

2013 November Election

Official LWVSF Recommendations

Prop B 8 Washington Initiative

Position LWVSF 2013

The Question: Shall the City allow a development project at the 8 Washington Street Site that would include new housing, retail and recreational facilities, and open space, and would increase the legal building height limits on a portion of the Site?

Background:

The site proposed for development as 8 Washington Street is 3.2 acres bounded by the Embarcadero, Washington Street and Drumm Street (the Site). Approximately 80% of the Site is owned by Golden Gateway Center and used as walkways and a privately operated tennis and swim facility. The remaining 20% is a public parking lot under the jurisdiction of the City and County of San Francisco's Port Commission.

In 2012 the Board of Supervisors (the Board) approved a development project for the Site involving construction of two mixed-use buildings containing 134 residential units, ground floor restaurants and retail, a privately operated fitness and swim facility, a public park and open spaces, and underground public and private parking.

In approving the development project, the Board also adopted an Ordinance to increase the legal building height limits on a portion of the project. Then a referendum, Proposition C, qualified for the ballot requiring that the Ordinance be submitted to the voters. Later, this initiative, Proposition B dealing with the same Site qualified for the ballot.

The Proposal:

Proposition B would create a **special use district** known as the 8 Washington Parks, Public Access and Housing District. The district would require the 8 Washington Street Site project to include:

- two buildings housing a total of between 121 and 141 residential units;
- an increase in the legal building height limits on an approximately half-acre portion (16% of the Site) along Drumm Street from 84 feet to 92 feet in one section and from 84 feet to 136 feet in another;
- a privately operated fitness and swim facility, with a two-story height limit;
- a height limit of 6 stories for the residential building along the Embarcadero;
- payment by the developer to the affordable housing fund of the City and County of San Francisco as required by law;
- a public park, open space, walkways and sidewalks on at least 20% of the Site;
- new and expanded pedestrian access to the waterfront and enhanced bicycle and
- pedestrian safety;

- ground floor retail and cafés;
- underground private and public automobile and bicycle parking; and
- increased revenue for the Port and the City.

Controller Statement:

The Ordinance approving the proposed project at 8 Washington Street, the establishment of a special use district, would result in near-term tax revenues of approximately \$4 million, \$11 million in fee payments to fund affordable housing and \$4.8 million in fee payments to fund transit improvements. The Port of San Francisco would receive approximately \$3 million in near-term revenues from the sale of a seawall lot for the project plus a percentage of property sales. In addition, the developer would construct a public park and improve public utilities and infrastructure. Future revenues, depending on market conditions, are projected to be more than \$350 million.

A “YES” vote means: If you vote “yes,” you want to approve the 8 Washington Street Site development project, which includes new housing, retail and recreational facilities and open space. It would also increase the building height limits on a portion of the Site.

A No” vote means: If you vote “no”, you do not want to make these changes.

League Positions:

LWVSF

- **City Planning:** Support a planning process that balances the need for more open space and the need for increased building with criteria such as open space, view, proportion and human scale, taxation, balanced development, transportation access and availability, preservation of desirable and/or historical areas.
- **Housing:** Support measures that provide for the needs of low, moderate and middle-income groups
- **Development and Redevelopment:** All redevelopment should conform to the San Francisco General Plan
- **The Port: Follow the principles of the General Plan, with special emphasis on height and bulk contents that should be enforced.**

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- **Land Use:** Local Planning-Land use decisions should relate to and protect the overall quality of the environment. Local government should plan for the preservation of open space and provide for adequate parks and recreation.
- **Housing:** Encourage the use of density bonuses, mixed, cluster and inclusionary zoning, infill development, air rights, and increased density along transportation corridors.

LWVSF Position: Opposed

Opposed: This proposition is asking for direct ordinance approval by voters for a special use district using the initiative process. Using the initiative process in this case is not in the best interest of an overall San Francisco plan. City planning does not benefit from project-specific

voter approval as elected officials are responsible. The Board of Supervisors approved this project.

Prop C
8 Washington Referendum
Position LWVSF 2013

The Question: Shall the City ordinance increasing legal building height limits on an approximately half-acre portion of the 8 Washington Street Site along Drumm Street take effect?

Background:

The site proposed for development as 8 Washington Street is 3.2 acres bounded by the Embarcadero, Washington Street and Drumm Street (the Site). Approximately 80% of the Site is owned by Golden Gateway Center and used as walkways and a private tennis and swim facility. The remaining 20% is a public parking lot under the jurisdiction of the City and County of San Francisco's Port Commission.

In 2012 the Board of Supervisors (the Board) approved a development project for the Site involving construction of two mixed-use buildings containing 134 residential units, ground floor restaurants and retail, a private fitness and swim facility, a public park and open spaces, and underground public and private parking.

In approving the development project, the Board also adopted an Ordinance (the Ordinance) to increase the legal building heights on an approximately half-acre portion (16% of the Site). The one section along Drumm Street and 136 feet in another.

A referendum was filed requiring that the Ordinance be submitted to the voters. The Ordinance will not go into effect unless a majority of voters vote in favor of it.

The Proposal:

Proposition C is a Referendum to approve an Ordinance passed by the Board of Supervisors. The Ordinance would increase the legal building height limits on an approximately half-acre portion of the Site along Drumm Street from 84 feet to 92 feet in one section and from 84 feet to 136 feet in another section.

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want the Ordinance increasing legal building height limits on an approximately half-acre portion of the 8 Washington Street Site along Drumm Street to take effect.

A "NO" Vote Means: If you vote "no," you do not want the Ordinance increasing legal building height limits on an approximately half-acre portion of the 8 Washington Street Site along Drumm Street to take effect.

Controller Statement:

This referendum to approve or reject an ordinance passed by the Board of Supervisors raising the

height limits for a portion of the 8 Washington Street project would result in near-term tax revenues of approximately \$4 million, \$11 million in fee payments to fund affordable housing and \$4.8 million in fee payments to fund transit improvements. The Port of San Francisco would receive approximately \$3 million in near-term revenues from the sale of a seawall lot for the project plus a percentage of property sales. In addition, the developer would construct a public park and improve public utilities and infrastructure. Future revenues, depending on market conditions, are projected to be more than \$350 million.

League Positions:

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- **City Planning:** Support a planning process that balances the need for more open space and the need for increased building with criteria such as open space, view, proportion and human scale, taxation, balanced development, transportation access and availability, preservation of desirable and/or historical areas.
- **Housing:** Support measures that provide for the needs of low, moderate and middle-income groups
- **Development and Redevelopment:** All redevelopment should conform to the San Francisco General Plan
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- **Land Use:** Local Planning-Land use decisions should relate to and protect the overall quality of the environment. Local government should plan for the preservation of open space and provide for adequate parks and recreation.
- **Housing:** encourage the use of density bonuses, mixed, cluster and inclusionary zoning, infill development, air rights, and increased density along transportation corridors.

LWVSF Recommendation: Opposed

All City developments should conform to the principles of the San Francisco General Plan and not exceed the existing zoned height limits. This proposition would establish a precedent of increasing height limits in this area of the City from 84 feet to 92 and 136 feet.