



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Golden Gate National Recreation Area
Fort Mason, San Francisco, California 94123

Foster RFL/PM 6/3/05
Ortega SS/PM 6/30/05
Bartling MLB/PM
O'Neill BON/PM 6/3/05
jm

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L76 (GOGA-PLAN)

JUN - 3 2005

Mr. Craig Middleton
Executive Director
The Presidio Trust
34 Graham Street
P.O. Box 29052
San Francisco, CA 94129-0052

Re: Initiation of Public Scoping and Environmental Assessment Preparation for Proposed Improvements to the Presidio Main Post Parade Ground

Dear Mr. Middleton:

During the past eighteen months, Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) staff members have been participating in workshops, sponsored by the Presidio Trust, to consider alternatives for the revitalization of the Main Post Parade Ground at the Presidio. The two alternatives presented at Public Scoping on May 23, 2005 demonstrate that the previous efforts to explore a broad range of revitalization alternatives prior to Public Scoping have yielded viable alternatives that are respectful of and compatible with the Parade Ground's status as a contributing element to the Presidio's National Historic Landmark Status. Both alternatives presented offer opportunities for revitalizing the parade grounds by introducing new activities and uses that celebrate the sites cultural heritage as the "heart" of the Presidio where military drills, troop exercises and public ceremonies were held dating back to 1776 when the Spanish built their first adobe garrison there.

As the Trust moves forward with plans to introduce new activities and tenants to the area around the Parade Ground, GGNRA encourages the Trust to give first priority to the rehabilitation and reuse of historic structures before considering new infill construction. Potential sites for infill construction should be evaluated to determine their impact on views from a variety of view points within the Presidio as the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the project is defined. We also encourage the Trust to insure that redevelopment alternatives that include the introduction of terraces be designed to accommodate the possibility of historic reenactments on the Parade Grounds.

GGNRA is encouraged by the progress in this challenging undertaking and looks forward to evaluating any new concepts that may emerge from the public scoping process. We are particularly interested in participating in discussions concerning the types of uses and

activities that will be introduced to the site and support your broad aims of incorporating as many public uses as possible. We offer our full support to your efforts to revitalize an urban space of monumental scale and historic significance.

GGNRA is available to provide technical support to your efforts in the accomplishment of a complicated and challenging task. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the attached comments or any other aspect of our participation in this project, please call Rick Foster at (415) 561-4472.

Sincerely,

 (SIGNED) BRIAN O'NEILL

Brian O'Neill
General Superintendent

Enclosure

Main Post Parade Grounds

Comment Number		Page Number	Comment Description	Initials
1			GGNRA is pleased with the progress and demonstrated effort working with the cultural character of the Main Post in developing concepts for revitalizing the Parade Ground.	
2			At this stage of planning, it might be wise to present a broader range of alternatives that were studied in the pre-scoping workshops to demonstrate that the public has had the opportunity to explore a broad range of alternatives. The reasons for not advancing dismissed alternatives into the NEPA studies should be discussed	
3			While it appears that the trees in front of the Montgomery St. barracks were planted late in the period of significance, they did for almost 50 years define and edge of Montgomery Street and provided framed views of the Bay from the front lawns of the Barracks buildings. Consideration should be given to replanting trees at this edge. It seems early in the process to determine that the trees on Montgomery should be removed. If the goal in removing the trees is to eliminate a non-native species from the area, could they be replaced by a more appropriate species that could define the edge between the Montgomery Barracks and the Parade Ground .	
4			Prior to proposing construction of new buildings as identified in Alternative 1, historic properties should be used to the maximum extent feasible to accommodate any of the functions that might be accommodated in these new facilities. The new building proposed between Anza and Graham is anticipated in the PTMP and could enhance the understanding of previous building clusters. However, the building proposed at the south end of the parade ground is not anticipated in the PTMP and conflicts with the historic “head” of all three parade grounds which is the Presidio Officer’s Club.	
5			Potential sites for infill construction should be evaluated to determine their impact on views from a variety of view points within the Presidio as the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the project is defined	
6			We encourage the Trust to insure that redevelopment alternatives that include the introduction of terraces be designed to accommodate the possibility of historic reenactments on the Parade Ground.	
7			The use of green to illustrate the surface of the Parade Grounds suggests grass. If large expanses of grass are being introduced to the Parade Grounds, the water requirement	

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			should be addressed and the impact of irrigation runoff on Crissy Marsh should be evaluated. This evaluation should include impacts of water borne fertilizer on Crissy Marsh.	
8			Alternative ways of moving people to activities and events at the Parade Grounds should be explored in an effort to reduce the volume of parking in the area.	
9			Efforts to reduce cut through traffic seem promising and should be coordinated with the Doyle Drive project to insure that the new on-ramps and off-ramps to Doyle Drive onto Girard Rd. do not increase the volume of cut through traffic through the area surrounding the Parade Ground	