

Wednesday, October 06, 1999

To: Assemblyperson Dion Aroner

Via: Betty Reid Soskin

From David Dolberg, Esq.

Trails for Richmond Action Committee

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Re: State Lands Commission Renewal of Chevron Long Wharf Lease

Dear Assemblyperson Aroner:

As you know, the Trails for Richmond Action Committee (TRAC) is a grass roots organization dedicated to completion of the Bay Trail within the City of Richmond. A major part of our focus is the Point San Pablo Open Space Project. The aim of this project is the incorporation of the Point Molate area with privately held parcels to the North and South, parcels that are presently available. This would create a full 6 miles of public access Bay shoreline and adjacent hillside – a truly spectacular and rare piece of urban open space. An essential component of this project will be provision for public hiking and pedestrian access to the peninsula – access that has been unavailable since construction of the Richmond Bridge, and Chevron's acquisition of properties south of the bridge, currently used for Long Wharf operations. The only existing access to the entire peninsula is by car, or by a narrow bike path ON THE SHOULDER OF I-580.

Presently, the State Lands Commission is considering renewal of the multi-decade lease on the subtidal lands surrounding the Long Wharf just south of I-580 to Chevron. This land is public property, belonging to all citizens of the State, and, as such, intended to be used by the public for access and recreation. Chevron's use of this land for commercial purposes has precluded access or use by the public, and Chevron would likely wish to continue to deny access to the public should the lease be renewed.

An administrative draft of the required environmental impact report (EIR) was sent to the State Lands Commission last Friday. TRAC will be going to Sacramento next week to request that the State Lands Commission require public access through Chevron property be provided to mitigate the lack of public access to the leased land, and offset the adverse impact of Chevron's continued use of this land. This would not only serve to mitigate the lack of public access to the public property at issue, but would also link communities south of I-580 with the growing public recreational area north of I-580 along the Point San Pablo peninsula.

Last September, TRAC met with representatives of Chevron and the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) to consider alternative routes across the upland portions of the adjoining Chevron property and linking up with the existing trail at the I-580 / Richmond Bridge Toll Plaza. A letter from Steve Fiala, trail specialist for EBRPD, is enclosed. This letter describes three alternative approaches for this path. In all three, the access would extend from the northern terminus of Western Drive in Point Richmond to the existing hiking and biking path under the Richmond Bridge.

TRAC urges you to contact the elected members of the State Lands Commission in Sacramento, requesting that the draft EIR require this mitigation as a condition of the renewal of the lease of public lands to Chevron. TRAC feels it is essential for this mitigation to be included in the Draft EIR rather than trying to seek modification of the Draft during the public comment period.

I would be happy to arrange a guided tour of this area for you or for your staff. Please contact me at (510) 215-7847. Thank you for your prompt attention to this

matter.

Yours Truly,

David Dolberg, Esq.
TRAC

CC: Bruce Beyaert

Enclosure