by focusing on the already defined goals of the site, adhering to its own design laws and policies, and re-establishing public confidence in the process by making a decision that respects and furthers the purposes of the Presidio and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area that it is within.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Neal Desai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Neal" and last name "Desai" clearly legible.

Neal Desai
Director of Field Operations, Pacific Region
National Parks Conservation Association

November 21, 2013

[Submitted via email only – commissary@presidiotrust.gov]

Members of the Board of Trustees
Presidio Trust
103 Montgomery Street
San Francisco, CA 94129

Re: Commissary Project

Dear Members of the Presidio Trust Board of Directors:

The following comment letter focuses on whether the Lucas Museum proposal should be selected by the Trust for the Commissary site. It explains the reasons why it should not, even if the proposal is significantly modified. We believe that the Parks Conservancy's Presidio Exchange is the only proposal that clearly and directly responded to the criteria contained and referenced in the Trust's Request For Proposals (RFP). However, if the Board is not inclined to select the Presidio Exchange proposal, this letter explains why the Board's decision on the Commissary site should be postponed indefinitely. These issues are addressed in the following analysis of the requirements stated in the Trust's RFP and related documents:

1. The RFP (at p. 3) recognizes the Presidio Trust Management Plan (PTMP) objective of creating “a public cultural use that would be fitting in a National Historic Landmark District and national park site as well as compatible with the stunning physical transformations that were just completed” (referring to the Crissy project).

The Lucas Museum falls short of any reasonable standard befitting the Presidio as a National Historic Landmark District (NHLA). In purpose and design, it has no substantive connection with a national park setting. It stands apart from its surroundings in size, design and pedestrian and vehicle traffic flow. The elevated structure would lord over the Crissy Marsh, block important views, and create a physical barrier between the Main Post and Crissy. While the Museum gains from the prestigious scenic setting, it stands apart from the open space and natural areas. Its ground level landscaping cannot overcome the impact the massive structure will have on its environs to the north and the south.

NPS Superintendent Frank Dean's Sept. 23rd letter aptly describes the importance of this site at the juncture of the Main Post and Crissy Field. He notes “the critical and powerful opportunity to seamlessly advance the park-building goal of the Trust: to physically and programmatically connect the Main Post to Crissy Field.” He recognizes that this “is a once in a lifetime opportunity” that likely will “be the most significant park transformation in the 21st century life of the Presidio.” He compares the right vs. the wrong use – one that can

advance the “park-building goal tremendously” versus one that creates “a physical, visual and programmatic barrier.” He states: “It should not be a use that could occur anywhere else.” Quoting from the PTMP, Supt. Dean urges programming “celebrating the area’s diverse historical, cultural and natural resources.”

We strongly believe that the Lucas Museum proposal is the wrong use for this unique and critically important site. The proposed museum does not meet the PTMP’s mandate that it offer programs celebrating “the area’s diverse historical, cultural and natural resources”. Clearly the Lucas Museum fails to meet that mandate as well as nearly all the relevant RFP requirements, as shown below.

The Lucas proposal is not befitting of the location, described by the Trust and others as the signature location in the Presidio. The Lucas team’s proposal for a large, hi-tech digital arts facility bears no meaningful relationship to the Presidio. Many art museums built or funded by an individual are legacy projects presented as a contribution to the public good. What makes them a public good is determined by how well the museum aligns with the needs of the locale. As shown throughout this letter, the proposed Lucas Museum does not align with the goals and intent of the Presidio.

2. The RFP (at p. 3) states that the proposal be designed “in a manner that enhances the whole of Crissy Field and protects its diverse resources.”

The Lucas Museum’s proposed design detracts from, rather than enhances, the Crissy area with its massive structure that stands apart from and reigns over the Crissy area, as noted above. Architecture critic John King in the Nov. 18 edition of the San Francisco Chronicle confirms this.

3. The RFP (at p. 5) states that the proposal offer programming that “complements other Presidio offerings and contributes to a high-quality visitor experience at the Presidio.”

The Presidio is a celebrated part of the world’s greatest national park system. It is a unique setting with tremendous historic significance. The Lucas Museum’s proposed programming has nothing to do with the Presidio, the park, its past or its role on a broader level. The Lucas programming as described to the public to date clearly fails to complement the Presidio’s offerings or the visitor experience in this rich parkland. The Lucas proposal’s technology may be very attractive to the San Francisco and Silicon Valley business community. It may also be very appealing to children in exposing them to highly stimulating digital arts experiences. However, the digital arts programming described in the Lucas proposal is entirely unrelated to the national park experience.

4. The RFP (at p. 5) states that the proposal present its “intellectual framework for your programmatic philosophy and approach.”

The Lucas Museum proposal offers no intellectual framework of a programmatic philosophy that in any way relates to the Presidio, the Presidio Interpretive Plan, its themes, its purposes as a national park, its role in bringing nature to the urban public, or any other legitimate intellectual goal connected to this park.

Supt. Dean's letter asks "which proposal best contributes to a continuum of visitor experience – physically, visually, and programmatically – by linking with and complementing the programs of the Heritage Center, Visitor Center, and Crissy Field Center?" Once again, the Lucas Museum comes up short, as there is a fundamental intellectual disconnect that cannot be glossed over.

5. The RFP (at p. 5) states that the proposal "describe how the building is an expression of the values of . . . the Presidio."

The Lucas Museum proposal does not on any level describe a bona fide rationale for its structure serving as an expression of the values of the Presidio. While the museum would be a great addition to the adjacent city of San Francisco, it has no true nexus to the Presidio. John King's article in the Nov. 18 edition of the San Francisco Chronicle excellently explains how the Lucas Museum does not fulfill this criterion.

6. The RFP (at p. 5) states that the proposal "provide CAD drawings that illustrate the building's relationship to the Main Post and Crissy Field. . . . [and illustrate] how the design preserves important views . . . "

It speaks volumes that the Lucas team apparently has chosen to withhold its CAD drawings and accurate site details until after the public input would otherwise have been closed. However, even without the benefit of the CAD drawings, it is clear that the Lucas Museum proposal egregiously violates the Mid-Crissy Design Guidelines. It fails to connect the Main Post with Crissy, and instead would create a massive structural wall between the two areas. It also fails to provide an inviting pathway between the two key locations. Its design runs afoul of the spirit of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for a structure in a NHL. Its Beaux-Arts style arguably misleads the public to think the building is a remnant of a prior era.

Additionally, the 65 foot high project, resulting from stacking the museum on top of a parking garage built on top the existing site, would significantly block views in all directions.

The Lucas team has consistently hidden the ball from the public and apparently the Trust. It has been a self-serving decision on the part of the Lucas team and they should not be permitted to gain from it. Public land is meant for public purposes. We place great value on transparent process for the uses of our national park, and greatly appreciate the Trust's efforts to ensure the integrity of that process.

7. The RFP (at p. 6) states that the proposal “describe the green design, construction and maintenance strategies . . .”

The Lucas Museum proposal offers no reuse of the existing site. Its design involves trucking into the Presidio a huge amount of soil fill and concrete material in order to build and then cover the large garage structure. Landscaping and planting a small lawn on part of the building’s roof falls far short of the Presidio’s standards for green projects.

8. RFP Goal No. 1. Enhance the visitor experience of the Presidio.

While the Lucas digital arts programming may provide a very stimulating indoor, high-tech experience, it does nothing to enhance the Presidio visitor experience. There is no relevant connection between the Lucas Museum program and the Presidio. It would be disingenuous to attempt to bootstrap the relatively recent addition of the Disney Museum or Mr. Lucas’ former corporate headquarters as providing that connection. Extending that logic, the next addition to the park would be a film lot.

9. RFP Goal No. 2. Provide programmatic offerings that are fresh and vital, that connect to broader themes, and that stimulate imagination and creativity. Offer cross-disciplinary programming that can be effective in advancing knowledge that has broad and lasting importance.

The Lucas proposal does not meet the objectives of this goal for a project to be situated in a national park in an area that has adopted guidelines, such as the Mid-Crissy Area Design Guidelines and the Presidio Interpretive Plan (PIP). None of the Lucas Museum’s professed objectives is consistent with park values or the PIP’s themes. The stimulation of one’s imagination and creative experience in visiting a national park, especially with its rich setting and past as the Presidio, should be related to the park and the Presidio, as opposed to totally unrelated digital arts.

10. RFP Goal No. 3. Be compatible with the natural and cultural setting along the Crissy Marsh and San Francisco Bay and conform to the Trust’s Mid-Crissy Area Design Guidelines and LEED requirements.

Based on what has been released for the public’s consumption about the Lucas Museum proposal, it deserves a failing grade in meeting this goal in essentially every respect. The museum would not be compatible with the natural and cultural setting and blatantly ignores the Mid-Crissy Guidelines. It does not respect the sensitive archeological sites within the project area. It does not reuse any part of the existing structure, and the proposed construction is environmentally insensitive involving the trucking of thousands of cubic yards of asphalt, concrete rubble, and in-coming fill and concrete materials.

Visitors arriving by car will park under the building in a garage and enter directly into the museum. Absent from the visitor's experience will be any physical contact with the Presidio itself. Visitors arriving by tour bus will be dropped off and picked up in a bus queue in front of the building, and will have nearly the same non-Presidio experience. The building itself is not conducive for a visitor arriving from Crissy to migrate uphill to the Main Post, or vice versa. The design does not appear to include an inviting trail that bypasses the structure. The structure would not relate to Crissy Field, to the new parklands above the Presidio Parkway, or to the Main Post.

11. RFP Goal No. 4. Complement current uses and activity in the Presidio, and integrate well with plans for Crissy Field and the Main Post.

For the reasons stated in the preceding comments regarding Goals 1, 2 and 3, the Lucas Museum proposal would fail to meet this goal as well. The proposal has no connection with current uses and activity in the Presidio on a substantive level. It would not complement the PIP. It would not integrate well, if at all, with the plans for Crissy and/or the Main Post. While the Museum may well attract hundreds of thousands of visitors each year, many if not most will leave the Presidio without having experienced or learned anything about the Presidio.

12. RFP Goal No. 5. Welcome a broad cross-section of the community in a manner that reflects and reaffirms the public nature of the Presidio.

As described in the preceding comment, many of the Lucas Museum visitors will not have any interaction with the rest of the Presidio; nor will they gain any appreciation or understanding of the Presidio as a result of their Lucas Museum experience. For those that do, their museum experience will have little or no connection with the Presidio. Instead of reaffirming the public nature of the Presidio, the Museum will charge admission fees and operate with restrictive hours that will preclude many park visitors from even entering the facility. Those that do gain entry can dine on a rooftop with a design that resembles a private country club experience. The proposed museum, in sum, does not reflect or reaffirm any aspect of the Presidio, its values, themes or offerings.

The Compromise of the Public Process and the Project's Transparency.

The Lucas team has had over three years to prepare its proposal, and has had multiple opportunities from its concept proposal to its response to the RFP to comply with the project's goals and the governing guidelines set forth by the Trust. Instead of cooperating with the Trust and the public, the Lucas team has knowingly withheld its CAD drawings and accurate site details from the Trust and the public until the last possible moment. The effect has undermined the public process and the transparency goals of the Trust. In fact, the effect of withholding the CAD drawings until after the public meetings and debate had closed has deprived the public of making fully informed input.

The Lucas team has hidden the ball from those who might disagree with its proposal. This has resulted in a breakdown of the Trust's well-intended public process. As John King's November 18th San Francisco Chronicle article and numerous public comments note, the Lucas team has focused its energy on influencing public officials and others to endorse its proposal based on wealth, star-power, political influence and high tech glitz, independent of what is best for this unique parkland.

A Proposed Solution.

Throughout this process, the Trust has learned much about the Commissary site that was not apparent a dozen years ago when the Trust incorporated into the PTMP a cultural institution in the Crissy area. It is likely that no one, not even the Trust's Board, fully comprehended the significance of this site at the time the RFCP was issued or when the goals for the RFP were established. Should it be a 100,000 sq ft complex, half that size or some other alternative is not a question that lends itself to a confident answer at this time. As the October 29 Haas letter counsels, with the long-term interests of the park in mind, this is the time to step back and take the long view – essentially, put the project on hold while the Parkway and the bluff become a reality before taking that next step.

Without the completion of the Presidio Parkway and the creation of the bluff with acres of new open space, it is not possible for the public or the Trust to fully appreciate and evaluate what is best use of the Commissary site in the future. A decision on a project of this importance – likely the most important decision the Trust will face in the next 50 years – should not be based on wishful thinking, speculation, political and self-serving endorsements, or vague assumptions for how it will function 20 to 50 years from now based on surroundings that are presently in flux.

One proposal, the Conservancy's Presidio Exchange, provides the flexibility in size, design, programming and timeline to accommodate the interim developments with the Parkway and the bluff. It also is the only proposal that solidly meets all of the RFP requirements. If the Presidio Exchange is not selected for the Commissary site at this time, then we urge the Board to accept the sage advice contained in the two letters from NPS Supt. Dean and the Evelyn and Walter Haas Fund, and delay your decision until the Presidio Parkway is completed. With the benefit of the completed Parkway and bluff, the Trust may well decide to significantly modify the Commissary project goals in a manner that ensures the best long-term result for this exquisite site.

All of us should appreciate the tremendous benefit we have gained in learning more about this critically important site as a result of this intense process. We thank the Trust for this opportunity and for the inclusive process. What has become evident to us is that the selection of a proposal other than the Presidio Exchange at this time would be premature and imprudent. Instead, if you reject the Presidio Exchange and its flexibility, we urge you to recognize the value of

stepping back for an extended period of two or three years before making a long-term decision. If you decide to proceed at this time with one of the other contenders as the Preferred Alternative for the EIS process, we urge that you share a statement with the public containing your detailed rationale addressing all of the RFP requirements.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

William R. Shepard, Chair, Neighborhood Associations for Presidio Planning
Amy Meyer, former Board Member, Presidio Trust
David Bancroft, Board Member, Cow Hollow Association
Louise Bea
Jan Blum, Board Member, Russian Hill Improvement Association
Lew Butler, Chairman Emeritus, Ploughshares Fund
Robert Cherny, Professor Emeritus of History, San Francisco State University
Barbara Corff, Member, People for the Parks/Presidio
Robert David, Board Member, Golden Gate Valley Neighborhood Association
Neal Desai, Pacific Region Field Director, National Parks Conservation Assn.
Herbert Elliott, Board Member, Lake Street Residents Association
Rebecca Evans, Sierra Club
Robert Fries, Friends of Sutro Heights Park
John H. Frykman, Coalition to Save Ocean Beach
Sharon Gadberry, Board Member, Presidio Historical Association
Don Green, Laurel Heights Improvement Association
Whitney Hall, former Presidio Commandant
Raymond Holland, President, Planning Association for the Richmond
Toni Kramer, Community Member, Presidio Restoration Advisory Board
Marty Krasney, Vice Chair, Commonweal
Tom Kuhn, Executive Board, Coalition to Save Ocean Beach
Michael Lynes, Executive Director, Golden Gate Audubon Society
JoAnn McAllister, PhD, Saybrook University
Doug McConnell, ConvergenceMedia Productions
Mary Anne Miller, Board Member, San Francisco Tomorrow
Doug Nadeau, GGNRA Chief Planner (1974- 1998)
Margot Parke, Board Member, Pacific Heights Residents Association
Tito Patri, Fellow, American Society of Landscape Architects
Jake Sigg, Conservation Chair, Calif. Native Plant Society, Yerba Buena Chapter
Laurie Wayburn, President/CEO, The Pacific Forest Trust
Paul Wermer, Neighborhood Network
Peter Winkelstein, Advisory Council Member, SPUR
Matthew Zlatunich, Member, People for the Parks/Presidio

Contact: William R. Shepard - 44 Montgomery St., Suite 3850 - San Francisco, CA 94104 - c: 415-385-4111



November 22, 2013

Presidio Trust (attn: Commissary Project)
103 Montgomery Street, P.O. Box 29052
San Francisco, CA 94129

Submitted via email to cmiddleton@presidiotrust.gov, nancyhb@pacbell.net,
mboland@presidiotrust.gov, tlombardi@presidiotrust.gov,
commissary@presidiotrust.gov

Dear Nancy and Craig:

Thank you for providing to the public the photo simulations for the 3 final Commissary project proposals. These simulations are helpful to NPCA and the public to better understand the proposals. The simulations, however, do not provide specific data long-requested and finally in possession by the Trust. For example, the height (measured in feet above sea level) of each level for each building proposal that would typically accompany a simulation is not described in the simulations. Thankfully, this information already resides with the Trust.

With this letter, we request the data provided by the project proponents that have informed the Trust's simulations. For example, we would like to review the dimensions (height, width, length) of the buildings that each project proponent has submitted to the Trust and used by the Trust to develop the simulations.

For ease of public consumption, we request that this data be posted online at the Trust's helpful Commissary website.

Please respond to confirm receipt and response to this request. Again, many thanks for your continued efforts to help all interested parties engage in this public process.

Sincerely

Neal Desai
Director of Field Operations, Pacific Region
National Parks Conservation Association