

# Potrero Hill - Neighborhood Improvement Plan

PAMPHLET FILE

## POTRERO HILL COMMUNITY RECREATION, OPEN SPACES & CULTURAL FACILITIES COMMITTEE

February 8th at AIR

POTRERO BRANCH  
SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY

### Present:

1977-78

Penny Blair Contact Person & resident.  
Linda Kiefer Comm. member & resident.  
Paul Sherrill Comm. member & resident  
Robert Lopez Community Gardener  
Shoshouch Dubiner Community artist & resident  
Jon Pon City Planning Dept.  
Rosa Hammock Pot Hill Rec center.  
Jan Gloe Rec. Director Jackson Playground.  
Dick Shouse Potrero Branch Library & resident  
Jack Wickert The Farm  
Bonnie Sherk The Farm  
Edith Winter Resident  
Lee White Resident (Under Fives group interest)  
Anne Bisack Resident

### Areas for further consideration

Supervision on Playgrounds  
Group for pre-school children & parents  
Sports programmes for women  
Swimming pool  
Study area (deck) for library  
Specific area for dogs  
Information giving facility for neighbourhood activities  
Garden at Arkansas & 18th street.  
Community cafe

There was a general feeling that the following are of vital importance;

- a. Exchange of information between groups
- b. Dissemination of information to general public
- c. System for feedback on different provisions by gen. public.

### NEXT MEETING

Wednesday February 16th 7.30 - 9.30pm at AIR  
(1319 18th street)



POTRERO HILL COMMUNITY RECREATION, OPEN SPACES & CULTURAL  
FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Meeting held Wednesday February 16th at AIR 1319 18th St.

Present:

Penny Blair  
Edith Winter  
Linda Kiefer  
Barton Mahew

Apologies from Paul Sherrill and Ann Bisack were received.

The committee decided that the following items should be dealt with more intensively during the next month. We also hope to present some sort of display at the open meeting on Feb 26th of the information gathered from the existing facilities during the two committee meetings.

1. Present facilities. How they can be used more fully and meet some of the needs not yet being met. (see minutes of first comm. meeting. (Linda Kiefer)
2. Swimming Pool. It was generally agreed that this would be a facility we should support. It would certainly be well used by Potrero Hill Residents.
3. The Waterfront. There seem to be a great deal of possibilities around this topic. (Barton Mahew & Paul Sherrill)
4. Open Spaces. Penny Blair & Edith Winter.

Again we discussed the need for better communication between clientele and existing facilities. We would generally support this neighborhood service.

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**Summary of Information Gathered from Meeting with Community Facilities  
February 9**

**Crossroads Community (The Farm)**

Houses the Raw Egg Animal Farm (live chickens and rabbits, used in programs with Buena Vista Elementary School), Tumbleweed-resident dance group, Earthworks- food and land research center with periodical from all over the world. Used by many groups like Make-A-Circus and Jones Company Theater.

First step, land acquisition, has been accomplished. Second step is planning. Have formed landscape architecture group, Consortium, with Mission Planning Council and Buena Vista School.

Two building, one three floors, the other large and open used for dance and theater. Consortium planning for all the land acquired.

Needs - more money to pay for labor (with unemployed youth) to bring buildings up to code and to complete project. Heat for building. More use at night.

**Potrero Hill Recreation Center**

Facilities - 2 tennis courts, play area, baseball field, building with all purpose basketball court, can be divided into two spaced.

Offer arts and crafts, tiny tots, adult sewing classes, mostly sports for all ages. Women do not use, nor senior citizens.

Needs - kiln out of order, more money to carry out programs, full-time janitor, playground supervision

**Jackson Playground**

Building being torn down in March. Park and Rec who administers say plans are complete, however, strong urging to Committee that should be rehabilitated (architect said it was possible) instead. Many programs for handicapped, programs for teens.

Needs - More feedback from community, problems with dogs (suggested set dog run area), more use (however only budgeted for after school and Sat. use), have had complaints that used by non-residents but have no say (bookings by Park and Rec)

**Library**

Much of the staff is CETA, fears if program falls through. Tuesday story hour for children, good file on PH history and file of artists. Upstairs meeting room (suggestion made to use as study area).

Needs - carpeting for floors, more money to buy popular books, molding in reading room to hang paintings, another toilet.

Experimental hours now permanent, use declined proportional to cut hours. Building needs to be repainted inside and out (Boosters project putting mosaic sculpture on outside.)



### Community Garden Projects

Arkansas and 20th - has no budget, little continual participation, extra food goes to NABE and senior citizens, run by CETA worker  
San Bruno and 20th - done by summer youth work program, now part of program with Patrick Henry School children on food preparation and environment

project with NABE to landscape mini-park

workshop with Nursery School at NABE using garden as resource

Mission mental health patients work in garden as therapy

Needs- more adult involvement, money for Arkansas and 20th garden

Suggestion by Edith Winter that 18th and Arkansas open space by the old railroad tunnel be turned into landscaped area, has permission from owners of land to do so.

### AIR (Artists In Response)

Run community gallery and clearinghouse for cultural information, plan cafe. Interested in establishing system of communication between cultural groups on PH to connect people and coordinate cultural activities.

Needs - larger space

### Playgroup for Under Five

Lee White concerned that presently no provisions are made on the Hill for under fives and their parents. Interested in working with group of other people to set up group and work for creative play equipment

Needs - other interested people and community support

Potrero Hill Neighborhood House - No response.

Port Authority - No response.



## WISCONSIN SITE COMMITTEE

There was unanimous agreement that the first priority on the site is a cleanup and removal of garbage and rubbish from the area. Removal of foundations and some minimal planting of native shrubs would enhance the spot which offers dramatic views of the city.

Plant material could be donated by the Department of Parks and Recreation and by interested citizens on the hill. A planting project could be carried out by people living on the hill tho it would be more meaningful to set up small temporary employment programs both for the cleanup and for the planting. The work programs could be the beginning leading towards some possible longer term job training apprenticeships in construction, demolition, garden and landscape planting and maintenance.

The hill needs help in planning and implementing authentic and meaningful job training- meaningful in terms of skills taught and their relevance to future employment possibilities. We could probably provide people experienced in the skills to do the teaching.

S F is one of the few cities in the US which does not provide municipal garbage collection. This encourages those who cannot or will not pay for private garbage hauling to dump their trash on communities who have open spaces. We are then labelled dirty or shiftless. If the city was to provide garbage pickup this would eliminate the problem.

Periodic cleanup on some kind of schedule would help as would setting out debris boxes several times a year for people to dispose of their large bulky trash. If the city did some such thing the residents would co-operate by having cleanups of the neighborhood periodically.

Suggestions for eventual use of the Wisconsin site ranged all the way from making it into a park to developing it into a multi-ethnic multi-age multi-racial multi-economic residential development. A total mix of people from single thru small and large families to the elderly, with residential units ranging from rental with option to buy thru special government low interest financed homes for people making their way into greater self-sufficiency to privately supplied market rate interest mortgages for



those with the necessary financial flexibility.

There was a feeling that a part of the site should be left open for use by the rest of the residents of the hill.

A plan to develop part of the site as a subsistence garden-urban farm for the eventual inhabitants was discussed. This might be the by which some low income people- the elderly, the young people just starting out on careers and family raising could qualify for low interest loans from the Farmers Home Administration under an urban farm program.

Work is starting on exploring possibilities of co-operative action. The committee will meet during or right after the big meeting. If you cannot attend call 824-9268 after 5 PM for times and places of meetings.

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## WORKING DRAFT FOR AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Because Community Development has, in the past, meant relocation/exploitation of those people least equipped to fight it ( minorities and the poor), and because it has meant the overall destruction of neighborhoods and the sense of community.-- our operating premise is that all community development must benefit all Potrero Hill residents - not just a few.

Potrero Hill is an ideal community to demonstrate economic development because: 1) it is "virgin" territory - it's potential has long been ignored by city, state, and federal agencies; 2) it is a unique multi-racial, multi-economic community; and 3) it has most of the unused land in the city, i.e., Wisconsin Street and East Potrero Hill, and many unused large buildings, i.e., American Can and Soule Steel.

Historically, the small efforts that have been put into the Potrero Community have been only piecemeal, which have not been designed to insure community viability. Development requires private and public commitments and must be directed by the Potrero Community itself. Without this balancing force, more piecemeal and special interest preoccupation is inevitable - further jeopardizing the interests of the community.

2/12/77  
Lamar



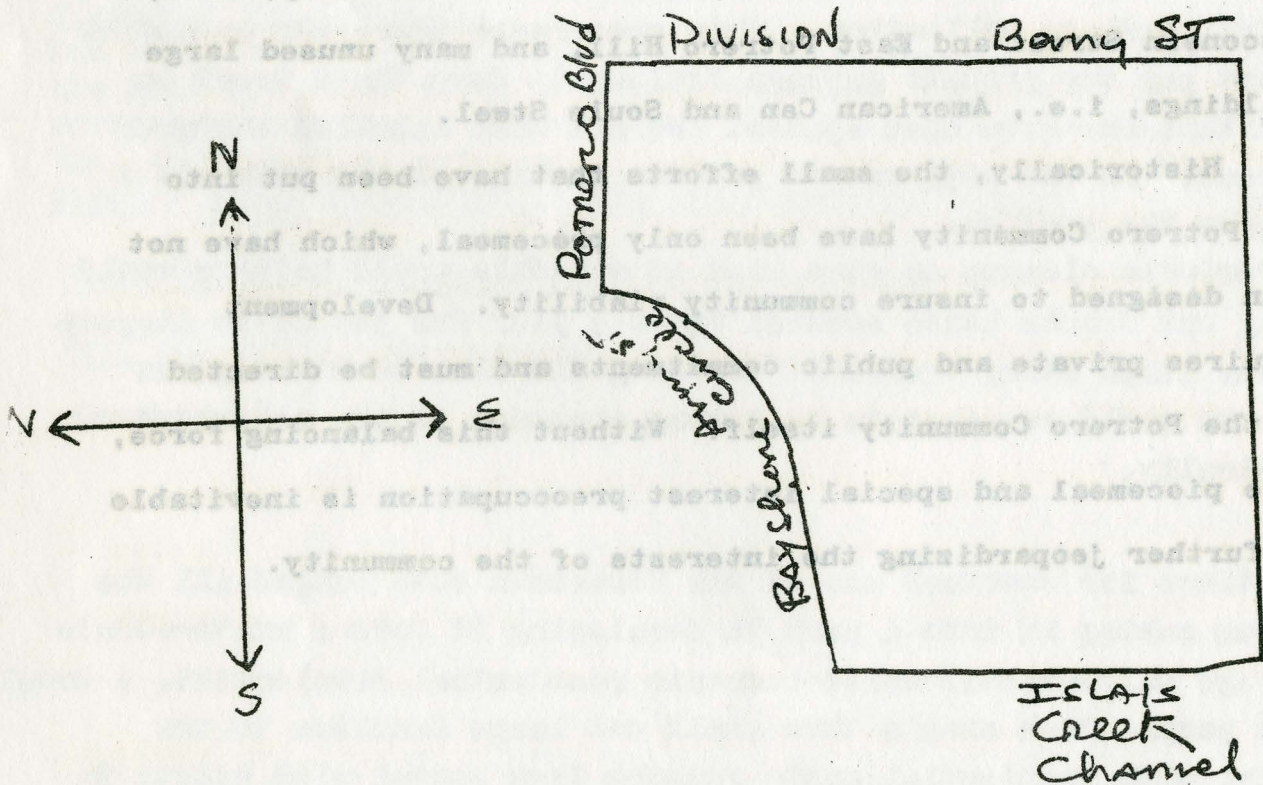
STUDY AREA

The residents of Potrero Hill, in order to develop a comprehensive economic development plan, must define what is considered to be the natural boundaries of the Potrero District.

Key to this is the significant unused warehouse, industrial, and waterfront space in the Eastshore area.

Proposed for the boundaries of the Potrero District are:

Northern - China Basin; Southern - Islais Creek; Western - Potrero Blvd; Eastern - San Francisco Bay.





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house facilities to this area, it was also recommended that industries, such as solar energy panel manufacturing, total paper recycling plants, microfilm processing plants and waste product materials recycling (all industries of the future) should be encouraged in this district. It is possible that the Hill residents may want to create some of these industries themselves as working co-operatives, providing community control and economic equity. Another suggestion for development was a marina or waterfront plant in the area of 3rd Street between 16th and 22nd.

The drive for these developments is based on our knowledge of the potential and the needs of this community. The committee feels that one cannot be accomplished without the other - to sacrifice the community for the sake of economic development misses the point. In order to prevent this, we feel that strong community control is imperative and that this is mandated by affirmatively active programs of education and training oriented toward employment in these new community industries and assisting in maintenance of a decent standard of living for the residents of Potrero Hill.



## DEVELOPMENT OF AN ECONOMIC PLAN

In order for the Potrero community to achieve its goal of economic development based on direction from the community and protection for the economic viability of the community members, some legal entity has to be created to deal with the incoming government and private resources.

A community development corporation with a cross section of Hill interests is one instrument that can be used to plan, develop, and implement a comprehensive program that will insure an economically healthy community.

A model CDC exists and to date has evolved relationships with government and private agencies, universities, and other community groups through a series of community meetings.

The CDC is constructing a community economic profile data base of Potrero Hill - specifically aimed at consumption patterns and general economic development potentials.

This data base should enable the community to evaluate the most feasible possibilities for increased economic strength in this district. Some of the suggestions to date have been made, keeping in mind the planning department's suggestions.

Ideas based on revitalizing the existing areas range from renovation of the existing shopping areas to creation of a mini-mall at the 22nd and 3rd streets location. Compilation of a new directory of the goods and services available for Hill residents by Hill residents and shops was suggested.

Another resource that has been underutilized is the warehouse and industrial area. Aside from an aggressive search for companies that would return their warehouse facilities to this area or a search for new companies to bring their ware-



house facilities to this area, it was also recommended that industries, such as solar energy panel manufacturing, total paper recycling plants, microfilm processing plants and waste product materials recycling (all industries of the future) should be encouraged in this district. It is possible that the Hill residents may want to create some of these industries themselves as working co-operatives, providing community control and economic equity. Another suggestion for development was a marina or waterfront plant in the area of 3rd Street between 16th and 22nd.

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## WORKING DRAFT FOR THE HOUSING COMMITTEE

In seeking to develop a set of guidelines of our own, the committee first answered the questions put to it by the planning department in their suggested guidelines.

In discussing "deficiencies", we immediately found that this is such an emotional and subjective area, that we had to develop some criteria of our own or we would not achieve any consensus. "Deficiencies" was broken into two categories - quantitative and qualitative. By quantitative was meant two things - was there presently enough housing of that type on the Hill and did we want to encourage more of it? It was felt that while housing for single should not be encouraged, housing for elderly, for "new" families (one adult, one child or two adults), for large families (anything larger than "new" families) should be encouraged.

As to the types of housing, while the committee did not want to encourage large apartment buildings (anything with more than four units), it felt that the following types of housing should be encouraged; single family dwellings, traditional "flats", and new concepts in housing, such as "cluster housing, planned unit developments.

Regarding qualitative deficiency, the following position was adopted by the committee: "As to existing structures, this committee recommends that no over all plan be instituted by government other than necessary for health and safety of the residents".

It was proposed that Potrero Hill be used as a program area for implementation of a volunteer rehabilitation effort. This would enable Hill residents to obtain low interest loans for rehabilitation without making the entire Hill a code enforce-



ment area. The rehabilitation loans could possibly be controlled through the formation of a housing improvement cooperative, designed specifically for this purpose.

Another important innovation enthusiastically supported by the committee was the possibility of tenant cooperative ownership of the public housing on South Petrero Hill.

The committee also felt that, since the goal of housing improvement on the Hill is to maintain the healthy heterogeneous mix that currently exists, while decreasing the amount of absentee landlordism and increasing the home ownership among low income residents, efforts should be made to standardize and equalize relationships between owners and tenants and that educational information should be made available to all residents regarding home improvement and acquisition opportunities.



## COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

This Committee is concerned with three areas of safety: earthquake, crime and traffic. Although all of them involve personal safety only the first two can be affected by group action most usefully in the form of Blockwide organization. The last is an engineering matter dependant upon reporting, investigation and correction on the part of the City's traffic agency.

Block organization seems to be the best way to increase neighborhood awareness and cooperation. Citizens' Safety Project or S.A.F.E. seeks to fight crime in this manner. To counter apathy and personal fear by active participation is a positive approach. Funded through the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration with matching funds from the City, the project is currently looking for staff for the expansion of the Southeast station serving Potrero Hill and Hunters Point. Qualified community organizers will be hired and trained in crime prevention methods to work with the block coordinators similar to the initial program in Visitacion Valley.

In the area of earthquake preparation, block organizations could also function protectively, making everyone familiar with who lives on the block, whether they will need help for reasons of handicap or age (very old or very young) and general concerns of neighborhood responsibility. Pre-earthquake plans for selecting means of shelter and storage of water, food and vital medical supplies can be developed. Rehearsals or drills can be held; this presents problems which will have to be worked out.

The primary need in the Potrero Hill district, numbered 4/3 by the Mayor's office of Emergency Services is education of the public for preparedness, to alert and train people to the hazards of the earthquake and what to do. We are in a special geological area, subject to ground failure hazards -- landslides -- and to the north and southeast of us are potential inundation areas subject to liquefaction due to man-made fill. An Emergency Operations District Headquarters has been chosen for us at 36 Bluxome Street, a Multipurpose Staging Area at the Bryant-7th Street Courthouse and a Mass Care Facility at the Potrero Hill Junior High



COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

School but a Casualty Care Center has not been selected. The General Hospital will function for another area and City-wide. There are several doctors' buildings, a health center and a convalescent home in the neighborhood. Water pressure for fire-fighting on top of the Hill should be increased.

An enormous amount of study has been done. There is a complete program for dealing with disaster both natural and man made. The average person living in San Francisco doesn't know about the programs, doesn't know how or where to get information and won't know where to turn in case a disaster comes. School drills, T.V. and radio programs and discussions would help. An early warning system of possible impending earthquakes alerting the citizen to put together food, water, clothing, first aid materials and battery radios and flashlights and showing him how to turn off utilities to minimize spread of fire would be an achievement. Certainly school children should be informed. They will carry back vital instructions to their families.