

March 5, 2010

Mr. Jared Blumenfeld, Regional Director
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 Region 9
 75 Hawthorn Street
 San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Director Blumenfeld:

As leaders and representatives of San Francisco's Bayview-Hunters Point community we are writing to express concern with the Environmental Protection Agency's handling of the public outreach process related to the cleanup and reuse of the Hunters Point Shipyard.

Representatives from the Hunters Point Shipyard Citizens Advisory Committee, Bayview Project Area Committee and the African American Revitalization Consortium met with EPA officials last fall to express our commitment to the ongoing cleanup and redevelopment of the Shipyard. At that meeting, we shared with you details of our collective efforts over the past decade to develop a community-led plan to transform the Shipyard from a toxic hotspot to new homes, park and jobs for our residents.

Those efforts culminated with the passage of Proposition G, in June 2008, which outlined the community's vision for this new neighborhood. The entitlements process for that community-led plan is moving forward with final approvals anticipated by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors early this summer.

Unfortunately, recent community meetings facilitated by EPA funded consultants under the Technical Assistance Services for Communities (TASC) program, which is supposed to help residents better understand the cleanup process at the Shipyard, is actually confusing residents and threatening to undermine the community's confidence in the project.

The first meeting, on February 18th, was hosted by opponents of the Shipyard project at the Nation of Islam's San Francisco Mosque – a location that significantly discouraged community involvement and participation.

The second meeting, held on March 2, reviewed EPA's draft report related to air monitoring and naturally occurring asbestos at the Shipyard site. At this meeting, comments made by the EPA funded technical advisor, Michael Lythcott, who identifies himself as representing the Stop Lennar Action Movement (SLAM) were at odds with the conclusions presented by EPA staff related to the draft report.

According to your own draft report, the EPA is just the latest in a long list of local, state and federal agencies to conclude that construction activities at Hunters Point Shipyard do not pose a threat to public health.

RA	✓	RA
DRA	✓	DRA
A/R		A/R
CE		CE
MTS		MTS
OPA		OPA
ORC		ORC
✓ # FUND		# FUND
SCFO		SCFO
WASTE		WASTE
WATER		WATER

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The EPA is on solid scientific ground from which to make such a finding. Indeed, your own draft report concludes that monitoring of construction dust at Hunters Point Shipyard has been adequate and that threshold air quality standards are more conservative – and more protective of public health– than anything that could be implemented by the federal government.

We at the African-American Revitalization Consortium have taken comfort in these conclusions as have thousands of Bayview-Hunters Point residents. Unfortunately, the comments made by Mr. Lythcott came as an unwelcome surprise. Mr. Lythcott's remarks were completely out of touch with scientific fact and the findings made by numerous other independent medical experts and authorities.

Furthermore, we are concerned that Mr. Lythcott appears to have aligned himself with a small segment of the community whose views are not shared by the vast majority of Bayview-Hunters Point residents. Thus far, Mr. Lythcott refused to meet representatives of our organization and the community at large.

Accordingly, we are requesting a meeting with you to determine how we can work together to prevent further dissemination of misinformation to the community.

Unfortunately, a small minority seeking to oppose progress for their own political gain have sought to raise unfounded health concerns about redevelopment in southeast San Francisco. While the residents of Bayview-Hunters Point suffer from legitimate health concerns after decades of pollution and neglect, no evidence has been presented to show that construction dust is to blame for these ills.

This issue has been debated and debunked for three years. We would urge the EPA to avoid creating further confusion that will only delay social justice and progress for the people of southeast San Francisco.

Sincerely,



Rev. Arelious Walker, Chair
African American Revitalization Consortium

Dr. Veronica Hunnicutt, Chair
Hunters Point Citizens Advisory Committee

cc: Mark Ripperda, Project Manager, U.S. EPA Region 9
Dana Barton, Community Involvement Manager, U.S. EPA Region 9
Michael Cohen, Director, Mayor's Office of Economic & Workforce Development
Amy Brownell, Department of Public Health
Rajiv Bhatia, Department of Public Health

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