



Creating, Enhancing and Protecting the Unique Beauty and Livability of San Francisco

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THE CABLE

FALL 2005



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DEE DEE WORKMAN

Grant Funds Available for Neighborhood Parks

Calling all neighborhood parks groups! I am delighted to report that San Francisco Beautiful has received a \$35,000 grant from the Walter and Elise Haas Fund to augment our Friedel Klussmann Grants Program. The funds have been awarded to us for distribution across The City to improve neighborhood parks, playgrounds and adjacent community gardens.

If you and your neighbors are caring for your community park but could use help with the tools and supplies needed to get the job done, look no further than SFB's website: www.sfbeautiful.org for information about our grants program and how to apply for this and other funding opportunities. With support from the Haas Fund we can help purchase plants, irrigation supplies, gardening tools, outreach materials, paint and even new playground equipment.

San Francisco Beautiful has been funding improvement projects throughout the City for over 15 years. In that time we have awarded nearly \$1,000,000 to local groups working to improve the livability of their neighborhoods. Grants are given to projects that:

2005 Beautification Awards Announced

Look inside for award winner digest. Plan to join us at our celebrated Beautification Awards Dinner, Hotel Nikko, October 20th - see pages 3 and 8 for details.

- ◆ Contribute to the City's beauty as well as enhance its public face
- ◆ Maintain San Francisco's livability by rehabilitating or enhancing community landscapes or urban architecture
- ◆ Improve the quality of our unique urban landscape including neighborhood commercial districts, the waterfront, historic landmarks, parks and other open or urban spaces
- ◆ Support and enhance the link between clean, healthy physical settings and a healthy local socio-economic climate
- ◆ Encourage community involvement in projects that will enhance and beautify neighborhoods or provide understanding/documentation of a historic resource
- ◆ Create safe, inviting spaces for residents and visitors alike

San Francisco Beautiful and the Walter and Elise Haas Fund are partnering with you, community residents, to revitalize our neighborhood parks. If your local park needs improvements, call us today at 415.421.2608 or email us at sfb@sfbeautiful.org for a grant application.

SFB Flexes Collective Muscle: Keeps New Billboards Off Market Street

Early in August, San Francisco Beautiful tapped the power of its membership, mobilized, and averted a major blow to Proposition G, the 2002 No New Billboards measure. Only days before the deadline to submit propositions for the November ballot, San Francisco Beautiful learned that a Market Street property owner was trying to find four members of the Board of Supervisors to place a measure on the ballot to allow brightly lit, garish billboards (including Jumbotrons) on Market Street. SFB mobilized its forces quickly to counter this attempted override of the voters' will.

San Francisco Beautiful wrote letters, met with the Board of Supervisors (and their staffs) and emailed an alert to our members asking them to also contact the Board. Supervisors received many emails and phone calls letting them know that NO new billboards should be allowed in any part of San Francisco. The supervisors responded to our collective efforts and ultimately, the Market Street billboard initiative failed to get the support it needed to be placed on the ballot. All of us at San Francisco Beautiful have much to be proud of - we acted as a united front and won.

To be effective, we need your email!

Another attempt to put billboards on Market Street may show up on a future ballot. Stay informed on billboard issues and other San Francisco Beautiful efforts by providing us your email address. With your support, we can have an even greater voice in improving our city's livability. To join our email alert list, email SFB at sfb@sfbeautiful.org and write in the subject line: 'add my email'.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

"Eye of the Beholder Redux"

In my column in the last issue of *The Cable*, I raised the question of what we can learn about civic beauty by studying San Francisco structures that many people consider ugly. I invited you, SFB's newsletter readers, to submit nominations for "Anti-Beautification Awards." My thanks to all of you who responded.

The following nominations, of course, do not represent SFB's views, nor can they be considered a statistically reliable sample – but they are provocative. The comments in parentheses are those of the submitter. Some of the nominations were cited by more than one person. I'm presenting the nominations in alphabetical order.

- ◆ ABC Building on Front Street (stucco offices amidst brick buildings)
- ◆ Any cheap, run-of-the-mill downtown high-rise.
- ◆ Any flat-facade, stucco, "Richmond Special" apartment building
- ◆ Argent Hotel (low cost and it looks it)
- ◆ Cathedral Hotel (improved with white color)
- ◆ City College (uninspired, utilitarian buildings, poorly sited)
- ◆ Doyle Drive (an eyesore which serves as a barrier between the Presidio and Crissy Field)
- ◆ Federal Building (Golden Gate Avenue)
- ◆ Fontana Apartments (okay design but blocks waterfront)
- ◆ Former Jack Tar Hotel on Van Ness Avenue
- ◆ Fox Plaza (gloomy reminder of the lost Fox Theater)
- ◆ Gap Headquarters Building on the Embarcadero (horribly missed opportunity)
- ◆ Genentech Hall at UCSF Mission Bay
- ◆ Hall of Justice on Bryant Street (big box with little heart)
- ◆ Hilton Hotel on O'Farrell Street
- ◆ Holiday Inn on Van Ness Avenue (garage facade along street)
- ◆ Hotel Vitale (turns its back to the City)
- ◆ Lucas campus in the Presidio ("buildings-on-steroids")
- ◆ Mirawa Building on Pacific Avenue in Chinatown (big tiled box)
- ◆ Moscone Convention Center (original, missed opportunity)
- ◆ New Court House on the northwest corner of Polk and McAllister Streets (exterior confusion)
- ◆ New De Young Museum (inappropriate for the location, and exterior copper is poorly fabricated)
- ◆ New International Hotel Project on the southeast corner of Jackson and Kearny Streets (big ugly box)
- ◆ Residential tower on the northeast corner of Mission and Third Streets
- ◆ UCSF Campus on Parnassus (congested, mediocre buildings)
- ◆ Western Addition's Redevelopment Housing (lost Victorians)

These choices do not have obvious commonalities, such as age, size or use. They do all underscore, however, our citizens' deep awareness and concern over the quality of San Francisco's architecture.

BETTER ARCHITECTURE/ URBAN DESIGN EVENT IN THE WORKS

Over the years, San Francisco's skyline has been the reluctant recipient of architectural eyesores that detract from our city's world-class beauty; some buildings and public spaces seem

to ignore the established neighborhood fabric and create uncomfortable, unwelcoming voids (see President's Report). San Francisco deserves better, and we must demand it from those who will build San Francisco's future.

San Francisco Beautiful is in discussions with the Planning Department to produce a symposium to thoughtfully address San Francisco's need for architecture and urban design that is worthy of this special city. We will keep our readers informed as details unfold.



GILBERT H. CASTLE, III

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San Francisco Beautiful, founded in 1947 by Friedel Klussmann, is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to creating, enhancing and protecting the unique beauty and livability of San Francisco.

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BYRON RODRIGUEZ NEW BOARD MEMBER

Byron Rodriguez is a public finance attorney at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman. Most of Byron's clients are developers of large affordable housing and community development projects utilizing private activity bonds, tax credits and other public financing sources.

Byron grew up in the Sunset District near Golden Gate Park. He is a product of the San Francisco public school system and returned to the City after graduating from law school. He represents pro bono clients in a variety of business settings and has been involved with Junior Achievement for the last three years.

Even though Byron grew up in San Francisco, understandably he did not realize how special it was until he lived elsewhere. That experience, coupled with being taught at an early age to help keep his community beautiful, led him to join San Francisco Beautiful's Board of Directors.

AWARDS DINNER SILENT AUCTION ITEMS AWAIT YOUR BID!

The October 20th Beautification Awards Dinner and Silent Auction is San Francisco Beautiful's major annual fundraiser. Your dinner sponsorship helps in making possible our various programs. The silent auction is a fun way for you to participate in the evening's activities. Here's a sample of the exciting auction items awaiting your bid. See back page for event details.

Parisian Apartment - 2 one-week stays
Southwest Airlines - 2 Round Trip Tickets
Gump's - Agresti Jewelry Box
Fine Wines and Winery Tours
Harris' Restaurant gift certificate
Rotunda Restaurant gift certificate

Four Seasons Hotel -
Night Stay in an Executive Suite
San Francisco Ballet -
2 Tickets to a performance
Tommy Toy's - 2 Signature Dinners
San Francisco Giants and 49ers
memorabilia

NEIGHBORHOOD OPEN SPACES MAY BE AT RISK

San Francisco has many informal open spaces, small undeveloped parcels of city-owned land, cared for by neighbors that soften the concrete edges of our urban communities. Unfortunately, a piece of legislation enacted last year may place these parcels in jeopardy. San Francisco's Surplus Property legislation calls for the sale or development of the City's surplus property with the proceeds to benefit homeless and low-income services. Even though land under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Park Department is exempt from this legislation, some parcels identified as "surplus properties" are cherished open spaces cared for by the surrounding community.

A neighborhood stairway and planted slope at Henry Street and Roosevelt Way (mentioned in Adah Bakalinsky's book *Stairway Walks in San Francisco*) was placed on the 2004 surplus property list. While the surrounding community is working with their district supervisor Bevan Dufty to keep this site from being sold and/or developed, its fate is still uncertain. It is essential that parcels like this are protected from sale or development.

Communities must be informed when a site in their neighborhood is being considered as surplus property. San Francisco Beautiful is committed to working with the City to determine the best way to inform citizens of plans that may impact their community's open space. However, until a notifi-

cation process is in place, it is still up to you to take an active role in protecting your established neighborhood open spaces. Below is a list of San Francisco's surplus property and/or underutilized city-owned properties. San Francisco Beautiful will continue to explore this issue and provide information on how best you can protect your neighborhood's open spaces.

Surplus and/or Underutilized City-Owned Properties

Information obtained from the Real Estate Division, Department of Administrative Service. Does not include Recreation and Park properties. Addresses contain remainders, right-of-ways, parcels, undedicated streets, etc. Proposed list as of 6.22.05.

Alemany and Ocean
600 Bosworth
Bosworth and Burnside
Broadway and Larkin
Cesar Chavez and Guerrero
2627 Cesar Chavez
900 Cesar Chavez
Bayshore and Silver
859 Dwight
401 Franconia
Cayuga and Geneva
Jerrold and Rankin
4011 Mission
195 Portola
Palo Alto and Glenbrook
840 Clipper
691 Alemany
Rutledge and Brewster
2198 Thomas
149 Milton
SE Carl and Arguello
De Long and San Diego
La Grande and Mansfield
East of Roosevelt and Park Hill
59 Ord
Augusta and Charter Oak
1400 Bancroft
1000 Fitzgerald

2005 Beautification Award Winners: Environmental Solutions and Urban Beauty

For over 30 years, San Francisco Beautiful has sought out individuals, groups and businesses that have helped improve the public face of San Francisco. With a salute to the City's beauty, we have never failed to find winners.

By Robin Chiang, SFB Board Member and Beautification Awards Committee Chair

San Francisco Zoo/Lurie Education Center (Outer Sunset) – The San Francisco Zoo has been revitalized by the implementation of its new master plan. Improvements include new and expanded areas for the animals and a level entry on the Great Highway that is accessible to all. The animals may have benefited most from the changes – especially in the new savannah area where giraffes and zebras now live together. The Connie and Bob Lurie Education Center is a prime example of architecture that engages the public while being suited to its location.



Kid Power Park: Hoff Street between 16th and 17th Streets (Mission) – This was an undeveloped lot in a densely populated part of the Mission. When the owner decided to



Chinese Historical Society of America Museum and Learning Center: 965 Clay (Chinatown) –

The Chinese History Museum is located in the historic YWCA on Clay Street in Chinatown. Many know that Julia Morgan designed the building, but few know that the original building was funded by private donations from Chinese laborers. It was designed with a Chinese sensibility and completed in 1932. The recent rehabilitation of the building has been a sensitive and economical paring away of decades of modernizations. The architecture of the YWCA building has been renewed for all to appreciate and the Historical Museum has become more central to the history and destiny of Chinatown.

develop the property, youths from nearby St. John's Educational Thresholds Center launched a successful campaign to save the open space for recreation. With extensive community input, the Recreation and Park Department built a charming new playground in what is now known officially as Kid Power Park. An open space has been spared and continues to provide light, air and happiness to a diverse neighborhood.

Shotwell Greenway/Plant SF: Shotwell between 17th and 18th Streets (Mission) –

Plant SF's Jane Martin and her neighbors on Shotwell Street were concerned about illicit activities occurring at all hours in and between the cars parked on the street and sidewalks. Jane created a pilot project for "greening" the sidewalks

with cut-out areas, rocks and low fuel plants. The result has been the introduction of 'permeable landscapes' in front of nearly every property between the sidewalk and the curb. Plants requiring more attention are grown in metal containers placed on the sidewalks that also serve as bollards. The result is a block with cars parked on the street and sidewalks filled with drought tolerant plants within rock beds. Cut-outs allow rainwater to drain through to the subsoil, thus helping to replenish the ground water instead of flowing into the over-taxed sewer.





Stern Grove Restoration/Rhoda Goldman Concert Meadow: 19th Avenue and Sloat (Sunset) – The Rhoda Goldman Meadow is the setting for summer concerts in Stern Grove. For years, the meadow provided an ample, if ad hoc, venue for the popular annual free concert series. Today, a new and well-equipped amphitheater beautifies the meadow. Landscape architect Lawrence Halprin created a place in harmony with the tall trees and marine climate. Large granite blocks for seating border a large flat lawn. The blocks create giant steps that climb an existing slope to form, with great lengths of lawn, a stately and stunning amphitheater.



Brooks Park: Shields and Ramsell (OMI) – Brooks Park was the scene of drug use, dealings and conflicts over territory. Alarmed neighbors decided to take back the park by using it. Peter Vaernet spearheaded the campaign and envisioned creating a natural area and community garden. Volunteers worked with the Recreation and Park Department to make it happen. The natural area attracts a wide variety of insects and birds. A sloping field to the west recalls the flora that preceded civilization. To the east, a fenced area serves as a community garden. Volunteers maintain the area and work with children from the adjacent school in the appreciation of growing vegetation. Brooks Park has indeed been reclaimed by its neighbors.



The Josephine Randall Junior Museum, 199 Museum Way – This year the Friends of the Josephine Randall Junior Museum organized an informational exhibit to promote sustainable energy devices. Included are two large wind power generators made of thin steel rods and solid transparent panels. Both provide enough energy to run the museum's interactive exhibits. The museum has also recently improved its facilities with new exhibit and teaching spaces, a dining area, terrace, accessible ramps, and has replaced part of its parking lot with native plant gardens to provide more permeable ground areas.

Robert C. Friese Award for Neighborhood Conservation: Linda Blacketer and Dan Dodt for the restoration of Sylvester House and their long-standing commitment to improving neighborhood livability in the Bayview – In 1978, Linda Blacketer found the abandoned and dilapidated Sylvester House (built in 1865) in the Bayview. Her goal was to restore the house to its original condition – not just to modernize its interior behind a classical façade. It took many years of search and sacrifice to achieve the historically relevant showplace that makes its neighbors proud. The house has become a Bayview landmark not only for its historic significance but because it hosts community and political meetings open to the neighborhood. Linda also founded the new Bayview Historical Society. Her husband Dan Dodt is a long-term member of the Bayview Project Area Committee and serves on the board of the Alliance for a Clean Waterfront. Both have been active in neighborhood improvement efforts and promoting sustainable development for a cleaner environment in the Bayview.



Photo by Robin Chiang

Rincon Hill Plan Adopted – With Exception

This summer, after nearly two years of community planning and public hearings, San Francisco's Board of Supervisors adopted the Rincon Hill Plan. San Francisco Beautiful voiced support for most aspects of the Plan and even helped to improve it by successfully advocating for adding pocket parks to the Plan's open space options. We consistently took a strong stance against the exception that contradicted an important component of the Plan regarding tower spacing. SFB made several appearances before the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors, calling for the exception's removal. Unfortunately, the exception remained in the Plan as adopted by the Board of Supervisors and signed by the Mayor.

SFB has raised the level of debate surrounding exceptions, providing our City's decision makers with an important message: "Exceptions to approved and community supported land-use plans cannot be tolerated."

Civil Grand Jury Reconsiders Billboards

A San Francisco Civil Grand Jury report released this summer shines a spotlight on San Francisco's need to properly address billboard enforcement. Based on a number of interviews with various stakeholders, including SFB, the report recommends in part that the City strengthen billboard-related laws and adequately fund the Planning Department's efforts to enforce these laws.

The Board of Supervisors will hold a hearing in early fall where they will consider the jury's report and recommendations. SFB looks forward to participating in this hearing and will advocate strongly for solutions to effectively keep illegal billboards from ruining our City's landscape.

2ND QUARTER KLUSSMANN GRANTS

San Francisco's southern half got all the attention in the Friedel Klussmann Grants Program's second quarter of funding. Check out the wild side of the City by planning a visit to the fresh waters of Lake Merced and the inviting Visitacion Valley Greenway; they're great outdoor places to explore.

Visitacion Valley Greenway Project, Herb Garden and Viewing Pavilion: \$6,660 for plant material for an herb garden and community viewing pavilion at Arleta and Teddy Avenues.

Lake Merced Task Force, Master Plan Phase 1: \$5,000 for a consultant to review all the lake studies and plans carried out over the years and then do a 'gap analysis' to determine what still needs to be done in order to create a Master Plan for the lake.

Friends of the Urban Forest, Visitacion Valley Neighborhood Tree Planting: \$5,000 to supplement the cost to residents for up to 50 trees at \$100 per tree.

STAIRWAY DEDICATION

Colorful tiles now cover the 163 steps of the 16th Avenue Mosaic Stairway (at Moraga). Over 300 neighbors participated in this grand effort. SFB granted \$5,000 to the project.



Photo by Tom Kennedy

Consider applying for a Klussmann Grant for your next community beautification project! Go to www.sfbeautiful.org or call 415.421.2608.

SFB MEMBERSHIP CONTINUES TO GROW

This past quarter, San Francisco Beautiful welcomed many new members and some previous ones back. Our strength is in our numbers. If you are not a member, please join today!

Janet Carpinelli
Jeremy Battis
Jim Bolinger
Rob Evans
James E. Henrich
Alan Skolnikoff
Ellen and Walter Newman
William Thele Jr.
Vivian Kremer
Keoni A. Tai
Lillian Cartwright
Heidi Price
Andrei Karkar
Stefan Hastrup
Andrew Gescheidt

Steve Stone
Walter Knoepfel
John Kay
Robert Byrd
Matthew D. Osowski
Jo Anne Appel
Aleks Kardas
Jane Morrison
Liz Lerma
Louise Fong
Omar Serang
Paul Guest
Maryta Piazza
Anne Cashmore
Erntest Ng

Eugene Schirado
Alexis Howe
Michael Gerber
James DiCarlo
Ed Scola
Maryanne Razzo
Debra A. Bagnulo
Richard Vignolo
Karen Vollinger
Catherine Barner
Ellen D. Schaefer
Alice Wallace
Gilbert Graham
Patricia Walkup
Anne Lawrence

WAYS TO SUPPORT SFB

MEMBERSHIP

Becoming a member of San Francisco Beautiful not only supports our programs financially, it also gives us powerful leverage as we undertake civic initiatives.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Beautification Awards Dinner is the crown of our special events. The evening provides a fun way to meet other SFB members and view the good work of those receiving an award.

PARTNERSHIPS

eScrip: A percentage of your purchases goes to SFB when you shop at over 150 eScrip merchants. There is no cost to you. All you need to do is register your debit, credit and grocery club card(s) with eScrip. To register, log on to www.escrip.com and go to "sign up" or call SFB at 415.421.2608 for a registration form. Designate San Francisco Beautiful to receive contributions by referencing SFB's Group ID#500000576. (Prefer shopping online? Visit eScrip Online Mall.)

Cole Hardware: Cole Hardware gives SFB 10% of the purchases made by you. Ask the Cole Hardware cashier to post your purchase to San Francisco Beautiful's Group ID#141. Visit www.colehardware.com.

FOR SALE

SFB Logo Tote: Avoid using excess paper and plastic while showing your support for SFB. Purchase a big, durable canvas SFB logo tote.

Award Site Illustrations: Copies of SFB's 2003 and 2004 Beautification Award site color drawing are available for \$40 each. See www.sfbeautiful.org for image selection or call 415.421.2608.

Books: Purchase SFB's *Rooftop Gardens from Conception to Construction* and Adah Bakalinsky's *Stairway Walks in San Francisco*.

Logo Tees: SFB long sleeve logo tee-shirt. SFB's medallion-shaped insignia lets everybody know that you care about San Francisco.

To order any of the above items, use the sales coupon below.

We're Moving!

San Francisco Beautiful will be moving from its location of nearly 20 years. We have outgrown our space on Sutter/Market Streets that we originally rented from John Ritchie who was friends with Friedel Klussmann in her heyday. We are looking for larger, more appropriate space in a beautiful building worthy of having SFB as a tenant!

A call is being put out to members for their assistance. Anyone with real estate connections can help us by providing office space leads; or, for those who know movers, asking them if they are willing to offer SFB a discount.

If you can help in any way, please contact us at 415.421.2608 or sfb@sfbeautiful.org. We are very excited about finding a new home. Thanks for your support.

MEMBERSHIPS/SALES

If you are not a member of San Francisco Beautiful, please become one today. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent provided by law. All new members will receive a free SFB logo tote!

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Friedel Klussmann Circle: \$5,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributor: \$100 |
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Meagan Levitan and Dale Carlson at

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2005 BEAUTIFICATION AWARDS DINNER
"ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS AND URBAN BEAUTY"

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20TH

The Hotel Nikko
222 Mason Street, San Francisco

Reception and Silent Auction, 6:00 p.m. and Dinner, 7:30 p.m.



Executive Director
Dee Dee Workman presents the
2005 Beautification Awards



With Master of Ceremonies
Henry Tenenbaum, host of
KRON4's *Henry's Garden*
Saturdays at 10:00 a.m.

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