

News Release

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## GROUPS ASK PRESIDIO TRUST FOR MORE PUBLIC COMMENT TIME ON CONTROVERSIAL CONSTRUCTION PLANS

The Presidio Historical Association (PHA), a nonprofit group, has asked the Presidio Trust to extend the public comment period for their recently released Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) from 45 days to 150 days. The Cow Hollow Association and Marina Community Association, neighborhood groups, have also asked for an extension.

The Trust's 318-page draft SEIS, released last week, describes the historic and natural impacts of several highly controversial proposals, including a 100,000 sq. ft. contemporary art museum proposed by Gap founder Donald Fisher; a 90,000 sq. ft. hotel, and movie multiplex being considered as new additions to the Presidio's grounds.

"The length, complexity and controversial nature of the Presidio Trust's Environmental Impact Statement require far more than the legal minimum of 45 days for the public to study and adequately comment upon it," said PHA's past President Whitney Hall.

The Trust, a federal agency which manages real estate in the historic national park, also announced it has suspended an ongoing consultation on the negative impacts of these proposals, a process that is required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Critics believe this move is designed to push through the Trust's building plans before the public can respond to the findings of the historic preservation review.

The massive new construction -- whose square footage is approximately that of three football fields -- is planned for the most historically sensitive site of San Francisco's birthplace and center of activity in the early West, dating back to the Presidio's founding by a Spanish expedition in 1776. The Presidio was the nation's longest-operating military base until it became a national park in 1994.

The entire Presidio, part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), is designated a National Historic Landmark District, a status that the National Park Service has said is threatened by the "adverse effect" of the scale and location of the Trust's proposals.

The Presidio Trust has scheduled one public meeting for citizens to comment on the SEIS and its proposals for Monday, July 14, 6:30 pm at the Presidio Officers' Club. Written comments to the Trust are due on July 31st.

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Founded in the 1950s, the nonprofit Presidio Historical Association (PHA) has worked in cooperation with the National Park Service and Presidio Trust since 1994 to advocate for preserving the integrity of the Presidio's National Historic Landmark District, located within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA). PHA created a museum for the Army when it was based at the Presidio. Earlier, PHA helped restore historic Fort Point at the base of the Golden Gate Bridge.