

\* \* \* \* \*

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – August, 2004**

### **Get to Know Your Bay Area**

Our LWVBA Fall meeting has typically been an informational meeting to provide League members throughout the Bay Area the opportunity to find out about issues that affect our region. Ranging from environmental concerns related to protecting air, water and bay quality, preserving open space and agricultural lands, identifying and meeting affordable housing needs in our expensive area, to learning about financial and governance solutions for the region, we always have something new to learn. This way, our information will be one step ahead of crises and solutions (and/or ballot measures) that emerge at a later time.

This year, we are focusing on water supply, particularly issues related to desalination as a possible (or even necessary) solution to our water needs in the Bay Area, and elsewhere, because our water resources are intertwined with the rest of California.

If you want to stay informed, and can spare a Saturday morning in October, please join us for our Know Your Bay Area Day on October 2 in Sausalito.

Linda Craig, LWVBA President

\* \* \* \* \*

## **KNOW YOUR BAY AREA DAY**

### **Ocean Water on Tap**

Economic, Political and Environmental Issues of Desalination Plants in the Bay Area

Saturday, October 2, 2004

San Francisco Bay Model Visitor Center, Sausalito

2100 Bridgeway, Sausalito

The cost is \$10.00.

Registration is at 9:30 AM with the program starting at 10 AM and ending at 1:30 PM.

There will be a continental breakfast available.

RSVP to [sandy@waterfrontaction.org](mailto:sandy@waterfrontaction.org) by Monday, September 27, 2004 with names of people by League attending. Checks may be sent in advance to:

Tam Hege, Treasurer@lwwba-ca.org

The topic will be about desalination plant projects and water, with panels discussing economic, political and environmental issues of locating and operating plants of this type in the Bay Area. Two panels will include representatives from the bay area water agencies planning these projects, as well as the regulators charged with project approvals.

Speakers and panelists will include:

Hasan Abdullah, East Bay Municipal Utility District

Jared Huffman, Marin Muni Water

Ernesto Avila, consultant for the Northern California Salinity Coalition

Al Wanger, Dep Director of California Coastal Commission

Jeff Blanchard, Bay Conservation and Development Commission

Marc DelPiero, Pajaro-Sunny Mesa Comm Service District.

Program will include:

## **Overview of Desalination Issues**

### **Why Desalination?**

Water supply issues: drought, emergency water supply, bay area growth

Declining conventional supplies

Water quality, desalination versus conventional treatment

Emerging consumptions and desalination treatment levels

Roles of agencies, fed, state and local

Private projects

### **Political**

Overview of Legislation related to desalination

Public support

Permitting

Who gets the water?

### **Economic**

The price of water

The price of projects

Funding mechanisms

### **Environmental**

Methods of water intake and environmental issues

Discharge plume toxicity, high saline brine

Dilution of discharge

Coastal cumulative affects

## CEQA requirements

More details of the event can be found on the LWVBA web site at [www.lwvba-ca.org](http://www.lwvba-ca.org)

### **Directions to Bay Model:**

Highway 280 or 101 north to 19th Ave in San Francisco. Drive over Golden Gate Bridge. Continuing on Highway 1 take the last Sausalito exit, Sausalito/Marin City exit, turn right on Bridgeway. Off exit is on Bridgeway, brown and white signs.

\* \* \* \* \*

Save this date for **BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY: Saturday, January 29, 2005.**

It will be a half-day event. Topic and location yet to be determined.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Beyond the Call of Duty – A Hearing That Went Until 3:10 a.m.!**

One of the first assignments I undertook as President of LWVBA was to present a statement in support of the San Francisco Transbay Terminal that would provide a needed regional transportation hub linking various regional bus services, CalTrain, BART and future High Speed Rail. Technically, we were opposing an appeal of the San Francisco Planning Commission's certification of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the project. Certification of the EIR was a necessary step for this important project to move forward.

Along with Joyce Roy, LWVBA Board Member and transit advocate, I arrived just before the stated time of the hearing before the SF Board of Supervisors at 4 pm on June 15, 2004. Unfortunately the hearing immediately prior to this was the Mayor's proposed reductions in the Health Department budget, and after more than 100 people spoke at 3 minutes each, our item began at 9 pm.

The parties filing the appeals spoke first, as well as speakers on their behalf. Just before midnight, the meeting was recessed to allow attendees to move their cars out of the Civic Center Garage which closes at midnight. Joyce (a transit rider) mentioned to me that BART service also ended at midnight but AC Transit still ran every hour through the night. Opponents of the appeal (the Transbay Joint Powers Authority) and others justified the merits of the EIR for the record because a court appeal was anticipated. Somewhere between 1 and 2 am, I presented our statement. Just before 2 am, the meeting again had to be recessed for people to move their cars off the street in front of Civic Center as there is No Parking between 2 am and 6 am (for street sweeping??). Finally, around 3 am the Board of Supervisors voted 11-0 to deny the appeal and to

certify the EIR (i.e. our side prevailed).

As we left the meeting, Joyce had to find a ride home with others to Oakland (she'd just missed the once-hourly AC Transit bus), and I drove home to arrive just before 4 am. I realized then that my family had called the San Mateo Co. Sheriff to report me as a missing person!

The SF Board of Supervisors actually had more items to consider after the Transbay Terminal matter ended at 3:10 am, so they continued with their business until whenever.

Never a dull moment in the cause of good government!

Linda Craig, LWVBA President

\* \* \* \* \*

### **The Continuing Saga of the Transbay Terminal**

The primary party appealing the certification of the EIR for the new Transbay Terminal is the owner of a parcel at 80 Natoma that was identified in the EIR for acquisition because it is in the path of the underground tracks for the CalTrain extension and future High Speed Rail. The owner, Myers Development Co., had not even commented on the draft EIR. The final was certified in April. Early in May, they began construction on the site claiming they had entitlements for a 51-story condo tower. Those entitlements were challenged and in June the San Francisco Building Dept. issued a "Stop Work" order to review the entitlements.

Engineers worked on proposals that could accommodate both the tower and the train. A concrete box could be built that would allow construction above it but the box would have had to be built first and it would be a couple of years before it could be completed. But Myers insisted no delay would be tolerated. The only way to possibly accommodate the continuation of construction would be to decrease the radius of the track and build a complex costly retaining wall. This would have shorten the station's track meaning only short trains could be accommodated or people in the last cars would have to drag their luggage through other cars to detrain.

Since Transbay Joint Powers Board's responsibility to the public is to deliver the most efficient and cost effective project, they have little choice but to acquire the property. Their offer of \$32.2 million has been rejected by the developer. The next step to move this project forward will be to start the process of eminent domain.

Joyce Roy

## **Proposed Land-Use Guidelines for Transit Station Areas**

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission is considering a new policy that would condition the release of discretionary transit funds on the adoption by local municipalities of transit-supportive zoning guidelines. The guidelines would only apply to projects in the Regional Transit Expansion Policy (RTEP), also known as Resolution 3434. The RTEP will be expanded to include projects in Regional Measure 2, such as ferry terminals.

The Transportation and Land Use Coalition (TALC) is proposing specific land-use guidelines to MTC that would apply to transit station areas, and the LWVBA, as a member of TALC, has been asked to endorse these guidelines.

## **Proposed Goals**

### Land Uses and Residential Densities around Transit Stations and Stops

1. Improved accessibility to transit and increase transit ridership, by providing for higher density/higher intensity, walkable communities near transit stations and stops.
2. Encourage a mix of transit-supportive residential, commercial, and employment opportunities, to make transit-oriented development attractive to a wider market

### Infill Housing and Housing Affordability

1. Efficiently use the land within walking distance of a transit station to provide housing, meet regional housing needs, and better encourage transit ridership.
2. Provide housing that meets the needs of people at all incomes and that includes both rental and sale units.

### Retail and Office

1. Provide for neighborhood-serving retail that is primarily supported by households and office workers within the Transit Zones
2. Encourage uses with greater employment density and design that encourages transit ridership.
3. Prevent incompatible uses, such as big box and other regional retail that generates mostly vehicular traffic and discourages transit use.

### Parking

1. Minimize the amount of land dedicated to parking, while still providing sufficient access to stations.
2. Encourage station access by walking, biking and transit.

### Pedestrian and Bike Friendly Environment

1. Encourage transit ridership, bicycle and pedestrian activity, and access for people with disabilities by providing high levels of access, safety, and continuity for pedestrians and

bicyclists in the transit area.

LWVBA supports these goals for development around transit stations, but we have not studied, nor are we as an organization informed sufficiently, to sign on to the very specific zoning criteria recommended by TALC. These include items such as an “Average net density of 45 units/acre within ½ mile radius of a transit stop” for Regional/Heavy Rail; Ferry and other lesser densities around Light Rail and Bus Rapid Transit. Specific minimum net densities, minimum Floor-Area ratios, maximum parking requirements by type of residential development, are also proposed for the three different types of transit zones, as well as other requirements for street improvements plans to address pedestrian crossings, safe bicycle access, and a limit of 600 feet on the facing block of new streets.

LWVBA Board decided that we will issue our own separate statement in support of the goals, but will decline to endorse the specific TALC policy recommendations. Additional information is available on the website [www.transcoalition.org](http://www.transcoalition.org).

Linda Craig, [President@lwbba-ca.org](mailto:President@lwbba-ca.org)

\* \* \* \* \*

LWVUS is part of the Smack Down Your Vote campaign. We have an opportunity to register a lot of potential voters, of every ethnicity and varying age groups. The World Wide Wrestling Federation, now known as WWE is offering its venues throughout the country as a place for local Leagues to get out and register people. In addition, for the Bay Area sites, the Mobile Computer Lab, which is a big buss with Internet access will be available for League members to show case our Smart Voter web site. If you would like to get involved for three hours prior to the event, please contact Nikki Harris or the Voter Service person in one of the participating leagues. Leagues to date:

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Arena</u>	<u>Participating</u>
8/23 Mon 6 PM	*Richmond	Richmond Memorial Center	W.Contra Costa Co & Oakland
8/30 Mon 6 PM	*San Francisco	The Cow Palace	North San Mateo/San Francisco

\* \* \* \* \*

**Web Sites:**

Bay Area Monitor: <http://www.bayareamonitor.org>

LWVC: <http://www.ca.lwv.org>

LWVBA: <http://www.lwbba-ca.org>

LWVUS: <http://www.lwv.org>

Smart Voter: <http://www.smartvoter.org>

Barbara Boxer: <http://boxer.senate.gov/>

Dianne Feinstein: <http://feinstein.senate.gov/>

**Emails:**

Barbara Boxer: [senator@boxer.senate.gov](mailto:senator@boxer.senate.gov)

Dianne Feinstein: [senator@feinstein.senate.gov](mailto:senator@feinstein.senate.gov)

George W. Bush: [president@whitehouse.gov](mailto:president@whitehouse.gov)

Arnold Schwarzenegger: [Governor@Governor.ca.gov](mailto:Governor@Governor.ca.gov)