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The Brisbane General Plan of 1994 is a repository of dreams, of the shared values of a community that was sure about its desire to conserve the landscape and wildlife of the City. It was on our San Bruno Mountain that according to one historical account, the scouts of explorer Gaspar de Portola were the first Europeans to see San Francisco Bay. The Brisbane Community was sure what they wanted to preserve in 1994: a small town atmosphere, a separate and distinct identity of the town and the independent spirit of its people.

The General Plan reflects Brisbane's ambivalence about what might be placed on the Baylands. They knew what things they did not want but were fuzzy about what they did want. They knew they wanted a singular architecture and to enhance creativity. They wanted to conserve and protect and sustain the biological and cultural resources. They wanted to be good stewards of nature and history. They wanted to emphasize open space, to not create walls of buildings or trees to block views. They wanted to make sure that the Lagoon water was safe so that the Lagoon might be used for passive recreation. There are four Baylands General Plan Policies (349, 351, 358 and 363) solely addressing water quality in the Lagoon. Their concern for the contamination present and its threat to human health and the environment resulted in Baylands Policy 370 which requires "risk assessment analysis identifying toxic contamination, landfill limitations and other related factors and resultant environmental impacts in order to address, mitigate and disclose the characteristics of its suitability for safe development." The developer has not finished doing that. They haven't determined the landfill's extent in all directions. They haven't adequately determined the groundwater flow in the southern railyard. They haven't answered questions about the impact of seawater infiltration into the landfill's garbage and the chemical reaction that would create Sulphur dioxide. They haven't answered how sea level rise and its subsequent infiltration into volatile organic compound contaminated groundwater plus extensive grading will impact the path of that groundwater which, in turn, creates soil vapor that could endanger people in buildings above the contaminated soil vapor.

The Community's shared values of protecting its people and the environment have not been met with this programmatic EIR nor have the values of maintaining a small town character and of maintaining a separate and distinct identity for the town been met, by the four major alternatives of this project. Instead, they are an assault on and an affront to the Goals of the General Plan, for example the plan says, "Brisbane will be a place where residents reciprocate (for the respite given by open space and natural areas) by respecting the land and the waters for future generations" and where citizens are judicious in the use of water and energy" and

Where “there is an awareness of the finite nature of resources.” This proposed project is where the full intent of these words must be applied. How can they be applied to buildings up to ten stories built on contaminated filled land in an area threatened by sea level rise? The water used in these mid-level and high rise buildings must be pumped up using lots of energy. The water needed to provide a water supply to the project is brought from hundreds of miles away and its availability is of uncertain reliability.

This large project is ill advised and unnecessary. The traffic, circulation, greenhouse gas and air pollution impacts cannot be mitigated below a significant level. The City of San Francisco stated that the traffic impacts may be understated. Your health and your children’s health will be at greater risk with the construction of this proposal. This community reacted strongly to the proposal, by a delivery company to locate a warehouse close to our middle school. Can’t you see how much worse this will be?

A goal of Chapter X of the General Plan is “There is peace and quiet”. How will there be any peace and quiet when the traffic will be so heavy on all the arterial roads and on the freeway and there will be twenty years of pile driving and construction traffic.

The Planning section of the 1994 General Plan listed noise levels that were very high in the Baylands from Highway 101, Bayshore Boulevard and Caltrain. They all created noise of 65 dba CNEL. That is the level that the FAA requires noise mitigation from airplane noise. Hwy 101 blasts 65 dba 1400’ into the Baylands (more than a quarter mile). Caltrain creates 65dba for 175 feet on either side of the tracks and Bayshore Boulevard creates 65 dba 250 feet in from that side of the Baylands. Imagine what the noise level is now 21 years later from those roadways and then imagine what it will be with high speed rail.

For me, aesthetics create a state of mind that allows people to relax and feel pleased by their surroundings. It promotes creative thinking and a sense of possibility, hope. It is impossible to judge the aesthetics of the project because all we have is blank boxes or generic building illustrations. There are some standards for building appearance but there is no way to figure out what they would look like. The sad example we have is the fortress like line of buildings shown lining the 101 freeway that was used to determine the impact on winds in candlestick cove.

There needs to be a coherent design inspired by the location and its natural environment. The design’s guiding principle should be how to use the open space, wetlands, wildlife habitats, urban relief and mudflats to highlight their importance to sustaining the quality of life for all living things located here. The design should envision that recreation will be integrated into the existing waterways and restored wetlands. Buildings should be located within this context and

with attention paid to prudent siting considering : contaminated areas, seal level rise, and access and circulation efficiency. Landscape plantings should be used to screen and soften the industrial uses, in particular, but also used with all buildings.

In thinking back to the repository of dreams, the Baylands Speaker Series of 2006-2007 brought prominent men and a prominent woman to dream with us. A class of UC Berkeley Architecture students also brought their ideas to our piece of land and water.

Two speakers in the series offered organizing ideas that could be used to resolve several issues. One of them was Dr. Charles Jencks who said in summary that he saw the site as an opportunity for rebirth tied to San Bruno Mountain and that it could be a significant urban park with 3 or 4 anchor features. His examples were: a Guggenheim Museum or a Pacific Art Museum, a corporate headquarters or a Sustainability Center. Perhaps we might offer other possibilities such as a Railroad Museum or an Ecological Museum of the Bay, its tributaries and watersheds. There might be other open space features, like wetlands and riparian paths along a north south axis following the north south axis of the San Francisco Peninsula. A second speaker, Richard Register, who noted the need to bring nature back to cities suggested ways that this might be done by daylighting streams, using passive architecture and green roofs, using wind and solar energy to power the project. We might add restoring and creating wetlands. The thoughts of the UC Berkeley landscape architecture students added using islands, ponds and reconfigured land forms to create an inspiring mix of natural and human construction.

Public meetings, like this one, are where we participate in a kind of virtual cultural communion and where we can envision a worthy future. We need to dream expansively with the knowledge that the Baylands represents many challenges.

The only alternative that makes sense is the Renewable Energy Generation Alternative. It should be integrated into a design orientation like that discussed by Dr. Jencks, one that has a north south axis with anchors and open space complemented by Mr. Register's daylighted streams and green roofs. Businesses or public entities that improve our sustainability could find a space here, such as Recology's anaerobic digester project or a heavily noise attenuated, conditioned and screened high speed railyard.

Whatever we do, it must be carefully crafted with a light deft hand that lovingly designs the details while big ideas are tethered to the integrity of the land's and water's ecology and those big ideas affirm that the ecology must be respected and sustained.

Thank-you