

Eastern Neighborhoods Community Health Impact Assessment (ENCHIA) Building a Vision for Healthy San Francisco Neighborhoods

A Project of the SF Department of Public Health

Community Council Members

American Lung Association
Asian Neighborhood Design
Center for Human Development
Charlie's Place
Citizen's Housing
GCA Strategies
Jardiniere / Nextcourse
Low Income Investment Fund
Mission Community Council
Mission Economic Development
Association
Mission SRO Collaborative
Neighborhood Parks Council
Okimoto-Saijo Architecture
Paul Terry & Associates
People Organizing to Demand
Environmental and Economic Rights
Potrero Boosters
People Organized to Win Employment
Rights
SEIU Local 790
SF Bike Coalition
SF Community Land Trust
SF Food Systems/Food Alliance
SOMA Family Resource Center
South of Market Community Action
Network
South of Market Employment Center
Tenants and Owners Development
Corporation
Transportation for a Livable City
Urban Habitat
Walk SF

Participating Government Agencies (non-voting)

SF Department of City Planning
SF Department of Parking and Traffic
SF Department of Public Health
SF Municipal Transportation Agency
SF Police Department
SF Recreation and Park Department
Board of Supervisors, Maxwell
Board of Supervisors, Ammiano
Board of Supervisors, Daly

Technical Advisors

Columbia University
Center for Collaborative Policy

Sponsor and Coordinator

Program on Health, Equity and
Sustainability, SF Department of
Public Health

February 15, 2006

The members of the Community Council of the Eastern Neighborhoods Health Impact Assessment (ENCHIA) would like to provide you with comments on the Eastern Neighborhoods rezoning process based on our collective work of the past 15 months. The letter also reflects a specific discussion on the zoning plans at our meeting of January 18, 2006. Government agencies are listed for identification purposes only.

As you know, the ENCHIA, coordinated by the SF Department of Public Health, is a multi-stakeholder, consensus-based process formed to analyze how development in the Mission, Potrero Hill/Showplace Square and SoMa neighborhoods could positively and negatively affect attributes of social and physical environments that are most important to health. These attributes include adequate and affordable housing; convenient access to public transit; accessible parks and public spaces; infrastructure for pedestrians and bicyclists; safety and security; healthy economic opportunities; unpolluted air, soil, and water; and, cooperation, trust, and civic participation. Council members consist of business owners, community service and childcare providers, public health, homeless, environmental, housing, bicycle, pedestrian, transportation, and parks advocates. City agencies providing technical support include the Departments of City Planning, Parking and Traffic, Parks and Recreation, Police, Redevelopment, and the Municipal Transportation Agency. Thus far, the ENCHIA Community Council has:

- 1) Developed an ENCHIA *Healthy City Vision*;
- 2) Developed community health objectives to reflect that vision;
- 3) Developed indicators to measure those objectives and vision;
- 4) Generated and presented data on those objectives and indicators; and,
- 5) Identified policies and strategies to advance those objectives.

Since its inception in November 2004, a primary goal of the Council was to evaluate the Eastern Neighborhoods rezoning plans. At the Council's most recent meeting in January, the group attempted to critique the plans in their current form based on community health objectives. Staff from the Planning Department briefed the Council on the current status of rezoning and neighborhood planning efforts. Planning staff reviewed maps of the proposed rezoning and a description of new use designations. They also provided the Council with a list of some of the other issues and proposals that might be considered through the creation of neighborhood plans. The Council then collectively evaluated the rezoning relative to the **Healthy City Vision** and related community health objectives that emerged out of the Council's first meetings.

While Council members did identify some specific ideas that could help the rezoning with respect to health needs and benefits, we also realized

that it is not possible to meaningfully critique the planning efforts in their current state. While there is a new division of lands among residential and commercial uses, there appears to few details as of yet regarding the other elements of healthy neighborhoods. The upcoming processes for the area plans and final rezoning could address this issue.

We also made the following additional general observations:

- Rezoning should serve the needs of a comprehensive community vision. While the rezoning addresses an important city interest in balancing land for housing and commercial uses, it also should address the social and economic needs of people in neighborhoods and the need for infrastructure that is important to health such as public space, parks, schools, and public transit.
- The rezoning should help spatially define and physically develop coherent and complete mixed use residential neighborhoods rather than simply appropriating space for mixed use residential uses.
- Open space planning should be a priority for healthy neighborhoods.

Specific ideas that could help the rezoning with respect to health needs and benefits included:

- Rezoning should provide incentives and rules as strong as possible to meet housing cost needs of San Francisco's diverse population.
- Rezoning should create safe and inviting pedestrian environments with street lighting, sidewalk design, transportation improvements, traffic calming, and small pocket parks.
- Rezoning should define what "usable" open space; while pedestrian realm improvements are valuable, it is imperative that the city not count 'living sidewalks', alleyways and streets towards public open space requirements.
- Rezoning should be coordinated with with all relevant agencies, i.e., Redevelopment, MTA, SFSUD, Health, Recreation and Parks.
- Rezoning should require mixed-income residential projects and neighborhoods as opposed to segregating neighborhoods by social economic status.
- Neighborhoods should not be broken up, i.e., SoMa, but should be coherent and distinct.

Importantly, the ENCHIA process will result in several related products that we believe will be useful to a comprehensive planning process. These products include:

- A set of integrated community health and planning objectives;
- Data and maps to assess how San Francisco is meeting these objectives;
- Research that helps relate planning outcomes to health outcomes;
- A planning evaluation tool based on key community health indicators and related standards to help assess the healthfulness of plans and projects; and,
- Priorities policies that advance community health.

We are encourage DCP to use all of these products in their upcoming work and are looking forward to working with the Department to find out how this is best accomplished. Please feel free to contact Lili Farhang, the ENCHIA project coordinator, at 415.252.3988 with any questions.

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