Youth Workshop
March 30, 2009 ~ 6-8 pm ~ Gallanter Hall, JCCSF
Hosted by: Jewish Community Center of San Francisco

Approximate number of attendees: 7

AGENDA

INTRODUCTION
- Matt Silva, Neighborhood Parks Council (NPC)

Matt Silva from the Neighborhood Parks Council opened the workshop by introducing himself and thanking the participants for attending. He then went on to explain to the group that NPC had been working with the Planning Department and various other City agencies to conduct a series of community workshops in neighborhoods all over the City. The purpose of the workshops is to gather community input about the future of parks and open space in San Francisco.

POLICY FRAMEWORK: ROSE
- Sarah Dennis Phillips, S.F. Planning Department

Next, Sarah Dennis Phillips of the San Francisco Planning Department spoke about the Department’s revision of the Recreation & Open Space Element (ROSE) of the City’s General Plan. The ROSE, written in 1986, is comprised of over-arching objectives related to open space that have a set of associated policies for each objective. The newest version aims to have actionable and specific implementation steps linked to each policy that are universal across agencies. During her presentation, Sarah noted that the reason for initiating the update is that the current version is out of date and consequently lacks the status it should have as a strong, guiding policy document for the City. Community input on the revised policies and implementation steps of the ROSE is strongly desired. Sarah elaborated on this point, noting that the high school age group has been significantly underrepresented in the past, and that it is vital to have open space policies that accommodate the needs of everybody.
She then summarized her presentation by mentioning the City’s goal of establishing a 5-10 Year Action Plan along with a 100-year Vision Plan for Open Space; both of these documents will utilize the information gathered in the community workshop series. The City aims to have the final draft of the ROSE revision ready for review by late spring of 2009.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION: Open Space Challenges & Opportunities for San Francisco’s Youth

During this time, the participants were engaged in a dynamic, free-flowing discussion about their opinions, priorities, and ideas regarding open space in San Francisco. Some of the topics for discussion included:

- What parks they used and why (or why not).
- What types of amenities or uses they would like to see more of.
- Ways to increase volunteerism among the youth.
- Elements from their childhood that they would like to maintain or bring back.

REPORT BACK: Top ideas/priorities determined by the group

Some of the major concepts that emerged during the group discussion include:

- Provide more events and/or significant programming at specific locations throughout the City in order to draw more teenagers to the parks.
- Focus on improving accessibility to parks and open spaces – maximizes the potential for social interaction and allows for greater mobility.
- Consider improvements to passive recreation areas that would maximize usage – i.e. heat lamps, lighting, etc.
- Prioritize having good play fields and other amenities for sports (active recreation).

NEXT STEPS & CLOSING

Next Steps
Next, Matt Silva reviewed the ‘Meeting in a Box’ - a handout created to have meeting attendees take back to their friends and families to hold a conversation about open space issues in their neighborhood and in San Francisco. Input captured by these small group discussions will be integrated with data and ideas gathered at the larger workshops and used to inform the ROSE update and the Action Plan. In addition to the ‘Meeting in a Box’ exercise, workshop participants were asked to visit the Open Space 2100 website and take the online survey. Available at www.openspacesf.org/survey, the survey collects individual priorities and values regarding open space in San Francisco, and is a very valuable source of information for the aforementioned plans. Matt also noted that participants would be able to access these meeting notes on the Open Space 2100 website.

Closing Remarks
Matt Silva and Mike Kritzman of the Neighborhood Parks Council thanked the participants for coming, and the JCC staff for opening up their facilities for the workshop. In addition, they also expressed thanks to Sarah Dennis Phillips of the Planning Department for attending.