

## **Ocean Beach Master Plan - Public Workshop #3 - Feedback received via email**

Received 10/29/2011:

Here's an idea. While I'm unclear on the connection between the Park and the beach at the far western end of Lincoln, I'm remembering little but roads and asphalt expanse. I'd like to see better connection.

Also, if the new recycled water plant is built, I'd like to see an overlook, perhaps as part of the western side of the building. There would be a place to park bicycles (and maybe cars). There would be an information center, and possibly a concession selling watch caps and eats. There would be an overlook spot to which one could climb to sight especially south and west, possibly with scopes (for 50 cents), protected by glass against wind. People like high spots; this would gratify. Ideally there would then be a pedestrian bridge, possibly also for bikes, across the Great Hwy for better connectivity. This building would act as a wind block, improving the inland habitat and Park opportunities. As wind is almost always from the west, odor should not be a problem. The info center might cover just Ocean Bch, or might cover the plant and recycled water, too. Ideally a MUNI stop too.

Received 11/2/2011:

As the SPUR Project Manager for the Ocean Beach Taskforce activities, this email is sent to you, and in turn I request that you ensure it is properly registered in the Ocean Beach Taskforce comments records.

For the benefit of others who receive this email, please know that SPUR (San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association) has been paid \$455,000 to develop plans for the next 50 years at Ocean Beach. To do this, SPUR has convened well-staffed public meetings and asked citizen attendees questions such as "what is your favorite view." (<http://www.spur.org/publications/library/article/future-ocean-beach>; <http://oceanbeachbulletin.com/2010/09/21/on-the-brink-of-an-ocean-beach-master-plan/>)

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Now, SPUR's Taskforce has developed 3 recommendations: despite the Taskforce's significant resources (including producing large glossy color paper copies of the Options and other information), they are not posted online. In sum, they involved, respectively, "retreating" (i.e., destroying the Great Highway so that it no longer connects to Skyline Blvd.) and routing all Great Highway traffic down Sloat and behind the Zoo; retreating and not even bothering to route traffic behind the Zoo; and letting Great Highway fall apart entirely along the Sunset District. Really, according to SPUR's Taskforce, there is no option: we must lose coastal transit.

Here are my comments:

1. The entirety of the SPUR Taskforce's activities are a sham, as its proposals fail to follow the single most basic tenet of any physical spaces analysis: maintenance of the status quo. Maintenance of the status quo is not provided as an option. No reason for this failure is given, nor is the status quo even addressed. This is a colossal failure of competence, and begs the question of whether the entire enterprise is so flawed that it should be discarded (\$455,000 dollars later): the answer is yes (see comment 2).

2. In my discussions with your coastal engineer Bob Battalio, it was revealed that maintenance of the status quo can readily be accomplished. There is "revertment" - the technical term for throwing rocks along the coast to slow the surf's energy -- and sand replenishment along the beach (through dumping, pumping, or back-passing) and to create surf-shaping sandbars. These can readily be accomplished, may cost relatively little, and are known technologies. Another known option would be a jetty or breakwater to redraw the circulation pattern such that sand will be naturally deposited on the critical section of the beach. I have been specifically informed that these methodologies would address the issue of beach scouring and maintain infrastructure until 2050. This would be my preferred option.

3. Fundamentally, the options are plain useless, as they have zero cost analysis. It is anathema that these options can be considered without cost considered hand-in-hand, just as with any real study. You might as well have asked your participants if they'd like anti-gravity hoverboards. Again, this study must be entirely revisited to see what the costs are of all options (including maintaining the status quo).

4. There is no discussion of things that matter. The Ocean Beach seawall has rusty rebar sticking out of it. There is no doubt that it must be fixed. However, this immediate and practical concern is entirely unmentioned. This further demonstrates the failure of the study to consider real needs.

5. Amazingly, the option to route all Great Highway traffic along Sloat calls for Sloat to be narrowed: yet, you stated that experts report that traffic on Sloat will not be impacted. I have no idea how on earth anyone could be considered an expert and conclude that increasing traffic volume and decreasing the number of lanes could not have a negative impact: to put it bluntly, that's nuts.

If it were within my power, I would have SPUR return this wasted money and direct the study to be performed by an entity that can conduct a practical, expediency-and-cost considered analysis.

Received 11/3/2011:

I see that reducing the number of lanes on most of the Great Highway is something that is being proposed. I would like to voice my concern for removing lanes from the Great Highway, especially southbound lanes. As a resident of the outer Richmond, the Great Highway is my portal to all points south, whether traveling to Hwy 1, Hwy 280, or eventually Hwy 101. In case of any type of disaster (earthquake or tsunami), the Great Highway will be a VITAL line of transportation to many residents of the outer avenues in case evacuation from the City is necessary. Two lanes in this southbound direction MUST remain open to support a necessary disaster management relief plan; we will not have the option to evacuate North over the Golden Gate Bridge, and traversing east across entire City to eventually reach a southbound highway is not practical for the hundreds of thousands who live out here. Sunset Boulevard will not adequately handle all of the traffic that would be created in case of a need for mass exodus of residents of the outer avenues. By removing lane(s) of traffic on the Great Highway, planners would put residents' safety at risk by greatly reducing the ability of residents to use the Great Highway in case of some type of emergency. Also keep in mind there are no live electrical wires spanning across or along the majority of the Great Highway, coupled with the fact

that the road is a 'straight shot' with no exits/entries between Lincoln and Sloat; thereby making this road an even more important asset in case of emergency; so long as the road may be traversed, it will lack the impediments many other roads in the City will have and be vital in assisting residents and Emergency Management workers easier access into/out of the City. I'm all for public use, but safety is paramount, and to ignore this fact would be an incredibly irresponsible action of the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association. Please consider this point; we need to maintain two functioning lanes of traffic moving southbound on the Great Highway to ensure the safety of ourselves, as well as our friends, family, and neighbors of the Outer Richmond and Sunset.

Received 11/16/11:

Recommendations for Ocean Beach, southern reach, primarily

Master Plan Team: Thank you for doing outstanding work in synthesizing much for the benefit of Ocean Beach.

I am pleased that critical sewage infrastructure is to be protected to maximize the chance that it lasts most or all of its useful life, most of which remains. The means of protecting is of course tricky:

1. Will cobbles be very costly? What is the environmental impact of using a large volume of them? They are dug from river beds, often, I believe. Do cobbles need to be transported long distances? Can they be shipped? If not, I assume roads would be used, increasing traffic and truck pollution. When the ocean hits, will cobbles roll? Are they effective at protecting large pipe from being undermined by ocean waves, or does the ocean roll the cobbles in front and undercut the pipe nearly as quickly as if cobbles had not been placed? Are cobbles placed within filter fabric, and does this improve protection? What alternative forms of protection, other than cobbles, are there, what are the environmental harms of these and how do they compare? Now that rubble is there, is it better to bury it, using it or some sizes of it, rather than incurring the cost, environmental and financial, to remove it?

2. While controversial and opposed by groups that are heavy users of the ocean, and thus need to be given due consideration, what about deploying some artificial reef? Are there areas that are not so much used by surfers where artificial reef might be tried? Is it possible, according to experts, that kelp beds might take shoreside of the new reef? Can a reef be anchored; will it be pounded apart? What are its costs, how would it arrive (ship, hopefully), what environmental effects, harmful and helpful, would it have? While this is an old idea that has not gained traction, I include it so that it not be forgotten: deploy a ship from Suisun Bay, an old carrier, during winters, perhaps towing it in late Fall, and towing it back to Suisun in Spring, sinking it offshore and using it to block and reduce the force of winter storm surge. There is about a 1000' of beach to protect; one ship is 888' in length.

3. Buried piles? Suppose drilled piles were buried in front of the most vulnerable stretch of Lake Merced tunnel pipe, before the "blanket" of cobbles was placed? Would these aid protection enough to be worthwhile? What is the precise mechanism of storm scour? When it threatens, is there something that can act as a barrier, even a moving (falling) one, and can that be incorporated at reasonable cost, better protecting infrastructure investment? (I doubt that ballast can be added internally to the pipe; key move 2.2.)

4. Vegetated dunes. Everyone should like this idea: it is user-friendly, lovely, protects infrastructure, and is probably most "natural". What is key is getting channel sand to the beach. The Essayon dumps the sand in 50' of water. Either Essayon needs to be modified, and money found to do so (\$10-20 million is estimated), or San Francisco needs to find a way to get sand from 50' deep in the ocean to shore. Please work on this latter, a Plan B as it were. Limited

quantities of sand are available, perhaps 300,000 yards per summer. Probably much more than that is needed/desirable. Some sand will be lost to the ocean's vagaries; lucky if 250,000 yards can be got ashore. Earliest feasible start is summer 2013. Plans are needed to make sure sand starts coming ashore no later than summer 2013. Then dunes need to be built and vegetated. The need is immediate; no one can know which winter will be the one when southwest storm surge combines with tide and other conditions to wreak destruction; it happens very suddenly. Protect; good intentions do nothing! One additional comment: I see no advantage to a cobble toe; cover the cobble entirely with sand (key move 2.6).

I ask that the draft recommendations be modified consistent with the above; alternatively, that they include the above in an appendix of alternative ideas. Again, thank you for excellent work done.

Additional comments. While my primary concern lies in protecting investment in infrastructure, here are additional comments and concerns relating to the southern reach:

- Now there is parking south of the west end of Sloat. Will that cliff-front parking be replaced? Will access be as easy? Many just view the ocean from their car or in front of it. It would be nice to have some if not comparable then equivalent (in the sense of as good as) spot from which to watch the ocean, meditating on it and perhaps loved ones whose ashes are part of the Pacific. It would be nice to have an arch or other gateway entrance to the wild ocean, for those who come by MUNI. My preference is for leaping dolphins or salmon as part of an arch; an artist should create. Could this come from 2% art set-aside money? SFPUC steers its art money itself, has lots.
- With the train crossing Sloat and Great Highway adding traffic, that intersection (perhaps where the old Zoo entrance was?) will require careful planning and control. Bike parking might be placed elsewhere to relieve congestion. Auto traffic will tend to try to drive to the far west, where the ocean is visible; there should be ways devised to minimize traffic congestion, ideally without too many flashing lights.
- If not yet done, make sure the Zoo is on-board with this draft plan.

I believe my previous email constitutes a sufficient comment about the middle and northern reaches. To briefly recap: consider rest room facilities (3.4) that are franchised to an operator, preferably local and small business, who would keep the facilities decent, charging (or waiving) a small fee for use. Re-consider the open roof concept (invites off-hour mischief; pictured pg74); run design concepts by potential operators so that it works best for them. Deploy wind turbines only if not unsightly, and not bird killers. At west end of Lincoln, if a recycled water plant is sited there, then use its western wall as an overlook (5.4) as well as a wind barrier; make it a meeting place, bike parking place, and info center, possibly with a rest room as above.

Also, adding, I am unconvinced that the seating pictured at pg65, seating/play, will be long-lasting and worthwhile. Wood is good because heat/cold does not transfer, but it gets pried out and used for firewood.

Received 11/19/11:

You don't need a two-way bike path up the hill past the Cliff House. One way up the hill is adequate. Downhill bikes are going about as fast as the cars, and the best thing is to move into the center of the lane.

Received 11/23/11:

Attached please find a joint letter from Save The Waves and Surfrider San Francisco, in response to the current draft of the Ocean Beach Master Plan. We appreciate your leadership in the planning process, including bringing together such a diverse group of stakeholders, and feel like great strides have been made towards coming out with a very progressive plan. We

also commend SPUR and other agency's willingness to consider long-term solutions such as strategic relocation of some of the threatened infrastructure as part of the plan.

We do however still have concerns with the draft plan for the Sloat area, including what we feel is a lack of sufficient emphasis on strategic relocation over the long-term of at-risk sewer infrastructure. We feel strongly that not addressing this in the plan, even if decades out into the future, would be a significant lost opportunity to complete the "vision" of an environmentally sustainable future for Ocean Beach.

Thanks for the consideration of our comments. As the letter emphasizes, there are many positive aspects to the draft plan and we continue to be supportive of the master planning process overall.

Received 11/22/11:

Here are my comments on the "Ocean Beach Master Plan" public workshop 3, dated October 29, 2011.

### **General Comments**

A comprehensive discussion of the parking impacts of each scenario would have been helpful. It might be useful to encourage the Zoo to use mechanized structured parking to save space. The small businesses and residents will want to know how these recommendations will impact parking.

It was hard to understand the maps without legends. I found a legend on a previous presentation, but I could not print it.

### **Specific Comments**

1. Key Move #1: You should explore the possibility of reconnecting Lake Merced to the Ocean.
  - 1.4. It might not be worth the expense to extend the L Train the last block or so. If this is built, there should be a pocket park or a nice green plaza near the terminus.
2. 1.3. What does reconfigure Sloat mean? Does that mean reduce it to one lane in each direction? Is a traffic study going to be performed to analyze the impact of this change prior to the adoption of the plan?
3. Page 47- This appears to show the removal of street parking on the north side of Sloat. This will generate significant opposition from adjacent businesses.
4. Page 49- Does this graphic suggest an internal travel lane on the north side of Sloat?
5. 2.1- I would suggest that the improvements at Fleishacker building be operational before the Sloat restroom and parking lot are demolished. This is a very popular parking area for families, surfers, and fisherman.
6. 2.7. Would this be open to the ocean, or act as a pond behind the dunes? Why not

connect Lake Merced to this?

7. Page 54- Do you need a pump station? It appears from the drawing that Sloat is higher than the wetland. If you have a pump station, what would be the benefits/costs of connecting it to Lake Merced?

8. Page 56- The Lake Merced Tunnel appears to be extremely close to the surf zone.

9. 3.4- This appeared on two pages, 62 and 63. One says 3 new restrooms and one says 2-3 new restrooms. I would encourage 3 new restrooms. Also, restrooms should include freshwater showers.

10. 3.5- Why improve access at Rivera? It seems like a minor connection without any commercial or transit linkages. There should be monument signs at Sloat, Taraval, Noriega, and Judah indicating transit and services inland. To protect the dunes, a boardwalk to the beach would be helpful at these locations.

11. Pages 64 & 65- I would explore removing the concrete promenade near Noriega and replacing it with dunes. It would create an unbroken stretch of dunes between Sloat and Lincoln. It would be a major expansion of the dune ecosystem, protect from flooding, and provide sufficient scale to allow dune species to survive. Without an analysis of the overall parking loss or gain, it is hard to determine the need for additional parking at Noriega. However, I think there is merit in attempting to cluster the beachfront parking around Sloat and by the Cliff House.

12. Move 5- The parking lots between Lincoln and the Cliff are painfully sterile. It would be useful to explore a "warming hut" in the parking lot at the southern end of this portion.

13. 5.7- Fee parking is a good idea.

14. Page 74: This area would be a good location for a visitor/interpretative center to explain Ocean Beach, the dune ecology, and etc.

15. 6.3- Given the grade, view, turn radius, and diagonal parking, it would probably be safer to have two lanes south bound near the Cliff House. This should preserve adequate space for a dedicated bicycle lane on the north bound lane. If there is only one lane, it has to come to a complete stop when cars wait for and enter and exit parking.

16. Pages 74, 79- The large cylinders that are supposed to be entrance elements seem out of place for the location. Low key and impact monuments might be more appropriate.