SAN FRANCISCO BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT - ITEMS 6-7

HYBRID IN-PERSON/TELECONFERENCE MEETING

HOSTED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY

CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

375 BEALE STREET

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2024 9:30 A.M.

Reported by: John Cota

APPEARANCES

Enforcement Committee

Marie Gilmore, Chair

Rebecca Eisen

John Vasquez

Counsel to the Committee

Shari Posner, Deputy Attorney General Office of the Attorney General

BCDC Staff

Rachel Cohen, Enforcement Analyst

Adrienne Klein, Principal Enforcement Analyst

Margie Malan, Legal Secretary

Michael Ng, Senior Staff Attorney

Matthew Trujillo, Enforcement Policy Manager

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PROCEEDINGS

9:50 a.m.

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COMMITTEE CHAIR GILMORE: We are going on to Item number 6, which is a hearing and vote on the Recommended Enforcement Decision to resolve ER2015.024.00, the City of San Rafael. We are going to have a presentation and a vote on a proposed recommended decision to adopt a Proposed Settlement Agreement with the city of San Rafael, who is the owner of record of the subject property of ER2015.024.00, Starkweather Park in San Rafael, Marin County. The City has closed a required public restroom at the park for approximately 38 years and counting.

If this Committee votes to adopt this Recommended Enforcement Decision, which includes the Proposed Settlement Agreement, then it will be put up for a vote of approval or rejection by the full Commission at its April 18, 2024 meeting, which is scheduled to be held online and in-person at the Metro Center, located at 375 Beale Street in San Francisco, commencing at 1:00 p.m.

So, after BCDC staff gives its presentation, the Respondent will be invited to present any remarks they may wish to enter into the record. Then I will allow public comment on this item and afterwards we, the Committee, shall hold our discussion and vote on the staff's recommendation. Presentations made by the parties as well

as any public comments to follow shall be limited to responding to the evidence already made part of the enforcement record. This Committee shall not allow the introduction of new evidence or oral testimony.

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So, at this time, will the representative or representatives for the City of San Rafael please identify themselves for the record?

MR. MACLEAN: Hi, I am Connor MacLean, attorney on behalf of the City of San Rafael.

MS. GUILLEN: Hi, I am Fabiola Guillen, I am with the Department of Public Works in the city of San Rafael.

CHAIR GILMORE: Thank you so much and welcome.

Okay, so now we will hear a presentation by staff, and I am going to invite Enforcement Analyst Adrienne Klein to give her remarks. Adrienne.

MS. KLEIN: Good morning, Chair Gilmore,
Commissioners. Nice to meet you, Connor and Fabi, in
person.

I have a slide presentation. I believe it will be -There it is. Thank you very much. So, we can go to the
next slide please.

This formal enforcement proceeding, as noted, is to resolve a single permit violation involving a closed public restroom at Starkweather Park on Francisco Boulevard in the city of San Rafael.

So, the presentation is not long, less than 10 minutes. It will identify the site where the violation is occurring, briefly review the permit and enforcement history, summarize the terms of the Settlement Agreement that will resolve the violations, and as noted by Chair Gilmore, conclude with the staff recommendation. Next slide.

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So, the next three slides identify Starkweather Park in the city of San Rafael, near the western terminus of the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge. You can see a red circle there.

The next slide zooms in. Another red circle showing the office park; and next slide please.

So, with this third image there is adequate detail that the restroom building is visible inside the red cloud-shaped bubble at the bottom left in the image. Francisco Boulevard is located below the bottom of the image and the shoreline trail that you can see between the restroom building and the beach continues to the north and west above the top of the image. So, as you can see and as noted in the public comment received from Bruce Beyaert with the Trails for Richmond Action Committee, this is an important public access site, not just for the local Marin County community, also for East Bay residents who may choose to use the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge public access;

and the restroom is a valuable public benefit that has been absent for too long. So next slide.

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This image from Google Earth is a street view or ground view of the restroom looking to the north. The beach is to the right, Francisco Boulevard is behind the image. The public shore parking required by this permit is located just to the right of the image that we saw in the last, the last image, that I should have pointed out there. So go ahead to the next image, next slide, please, thanks.

So, the formal enforcement proceeding seeks to resolve a single violation of failure to maintain a public restroom in violation of Permit Condition II.B.4 of the 1978.028.05 permit. Next slide.

So, we will spend most of the time here. Very briefly, the permit authorizes a portion of two commercial buildings and fill placement for paved roads and parking in the Commission's 100 foot shoreline band jurisdiction. And as just noted, the permit requires a series of public access improvements as usual, and again as usual, requires those improvements to be maintained. And in this case, the restroom was opened but closed, and from that point not maintained open.

The commercial facility has been in use since at least 1987. And while the public restroom, as I just noted, was opened and constructed pursuant to approved plans in

September 1985. It was closed six months later in March 1986 and has remained closed since then.

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BCDC became aware of this closure in 2015 and opened an enforcement case and notified Respondent of its permit violation.

Despite more than seven years of effort by both City staff and BCDC staff, especially City staff, the restrooms remained closed.

As a result, BCDC issued a Violation Report on January 30, 2024, to cause resolution of this longstanding violation.

And I am not spending time on the details during that seven-year period. They are laid out in the findings with the Settlement Agreement and in the Violation Report that was published. But if there are any questions, they can be answered if relevant.

So, coming right up to the present. A week prior to issuing the Violation Report I made contact with Fabiola and got a very positive update, which was that in the intervening time between the last Enforcement Analyst and myself working on the case, the restroom in fact had been restored according to staff-approved plans; so that step had been achieved.

However, the not-so-good news was that there was another issue, which was that the electrical conduit was

installed on private, not public property, rendering PG&E unwilling to turn power on to the restroom until that private property owner had provided an easement to the City. In order to speed that process up, the City negotiated with PG&E and the private property owner to accept a letter while an easement is in process. So PG&E agreed that a letter would suffice with a commitment that an easement would be forthcoming. That resulted in PG&E being willing to schedule an appointment, a site visit to turn on the power on April 10th, and so that is, that is all positive news.

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So, with that, on March 4, BCDC counsel and City of San Rafael counsel held a confidential negotiation that resulted in an agreement to settle this matter as follows, and we can now move to the next slide.

And so, the Settlement Agreement. In the Settlement Agreement the City agrees by May 10 to open the restroom to the public and submit evidence of having done so, photographic evidence and a permit Notice of Completion that confirms that the facilities have been installed consistent with the approved plans. Next slide, please.

As part of the Settlement Agreement, the City has agreed to pay a civil penalty. The full penalty would be \$30,000 by May 10. Or if the City demonstrates that it has opened the public restroom, as per the prior commitment,

according to approved plans and all by April 27, then the civil penalty would be half of 30,000 and 15,000 would be due by May 6. So, in addition to opening the public restroom, there is a temporary porta-potty, so that should be removed; and there is some missing landscaping that will also be restored. So, with that, next slide.

Staff is therefore recommending that the Committee recommend that the full Commission adopt the proposed Settlement Agreement to resolve Enforcement Case 2015.024. And that concludes the staff presentation, thank you.

CHAIR GILMORE: Thank you, Adrienne.

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Now I would like to invite representatives from the City of San Rafael to make their presentation or whatever comments you would like to make.

MR. MACLEAN: Hi there, Connor Maclean, attorney on behalf of the City of San Rafael. Adrienne, thanks so much for working with us on this, we really appreciate it. I think this is a result, the settlement agreement is a result that is good for everyone. It is good for the City because it saves the City money that the City can use to actually open this restroom, which is exactly what everyone here wants. The city is on the verge of opening it and it is a result that is beneficial to the public, to BCDC and to the City.

I just want to clarify really quick. And let me know,

1 Michael, if this is your reading of the agreement too.

2 Adrienne, I think some of the timeline that you mentioned

was just a little bit off. So, the agreement is April 27,

4 open the bathroom, restore -- remove the temporary toilet,

5 have the water fountains available. Then -- no sorry.

April 27 is open bathroom and open water fountain and water

7 bottle filling station.

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May 6 is remove temporary toilet, there is currently a porta-potty there, and hand washing station, and restore the landscaping. So that's by May 6.

May 10 is payment date, in any case. So May 10 is if that stuff doesn't happen, then on May 10 the City owes \$30,000. If those things have happened by April 27 and May 6, then on May 10 the city owes \$15,000. I just wanted to confirm that that is the correct timeline.

MS. KLEIN: I -- oh, sorry. I will pull up the settlement agreement. I didn't negotiate it so maybe I read it incorrectly.

MR. MACLEAN: Yes, it's -- if you want to pull up the Settlement Agreement it is on page 7, and it is point 3.

MR. NG: Michael Ng, Staff Attorney. I also was not involved in the drafting of this, but I did read it last night. I think my recollection -- I am pulling it up.

Adrienne is on my computer at the moment, so I am pulling it up on my phone. My recollection is that Connor's

characterization of the timing requirements is accurate.

But let me just take a minute to just take a look at it again. So, May 10 being the date that either the 30,000 or the 15,000 is paid, depending on what corrective action — if the corrective action is taken by April 27 with regard to making the permanent restroom facilities and water fountain/water bottle filling station available by April 27. And by May 6, restoring and removing the temporary toilet and hand washing station and restoring the landscape behind the restroom. Is that your — I think that is

MR. MACLEAN: That's right, that's the City's understanding as well.

MR. NG: Yes. Yes. I guess obviously this goes without saying, but if those, I guess, milestones are not met, payment by May 10 of the 30,000 is also the date by which the City would have the permanent restroom open.

MR. MACLEAN: Yes. I mean.

consistent with what you just said.

MR. NG: Yes.

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CHAIR GILMORE: Wait a minute, I am confused now. It sounds like the restroom had to be open by the 27 and if that didn't happen the 30,000 was due, help me here.

MR. MACLEAN: On the 10th.

MR. MACLEAN: On May 10. But there is nothing that says that if you miss the April 27 date that the restroom

has to be open by May 10; is that true?

2 MR. TRUJILLO: No, that's not true. Part 1 of page 7, 3 Cease and Desist, does include the phrase --

CHAIR GILMORE: Ah.

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MR. TRUJILLO: Respondent --

CHAIR GILMORE: Yes.

the Settlement Agreement.

MR. TRUJILLO: Yes.

CHAIR GILMORE: Okay, I see it now. Thank you.

9 MR. NG: So, I think we're covered.

CHAIR GILMORE: Okay. So, I am going to ask the City of San Rafael, do you agree to the terms of the Settlement Agreement?

MR. MACLEAN: Yes. So, we are at a similar place in accepting this agreement as you are. Staff has recommended approval; the City Manager has signed. But the City Manager only has the authority to sign for things up to \$20,000 so this will be on the City's agenda for the April 15 City Council hearing, at which staff will recommend that the City Council enter into and approve the Settlement Agreement, and we expect that the City Council will approve

CHAIR GILMORE: Okay, great. So, do any members of the Enforcement Committee have clarifying questions or any questions for either staff or the City?

COMMISSIONER VASQUEZ: Marie, this is John.

CHAIR GILMORE: Yes.

COMMISSIONER VASQUEZ: What if nothing happens?

MR. TRUJILLO: I can field that. Do you mean, if the City just -- do you mean if the Settlement Agreement is not approved, or if the City does not live up to the terms of the Settlement Agreement?

COMMISSIONER VASQUEZ: Doesn't live up to the terms. Something happens.

MR. TRUJILLO: Okay. So, in that event, we have a couple of options. I am channeling a discussion I had with Greg about this yesterday. Option, the potential option would be to then refer the matter directly to the Attorney General or to issue an order that orders the City to comply with the terms of the Settlement Agreement.

COMMISSIONER VASQUEZ: Does the fine increase then?

MR. TRUJILLO: From our perspective, no, because we are already maxed out, we can't charge more than 30,000.

However, I am less clear about how it works if this were to go to court.

COMMISSIONER VASQUEZ: Well, it started in 2015, it has been now nine years.

MR. TRUJILLO: Yes.

COMMISSIONER VASQUEZ: All right, thank you.

24 CHAIR GILMORE: Any other? Rebecca.

25 COMMISSIONER EISEN: This may be for Michael, but does

the full Commission need to also approve the Settlement
Agreement? And if so, in the presentation to the
Commission I think there should be some description of,
summary description of what happened between '86 and 2015,
why there was no effort to enforce the permit during that
twenty-some year period. And then also a summary
description of why the negotiations between 2015 and now
have taken this long.

MR. TRUJILLO: Okay, we can do that.

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COMMISSIONER EISEN: Am I right that the Commission needs to approve the Settlement Agreement also?

MR. TRUJILLO: You are correct, yes.

COMMISSIONER EISEN: Yes, I think we should. People are going to ask. I would be asking now but I gather --

MS. KLEIN: I can answer that question.

COMMISSIONER EISEN: -- some of that information is already available. Go ahead.

MS. KLEIN: I apologize if I didn't provide enough background. We were -- staff was not aware, Commissioner Eisen, before 2015 that the restroom was closed. The City in fact submitted a request to amend their permit to remove the public restroom requirement in 2015 and that is how BCDC found out that the restroom was closed. The City, I believe, eventually withdrew that request based on direction from staff that they were unlikely to make a

recommendation of approval to the Commission as that amendment was considered to be, likely to be a material permit amendment.

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We then -- this was actually Matthew's enforcement case. So, we used the 35 day standardized fine letter as the first tool along with a lot of communication. Matthew negotiated the porta-potty so that at least there would be a public restroom facility while the permanent restroom facility was being refurbished. So, it had been closed for so long. I don't think I ever knew exactly the details from reading the record of the condition of the restroom, but it wasn't able to be simply opened. I think it needed to be wholly reconstructed.

So, there were a series of events that I might characterize as a bit of a tragic comedy in that the City, I believe with full good faith, intended on many different occasions to take step X and open the restroom. At the point that staff would check in when that due date, that sort of City self-imposed due date came, there was yet another technical reason why they couldn't then open the restroom for another year. And so this series of events occurred over this eight year period and staff was for the most part engaged during that entire period of time.

The last couple years I think we haven't been engaged so actively. Compliance Analyst, former Enforcement

Analyst John Creech was then working on the case for a couple of years and in close contact with Fabiola. She wasn't part of the project originally, but became, I believe, the City lead. And during the period that we weren't in contact the City did reconstruct the restroom, which is great. And then as I had mentioned, they encountered in this series of events another obstacle, unexpected, not intentional, and they seem to have now worked their way through that. I would be curious to know if there is an update on how long it will take PG&E to turn on the power.

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So, I hope that answers your question. I am happy to provide more details if you have any further questions.

COMMISSIONER EISEN: It does. But it also leads me to think about what lessons can be learned from this. I mean, part of the problem sounds like we rely, or at least have in the past, largely relied on somebody coming to us and saying guess what, that bathroom is not open. And we don't have any method for making sure permit holders bring to our attention any issues with compliance with the permit.

There may be a dozen other things. But I think, you know, given that we have got thirty-some years invested in this, maybe we can spend a few minutes thinking about what lessons can be learned from this and if there can be improvements in processes given what's happened in this

case. Whether we can use it as a learning. It sounds like we can't get any more money out of it but maybe we can get some learning out of it.

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MR. TRUJILLO: Well, so we -- yes, we learned a lot from this case. As you probably have discerned, this case was opened prior to the reinvigoration of the enforcement program, before we had the establishment, which was a recommendation by the auditor of a compliance program, as well as another recommendation, which is to do more in terms of getting out into the community to monitor and patrol the site. So, while I don't believe, because this was an active case, and I believe that -- correct me if I am wrong, Adrienne -- they were only looking at resolved cases. This is certainly one that was top of mind throughout that process.

I am not going to necessarily make excuses for why it has taken so long post-audit, other than just to say that the practicalities have not allowed us to resolve this case fully. This PG&E issue, for example, has been going on for I believe it has been a couple of years at least where we have checked in, what is going on with the restroom? Oh, it's PG&E. And then eventually, the reason why it's now in front of you is because we just needed, we need resolution. We can't have these longstanding cases. Nine, eight, nine years is just too long for any case to really stay open

post-audit, post-reinvigoration, so we are really trying to move those things through.

But yes, we do learn from these. Unfortunately, this will not be the probably the only example that comes before you of a very longstanding case that takes forever to resolve but we are on top of it.

CHAIR GILMORE: John.

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know, we went through this some years ago. How do we check back and make sure the permits are completed when we have relied on other agencies to go ahead and do those approvals? In some cases it is the developer, in other cases it happens to be the City. Because we only had a few members in enforcement and the audit indicated that that was part of the problem too. But we have had these discussions over the years and Marie can remember us going, starting with the audit and then looking at the way enforcement was handled.

It was a lot of work for the small group of staff we had. It was enough just to work on the stuff that came before us, let alone being able to look back and say, did that permit get completely completed, did everybody check things off? We even talked about in the case of a building maybe we are the last person that signs off for the occupancy permit. While we in the past have been relying

on other agencies, as I said earlier, to make sure that the work had been done. You know, pathways might be too small. In this case a bathroom never got opened. But who really suffered was the public itself for so long. And yes, we do rely on the community to let us know when things are not. We will get there. But, you know, as Matthew said, some of these older cases just been hanging around.

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Yes, I know as a member of the Commission it is sometimes frustrating. Having spent all that time going through the audit and working on some new rules and some new procedures and more staff. Again, it was a small staff and it was a lot of work for them.

MR. TRUJILLO: If I may, on that note, we are currently looking at going through the process of a mission-based review on the regulatory or permit side, where we are looking at how and whether we should reconceptualize our permit conditions. And I am wondering if perhaps we are looking at, for example, incorporating more compliance into that thing too. So, I believe that that will be coming before the Commission for a briefing and input in the very near future.

CHAIR GILMORE: Okay. So, thank you, Rebecca, for that question because this kind of brings my set of comments full circle. Number one, it is not unusual, and as a matter of fact very common for public agencies to rely

on the public to be their eyes and ears because most public agencies just do not have the resources in terms of people to actually be out on the ground, you know, looking for violations or, you know, whatever. Whether it is us, the City of San Rafael, other cities, we rely on the public to be our eyes and ears, that's number one.

Number two, this gets back to what I asked about earlier in terms of software. We have had discussions about how hard it is to track our permits in terms of compliance. Not in terms of like, are they out of compliance, but what are the timelines that are set in these permits for compliance? So, like we issue a permit today and there are several milestones that have to be tracked. In the past, it has been hard to do that because staff has been doing it basically by hand or with a spreadsheet.

And that's part of my comment about, you know, what software or systems do we have in place to make it easier to track that kind of thing. And so I kind of feel like this came back full circle to what I had asked about, you know, in the beginning. And it is a problem because I have no idea if, for instance, the software that we would need exists, and if it does, how much it costs, or if it has to be created from scratch and how much that costs. But these are all issues that I think, you know, we at BCDC have to

grapple with and I am sure there are a lot of other public organizations and cities that are doing the same thing.

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Okay, it occurs to me that I have not asked for -- oh, Rebecca.

COMMISSIONER EISEN: I just had a quick follow-up. don't know if our permits already have this in them, but is it possible to have -- it sounds like the City of San Rafael itself may not have been aware that a part of its permit obligations had not been fulfilled or had lapsed. Is there some process in the permit where every, I don't know, five years or something, the permittee confirms or reaffirms that the permit conditions are still being met? Something like that. So that they would then have to check and make sure everything that they were supposed to have done is still being done. Matthew, it is just something to sort of stick in your thinking box because it sounds like you are already doing a lot of thinking about how to improve our processes. So, I don't know if that is something that would be useful, but I just wanted to get it out there while it was still in the top of my mind.

MR. TRUJILLO: I think that's a good, a great idea. I would just I guess assure you that in our permits already there is language to the effect that clarifies that it is the permittee's responsibility to maintain compliance throughout. But yes, I guess I share your concern, if I am

interpreting it correctly, that maybe it is not as robust as it could be, maybe we need to think about how to make that a bit more robust.

COMMISSIONER EISEN: Thank you.

MR. TRUJILLO: Mm-hmm.

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CHAIR GILMORE: I see Shari Posner. I didn't know if you wanted to say something.

MS. POSNER: I was just going to say that this sounds like perhaps, and this is up to the Committee, but it sounds like maybe some sort of presentation from the permit compliance group, or a working group, or discussion might be in order because there are a lot of ideas here and something to consider as a future agenda item, maybe.

CHAIR GILMORE: I like that suggestion and if other members of the Committee, it kind of sounds like we are all asking the same sorts of questions, and so I am going to ask Matthew if you would agendize that for a future meeting.

MR. TRUJILLO: Yes, I will.

CHAIR GILMORE: Okay, thank you. All right. I'm sorry, did I ask for public comment? I don't think I did.

Are there any members of the public who would like to comment on this item?

MS. MALAN: I see no hands raised, Chair Gilmore.

CHAIR GILMORE: Okay, thank you. All right.

If there are no final questions or comments from the 1 2 Committee Members, I will entertain a motion for approval 3 to approve the Executive Director's Recommended Enforcement 4 Decision regarding the proposed stipulated Cease and Desist 5 Order (sic) today. COMMISSIONER EISEN: So moved. 6 7 COMMISSIONER VASQUEZ: Second. 8 CHAIR GILMORE: Okay, we had a motion from 9 Commissioner Eisen and a second from Commissioner Vasquez. 10 Matthew, could you please call the roll? 11 MR. TRUJILLO: I'm sorry, may I clarify? Did you say Cease and Desist Order? Because it's a Settlement 12 13 Agreement. 14 CHAIR GILMORE: Oh, I'm sorry. 15 MR. TRUJILLO: Does that mean we have to redo it? 16 am not sure. 17 CHAIR GILMORE: Well, let's redo it just so we have a 18 clear record. Okay. Can I have a motion to approve the 19 recommended Settlement Agreement? 20 COMMISSIONER EISEN: So moved. 21 COMMISSIONER VASQUEZ: Second. 2.2 CHAIR GILMORE: Okay, so we have a motion from 2.3 Commissioner Eisen and a second from Commissioner Vasquez. 2.4 Now, Matthew, will you please call the roll? 25 MR. TRUJILLO: Okay. Commissioner Eisen?

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         COMMISSIONER EISEN:
                              Aye.
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         MR. TRUJILLO: Commissioner Vasquez?
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         COMMISSIONER VASQUEZ: Yes.
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        MR. TRUJILLO: Chair Gilmore?
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         CHAIR GILMORE: Yes.
         The motion passes unanimously. Thank you very much,
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   Committee Members.
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         And I will now -- and thank you to the city of San
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   Rafael. We thank you for your attendance and your
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   participation today.
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         So, Committee Members, I will now entertain a motion
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   to adjourn.
         COMMISSIONER EISEN: So moved.
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         COMMISSIONER VASQUEZ: Second.
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         CHAIR GILMORE: Okay, we have a motion and a second; a
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   motion by Commissioner Eisen, a second by Commissioner
   Vasquez. Is there anybody who objects to this motion?
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    Seeing no objections, we are adjourned. Thank you
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   everyone. Have a nice day.
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         (Thereupon, the Enforcement Committee meeting was
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         adjourned at 10:25 a.m.)
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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, JOHN COTA, an Electronic Reporter, do hereby certify that I am a disinterested person herein; that I recorded the foregoing San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission Enforcement Committee meeting and that it was thereafter transcribed.

I further certify that I am not of counsel or attorney for any of the parties to said Committee meeting, or in any way interested in the outcome of said matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 2nd day of April, 2024.

JOHN COTA

18 CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

I, RAMONA COTA, a Certified Electronic Reporter and Transcriber, certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript, to the best of my ability, from the electronic recording of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter.

24 Kamora (

April 2, 2024

25 RAMONA COTA, CERT**478