



For Immediate Release: January 16, 2015

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## Social Justice & Labor Alliance Defeats Candlestick Stadium Implosion Proposal

San Francisco, CA – Community, environmental justice, and labor organizers raised a cheer today when their unified pressure triggered Lennar corporation to withdraw its application for a permit to demolish Candlestick Stadium by implosion demolition.

Led by months of organizing by the Bayview Hill Neighborhood Association and the Candlestick Point Neighborhood Committee, the effort to halt the implosion demolition eventually included community groups and organizers from all over the City, with a strong assist from labor unions.

The final blow to the Candlestick implosion plan came Thursday night when the San Francisco Building and Construction Trades Council unanimously adopted a resolution sponsored by Laborers Union Local 261 to oppose implosion and support mechanical dismantling of the stadium.

Julia Cuppa, Co-Chair of the Candlestick Point Neighborhood Committee said, "Imploding Candlestick Park would have polluted the community with a large plume of hazardous silica cement dust that would have had devastating adverse effects on many people with pre-existing respiratory illnesses and cardiovascular disease. It is a powerful turning point that the community, environmental groups, and local unions all joined together in solidarity to support mechanical dismantling, instead of a dangerous implosion plan."

Joshua Arce, Laborers Local 261 community liaison and president of the San Francisco Commission on the Environment said, "This was an opportunity for San Francisco's building trade unions to stand in solidarity with community and environmental leaders to say that when we talk about jobs, we mean good-paying jobs that build communities, not hurt them."

Eric Brooks, coordinator for the grassroots organization Our City added, "This groundbreaking victory through an alliance of union, environmental, and social justice organizations is exactly the sort of solidarity between labor and community that Martin Luther King was working for in the latter years of his life. I can think of no greater validation of King's work on this year's MLK holiday than the halting of this implosion plan. When labor joins with environmental, social justice and community movements, we together become an unstoppable force."

The plume from the proposed implosion demolition would also have inundated local and state parks, a bird sanctuary, and wetlands habitat near the stadium. Workers at ground zero on the site would have suffered the brunt of adverse health effects. Conversely, mechanical dismantling provides far more employment for local union workers, because it requires skilled hands-on labor for several weeks or more; whereas the implosion would have been accomplished largely via explosives and machinery.

Community organizers were deeply alarmed that Lennar corporation, which had been fined \$500,000 in 2008 for previous construction dust violations near Candlestick, was seeking permission to generate still more hazardous dust in that area in its implosion demolition plan.

A study of the 1998 implosion demolition of a hospital in Calgary, Canada stated in its conclusions that, "Problematic issues surrounding public health protection in affected areas that could extend 10 or 20 km downwind from an implosion site suggest that implosions should be prohibited in metropolitan areas."

See: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/10473289.2005.10464605>

**For More Information:**

**Bayview Hill Neighborhood Association - <http://www.bayviewhillsf.org>**

**Our City - <http://our-city.org/campaigns/AntiToxicDevelopment.html>**

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