



Board of Supervisors
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June 16, 2010

Subject: In favor of a ballot measure for a charter amendment for a more balance
Recreation and Park Commission

Greetings Honorable Supervisors!

The Sierra Club supports the proposed ballot measure for a charter amendment to bring balance to the Recreation and Parks Commission.

As a body solely appointed by the Office of the Mayor, along with the General Manager also being appointed by the Mayor, the Recreation and Park Commission has not been as responsive to the citizens of San Francisco as it should be. Policies are formulated and implemented, without community announcements and hearings other than the three-day notice for agenda items at Commission meetings.

Recently, the Commission has supported a policy of privatization and commercialization of our parks, without any city-wide discussion or examination of the potential loss to our communities resulting from such a policy. Park resources are being subjected to special permits and licenses that significantly impact park property and surrounding neighborhoods, without the right of neighborhoods to appeal the decisions.

It appears that the Commission does not reflect the variety of voices in San Francisco. Outreach on projects is limited, citizens are not listened to in hearings, and budget oversight is weak. Our parks are being parceled out, park by park, and privatized piecemeal. The policy to commercialize our parks has not been presented to or approved by San Franciscans, but it is being rapidly implemented nevertheless. Parks supporters are reduced to fighting for various parks, one by one, and then given short shrift at commission meetings, with little if any response to questions, criticisms and concerns.

For these reasons, the Sierra Club supports placing on the ballot the proposed charter amendment to split appointments to the Recreation and Park Commission between the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors, and to make the Recreation and Park Department and the Commission special event permit and license decisions appeal-able to the Board of Appeals.

Sincerely,

Pinky Kushner
Executive Committee
San Francisco Group