

Optimism over Richmond's new general plan

CESP is pleased that the new Richmond General Plan released in February includes many positive changes. There is an emphasis on environmental sensitivity and respect for open space and natural resources that well befits a city with as many important environmental areas as Richmond. CESP applauds several changes made from earlier drafts, which will minimize significant impacts on important shoreline wildlife habitat.

Areas of positive change

- The new open space designation of the entire North Shoreline area west of the Richmond Parkway and south of Pt. Pinole Regional Park.
- The mixed use designation for the Terminal 4 area at Point San Pablo opens the way for conversion of this former industrial site to park and open space use that will benefit Richmond citizens and the public.
- For the Southern Gateway area, the added language to create appropriate setbacks to respect the natural habitats in adjacent marsh areas.

- Continuation of the current business/light industrial zone in the area adjacent to Point Isabel Regional Park, which will lessen negative impacts on the adjoining park and open space/natural preserve areas.

Areas of Concern and Request for further improvements

- Set-back requirement designated for the Campus Bay area should also be extended to the area surrounding Point Isabel and the Hoffman Marsh.
- Stronger recognition of sea level rise and a commitment to implementing a plan to deal with it. Specifically, the General Plan needs to reserve sufficient upland area to accommodate shoreline-using animal and plant species that will inevitably lose their crucial habitat to sea level rise. This is particularly true along the North Shoreline and the Hoffman Marsh.

Please send supportive comment letters to the City Council and the Planning Commission via the City Clerk at 450 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond CA 94804, or send email to the City Clerk at Diane_Holmes@ci.richmond.ca.us.

UPCOMING HEARINGS ABOUT THE
RICHMOND GENERAL PLAN
RICHMOND CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS,
440 CIVIC CENTER PLAZA, RICHMOND

April 7 — Study Session – 6:30pm
The Richmond Planning Commission will host a study session to address questions and review the new General Plan. Many of the issues addressed in the General Plan that affect the preservation, quality, and accessibility of shoreline parks will be discussed at this meeting (Elements 3, 7, and 9-11).

April 21 – Study Session – 6:30pm
The Richmond Planning Commission will host a second study session covering elements 2, 6, 8, 10, and 13 through 15 of the new General Plan.

May 5 – Planning Commission Recommendations on General Plan and Final EIR

May 17, June 7 – City Council action on General Plan and Final EIR

Updates are posted at:
www.cityofrichmondgeneralplan.org/



Shore Lines

News from Citizens for East Shore Parks

Spring 2011

Saturday, April 16 ~ 11:30 a.m.

Eastshore State Park Berkeley Meadow Dedication In Honor of Dwight Steele and Sylvia McLaughlin

Berkeley Meadow Southwest entrance ~ Marina Blvd

Please join CESP on Saturday, April 16, to celebrate the completion of the Berkeley Meadow in the Eastshore State Park and to honor CESP co-founders Dwight Steele and Sylvia McLaughlin for their efforts in making Eastshore State Park a public place that all the East Bay can enjoy.

The Park's Berkeley Meadow is a shining achievement in wetland restoration. The present-day meadow was once a landfill that has been transformed into a rare habitat oasis. The 72-acre meadow now offers coastal grassland and seasonal wetlands with walking paths that provide an opportunity for recreation and nature study.

The East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) restored the site in three stages over five years, planting native grasses and scrub species to create habitat for white-tailed kites, northern harrier, western burrowing owl, and other birds and animals. The cost for restoring the entire meadow was approximately \$6,000,000 with major funding from the California Coastal Conservancy, EBRPD and other sources.

Eastshore State Park is one of the most outstanding triumphs in the history of open space protection. Without Sylvia McLaughlin and Dwight Steele it is unlikely that there would be an Eastshore State Park today. Their

ceaseless efforts to save San Francisco Bay and its shoreline from development brought the Park to fruition.

In 1961, Sylvia, along with Kay Kerr and Esther Gulick, founded **Save the Bay**, one of the earliest citizens' groups in what was to become the environmental movement. Dwight joined them in their successful efforts to establish The San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), which in its first Bay Plan, designated the East Bay shore for park use.

In 1985 Dwight and Sylvia played key roles in forming CESP, a coalition of park advocates that included **Save the Bay**, the **Sierra Club**, **Golden Gate Audubon**, and other organizations and activists. They contributed essential funding to establish CESP. Dwight and Norman La Force became co-chairs and Sylvia became Secretary, a role she still plays today. Dwight guided CESP and led the campaign for the Park until his death in 2002.

We encourage you to come to this event to recognize the perseverance of two remarkable leaders—Sylvia McLaughlin and Dwight Steele—for saving the Bay and its magnificent shorelines for the hundreds of thousands who daily use its trails or enjoy its views of the Bay between Oakland and Richmond.

Please RSVP pjones@eastshorepark.org

and bmontano@ebparks.org or call 510-544-2200. Light Refreshments will be served.

The event will be directly across from the Marina. Driving directions are on our website: www.eastshorepark.org.

BERKELEY BAY FESTIVAL

Saturday, April 16 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Berkeley Marina along University Ave. and Marina Blvd

Spend a day by the Bay listening to music, taking free sailboat and Dragon boat rides, eating tasty food, and exploring the Berkeley Marina! Visit booths sponsored by CESP and other Bay Area educational organizations.

EVENT SCHEDULE

Shoreline Clean-Up: Register at 9 a.m. along the left side of University Ave, just before Marina Blvd. Clean-Up from 9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m. For more info, call *Patty Donald* at (510) 981-6720 or www.cityofberkeley.info/marina and look for special events

Berkeley Meadow Dedication: 11:30 a.m. at the Marina Blvd. entrance to Berkeley Meadow across from Marina.

Shorebird Classroom Grand Opening: Noon – 1 p.m. at the end of University Ave. in Shorebird Park.

Berkeley Bay Festival: Noon – 5 p.m. at the end of University Ave. in Shorebird Park



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Friends,

Please read this newsletter and see how YOUR support helps CESP work to complete a necklace of shoreline parks.

An envelope is enclosed for your much needed contribution and to share your views. All donations to CESP are tax-deductible.

Thank you!

Conservation is an investment that does not lose its value. Please help CESP secure future parks.

The mission of Citizens for East Shore Parks is to create a necklace of shoreline parks from the Oakland Estuary to the Carquinez Strait.

On the Horizon for CESP

from Patricia Jones, Executive Director

Dear Friends of Shoreline Parks!

Now that the rains have finally stopped, we can look forward to getting outside to celebrate our budding park.

Put on some sunscreen and come out to the April 16 Berkeley Meadow dedication honoring Dwight Steele and Sylvia McLaughlin for their relentless efforts to preserve the Bay and its shoreline for the health and enjoyment of native species and the public.

We anticipate many more improvements for the East Bay shoreline will spring from the work of persistent citizens.

And, if you're interested in getting more involved with the ongoing community efforts started by Dwight and Sylvia, please consider joining one of two CESP teams that focus on . . .

- Completing the Eastshore State Park's public amenities and natural habitat, or
- Expanding the area of the Park north along the Richmond shoreline.

New volunteers are most welcome to contact me and I'll see that you get connected with like-minded folks who get together to review projects, write comment letters, and organize or attend meetings to represent CESP's perspective on parkland and habitat.

For example, the restoration of the Berkeley Meadow was a big step in implementing the master plan for East Shore State Park. Citizens have also been involved in the planning for restoration and public access now under way for the Albany Beach and Breuner Marsh.

If the Richmond City Council approves the Pt. Molate resort project, many park and habitat benefits will emerge through the Shoreline Protection settlement agreement.

The new Richmond General Plan offers positive land use zoning policies that we

anticipate will improve the fate of the shoreline. For example . . .

The North Richmond Shoreline is important habitat for migrating birds. Its tidal marshes, mudflats, and eelgrass bed shelter many threatened and endangered species. Preserving this shoreline corridor as open space offers a unique opportunity to create a visible edge to the city with stunning long views in every direction.

Pt. San Pablo Peninsula, its scenic shoreline includes a tranquil beach, open space, historic buildings, stunning views of Mt. Tam, and populations of native fish offshore and grasses on shore.

South Richmond Shoreline. North of Point Isabel Park and south of Marina Bay, the Zeneca/Campus Bay is an integral part of the South Richmond Shoreline, with great views and a stretch of the Bay Trail. We envision it as an extension of the Eastshore State Park.

One area that I'd hoped to have something more to report on is the *Brickyard*. The California State Parks Department has finally brought on a new consultant to design a recreation development. Stay tuned.

I know you want to hear about shoreline updates, but it is expensive for us to send them by mail. The most cost-effective way to send timely information is via email. If we don't have your email address, please send it to me at: pjones@eastshorepark.org. We promise not to inundate with you with frivolous messages and we don't share our mailing list.

Our successes depend upon the financial support we get from our friends. Your tax-deductible contributions enable CESP's work to create a necklace of shoreline parks along San Francisco Bay. We are always grateful for your help.



Executive Director
510-524-5000

Shore Lines

News from Citizens
for East Shore Parks

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The long view for Albany Beach

Last year the East Bay Regional Park District initiated the Albany Beach Restoration and Public Access Feasibility Study to implement the Eastshore State Park master plan at Albany Beach.

Public workshops were conducted in Albany in December and at East Bay Regional Park District headquarters in February. Approximately 50 community participants from throughout the East Bay attended each of the workshops.

An analysis of opportunities and constraints was presented at the December workshop and three illustrative concept alternatives were presented during the February workshop. These concepts include restoration and protection of Albany Beach and dune habitats, expansion of dune areas behind the beach, enhancement of water access to San Francisco Bay, closing of a key gap in the San Francisco Bay Trail, shoreline stabilization, public access improvements and other park facilities such as picnic areas, interpretive signage and restrooms.

Comments received during the workshops covered a broad range of interests and concerns ranging from support for habitat and public access improvements identified in the master plan to a preference for minimal to no improvements to the project area.

A summary of comments from both workshops is posted on the District's website at www.ebparks.org/planning#albany. Future public meetings will be held as the scope of the project is defined.

Chris Barton, EBRPD Senior Planner, can be contacted at by phone at (510) 544-2627 or cbarton@ebparks.org.



Photo: Patricia Jones

THE HANDS ACROSS THE SAND RALLY AT ALBANY BEACH LAST YEAR.

Breuner Marsh restoration & public access progress

The Breuner property is a cornerstone of the North Richmond Shoreline and one of the most important expanses of undeveloped shoreline in the Bay Area. You see the Bay as it once was—an open saltwater marsh and coastal prairie filled with wildlife. The endangered Saltmarsh Harvest Mouse and California Clapper Rail and many other species of flora and fauna call the Marsh home.

The East Bay Regional Park District has started planning for a 140-acre restoration project that includes Giant Marsh. It will restore vital shoreline habitat and increase public access along the Bay Trail and day-use facilities for visitor education.

In January the Park District hosted a workshop at Parchester Village in Richmond and 50 people from throughout the East Bay attended. Four project concepts were presented for public input.

A second public meeting was held before the Executive Committee of the Park District Board of Director in February. Public comments at both meetings focused on proposed project amenities, including restoration and public access improvements.

Park District Staff are developing project alternatives based upon public input and findings from recent studies done by the project consultant team.

Proposed project alternatives will be released in July for the public to provide scoping comments for consideration in

preparing an Environmental Impact Report on the proposed project.

The alternatives are available at www.eastshorepark.org. More information at: www.ebparks.org

Golden Gate Fields bids on new Lawrence Berkeley Lab

In January a Request for Qualifications went out for a second Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory (LBL) campus with 2 million square feet of lab, office, and support space, including a 3000-foot-long building to house a light/energy research program.

Twenty-one developers from eight Bay Area cities responded. All proposals will be compared to the university-owned site at the UC Berkeley Richmond Field Station. A spokesman from LBL said that approximately four finalists would be announced sometime in April followed by a final decision in June.

Golden Gate Fields owner Magna International Development submitted a proposal to locate the campus at the racetrack site, straddling land in Berkeley and Albany. There is a question about whether an LBL campus would conform to the *Voices to Vision* plan for the Albany shoreline, which calls for at least 75 percent open space on the 102-acre property. There are also concerns that, as a government facility, it would not be legally required to comply with local zoning ordinances or the community wishes.

Supporting organizations include: Golden Gate Audubon Society • Sierra Club • Save the Bay • NRSOSA Oakland Waterfront Coalition • Berkeley Partners for Parks • California Native Plant Society Environmental Defense • Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge • Friends of Aquatic Park Oceanic Society • Regional Parks Association • Urban Creeks Council • Contra Costa Hills Club California State Parks Foundation • Citizens for the Albany Shoreline • Ecology Center