

Wednesday  
February 16, 2011

## Extra

### Berkeley City Council Fails to Pass Controversial Resolutions

By *Charlotte Perry-Houts*  
Tuesday February 22, 2011

Last Tuesday the Berkeley City Council discussed open government, Bradley Manning, the Affordable Housing Impact Fee, and PG&E's pipelines in Berkeley.



Council voted unanimously to adopt the first reading of the Open Government Ordinance, with a second reading scheduled for March 8<sup>th</sup>. Then they voted to approve a second part of the item, regarding the agenda committee and the presiding officer's ability to move public comment to different parts of the meeting. Many members of the public spoke out against the item, commenting that the agenda committee has too much power over what goes onto the agenda, and that moving the public comment around during a meeting can be a problem for the disabled community, who cannot always stay until late into the evening to make their comments. The vote was all ayes except for Worthington and Arreguin.

Returning to the discussion about Bradley Manning, council voted unanimously to send a letter requesting his humane treatment while awaiting trial. Manning, who allegedly released documents and information to WikiLeaks about the Iraq War, has been in solitary confinement and subjected to very difficult conditions in a military prison while awaiting his trial. The letter will be sent to the new Brig Commander, Denise Barnes.

In light of the recent discussion about the safety of PG&E's pipelines, Council voted unanimously to request that PG&E identify the size, condition, age, location, and last inspection dates of all natural gas lines in Berkeley, and that they install shut-off valves.

The Affordable Housing Impact Fee, a fee that developers pay when building housing that goes to the City's Housing Trust Fund, will be discussed again later in a worksession. Council voted unanimously to have the City Manager prepare an ordinance with a range of options for setting the Impact Fee, and to discuss the issue more in a worksession. There was a staff recommendation to set the fee at \$20,000 per unit, and a Housing Advisory Commission recommendation to set it at \$28,000 per unit.

Council also passed an ordinance extending the operation of the warm water pool until construction actually makes it impossible for it to continue operating. The warm water pool was going to close this June.

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A number of members of the public came to the meeting to support the Peace and Justice Commission's recommendation that Berkeley step up in the safe resettlement of Guantanamo detainees. The Council took no action on the item.

Ceremonially, the Council honored Josefina Lopez, who created Corazon Del Pueblo, a place for showcasing Latino and Chicano art. She announced the upcoming celebration of El Dia Del Nino, day of the child, occurring on April 30<sup>th</sup> at 4814 International Boulevard in Oakland.