Potrero Boosters Neighborhood Association (PBNA)
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DOCKET
04-AFC-1
DATE APR - 9 2006
RECD. APR - 9 2006

April 09, 2006

James D. Boyd
John Geesman
California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: 04-AFC-1
San Francisco Electric Reliability Project

Dear Commissioners Boyd and Geesman:

On behalf of Intervenor Potrero Boosters Neighborhood Association and Dogpatch Neighborhood Association, I am writing to express our organizations' shock, amazement, and outrage at Intervenor Sarvey suggestion that this City foot the bill for an $800,000 boondoggle which would look for fireplaces and woodstoves to retrofit in the communities of Southeast San Francisco.

Members of our Potrero Hill communities, and the San Francisco community at large, have participated in many meetings, workshops and focus groups to discuss and evaluate exactly what sort of air mitigations would be most effective and appreciated. These gatherings reached well beyond the CEC hearings and were sponsored by our Associations, the SFPUC, and the San Francisco Board of Supervisors' Power Plant Task Force, on which I have served for over 6 years. Educational articles have been published in the local newspapers on the topic of air quality mitigation measures. In all venues, the idea of stove/fireplace replacement was resoundingly rejected for the simple reason that there are very few wood burning fireplaces and stoves used in San Francisco, and even fewer in our part of the City that enjoys warm fog free weather. We considered and rejected this type of mitigation for that simple reason. Sarvey is a resident of Tracy, NOT San Francisco, who did not participate in any of our local discussions!

Through those workshops and meetings, we worked very hard to get the City to agree to fund two important programs – $500,000 for tree planting and $500,000 for indoor air improvement. The tree planting is designed to capture particulates from the air, generate oxygen, and reduce energy consumption. We successfully argued that the 1991 E. G. McPherson "Chicago Study" was real science and convinced the City of the practical nature of the tree planting along the main freeways and roadways as lasting mitigation, not just community benefits. The indoor air quality program would improve in-home ventilation systems, clean and replace carpeting, provide advanced home-cleaning tools, and conduct educational programs targeted at asthma in our children.

We understand that if you apply the California-wide average, wood burning might appear to be an effective measure, but it is simply not applicable to our temperate neighborhood, which adjoins the Central Waterfront area, home to both the Mirant Power Plant and the proposed SFERP. The

suggestion by Mr. Sarvey (and, apparently, by the CEC staff as well) that the City spend up to $800,000 on a wild goose chase for fireplaces severely jeopardizes our chances to keep the tree planting and home air quality programs on track. As City residents and (unlike Mr. Sarvey and the CEC staff) City taxpayers we are painfully aware of living in a world of finite resources.

Amazingly, the California Energy Commission recognizes ZERO air quality benefits associated with programs that the community really wants, and is now insisting that the City spend money on a fireplace retrofit program or paper emission credits to "mitigate" local air quality impacts. In our opinion, the Committee should eliminate these two conditions completely and direct the City to use these funds to increase the size of the tree planting and indoor air quality programs. We are cognizant of the general policy that assert that offsets for stationary emissions should be made with stationary emission reduction but find that in a dense, non-industrial setting within the City and County of San Francisco; such policy is not generally attainable.

We have attended enough CEC hearings to know that our concerns will most likely land on deaf ears, but we find it extremely difficult to be resigned to San Francisco and California ratepayers' money wasted on these two conditions. This is an ill-conceived idea being pushed along simply to let the project move forward. We support the project, an important part of an environmentally friendly reliable energy plan so beneficial to the Bay Area and all of California.

If the CEC staff wants a fireplace program and paper emission credits, there is little we can do—but please don't spend so much money leaving little or nothing left for the two great programs already supported by our community. Having fought long and hard with the City to get these two, real mitigation programs, we now risk losing a substantial portion of their funding for no good reason. We respectfully ask that the Committee disregard this last-minute ill-conceived proposal and let us get on with this project – and the real benefits it offers.

This last minute turn has also left us unable to respond in the scheduled CEC hearings, at which we have been silent based on the honest and straightforward process that has allowed us to create a project that satisfies all parties. This could force us to take some action, delaying a very important community supported project. Please insist Staff review this inappropriate solution.

Sincerely,

Joseph Boss
Potrero Boosters and Dogpatch Neighborhood Associations

CC: Supervisor Sophie Maxwell
Jesse Blout, Mayor's Office
Karen Kubick, SFPUC
Jeane Solé, Deputy City Attorney
Susan Eslick, Pres. DNA
Tony Kelly, Pres. PBNA