

All hail the...

...the vandals of hammerwich issue...

Hepper Spray Times

May 2007



It's spiriferous... it's free...if you can find it

"...approach thou like the rugged Russian bear..."*

Vol. IX No. 5

MKTHINK VALUES YOUR INPUT; CITY-WIDE RECEPTACLES AVAILABLE

By Joaquin Numonia



Put your input here.



PEOPLE'S PARK'S problem, according to the university, MKThink, and the chancellor-appointed People's Park Advisory Board, is that nobody uses the park, and that there's no "vibrancy" there. No one can figure out why people like these didn't get the message.

Architectural firm MKThink was absent from the most recent Community Advisory Board meeting on People's Park, busy privately collecting disposable input from various private groups of privately selected "stakeholders", input which will be privately packaged and privately censored.

The board members quickly and creatively revised procedure so that Assistant Vice Chancellor for Planning for UC Berkeley Emily Marthinsen, conveniently sitting in the audience,



THE PEOPLE'S PARK Community Advisory Board knows that it can't call itself representative since it was appointed by the university, and it can't call the information collected by the consultant group MKThink representative since it is being privately collected and privately censored, and it can't call its meetings fair because some members of the audience have special opportunities to speak while others are deemed disruptive, and it can't argue that it honors the Brown Act because some of its meetings and deliberations are private. But at least they all get a cookie.

could give MKThink's report instead, while managing to accuse as "disruptive" anyone else from the audience who tried to speak.

"It's this flexibility of approach to procedure which distinguishes our group," stated co-chair Joe Halperin. "We couldn't possibly engineer the inclusion of one audience member but not another into a publically noticed presentation by a third party unless we had a very flexible approach to the Brown Act and the whole concept of a public meeting."

Critics objected that allowing Marthinsen to present for MKThink proved that the university and the consulting group were synonymous, and the board simply a prop created to imply that there had been a process of sorts before another potentially expensive, confrontational round of UC-inspired construction in People's Park.

"Nonsense," responded UC Community Affairs Director Irene Hegarty. "MKThink is an architectural firm being paid \$100,000 of public money to tailor privately collected information from privately selected individuals so that the information is identical to the university's plans for the park. We could never accomplish this without them."

Dubious community members pointed out that the last university plan for the park involving a consultant group resulted in millions of public dollars

being spent on a volleyball court, which was so thoroughly unwanted it needed 24 hour police protection. The consultant group, Calthorpe Associates, had even allowed some public participation in their biased process, and still ended up having the shared embarrassment of watching the university dig up and eliminate its own volleyball court to save on police overtime.

"It doesn't seem very sensible to repeat that whole embarrassing, expensive episode," conceded one Community Advisory Board appointee, requesting anonymity. "But you must keep in mind, that this is a lot like Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates's initiative about the 'public commons'. We're trying to get rid of the poor people and get some rich people downtown, buying our condos, and picnicking in the park. It's quite a creative challenge, and we may fail. We may just have to hire them."

* * * * *



ASK THE EXPERTS



LENA DEETER knows the answers to everything forwards and backwards.

Dear Lena, MKThink supposedly prides itself on something called “anthropology of design”, so isn’t it possible they’ll eschew construction projects in People’s Park for more obvious ways to make people “feel more comfortable” in the park like having clean bathrooms, free food, free music, and free yoga?

Dear reader, it’s true that the park would be brimming with people if your suggestions were implemented. But they would be the wrong people, the very same people who don’t mind if they’re wearing the wrong shoes, or no shoes at all. The university is looking for ways to draw the people who understand the significance white shoes before, as opposed to after, Labor Day.

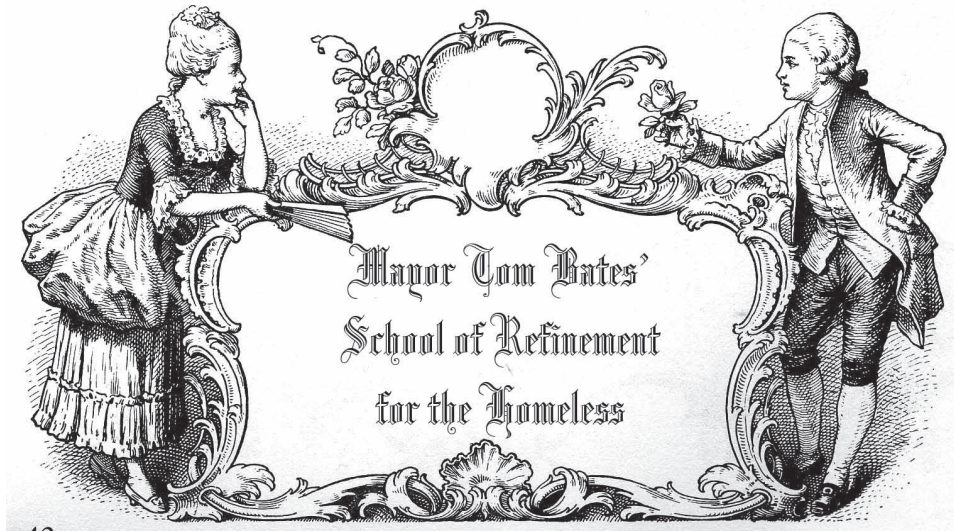
Dear Lena, isn’t it a good thing if oil companies with checkered backgrounds pour private money into secret research projects on campus? They might invent something really cool. Wouldn’t that be a good thing?

Dear reader, oh, yes, anyone who has ever dissected a frog would agree that the public should be shielded from such projects, which strongly depress one’s appetite.

Dear Lena, what’s wrong with the Supreme Court limiting some of the stuff doctors can do? Doctors are so full of themselves they make me sick anyway. Don’t they deserve to be taken down a peg?

Dear reader, yes, they do. And nobody can do it better than a humble, self-effacing group like judges.

Ask Lena anything! Write or email her, and she will give you actual expert advice. Contact her at cdenny@igc.org.



Victorian Etiquette - Etiquette When Visiting

Do not be in haste to seat yourself; one appears fully as well and talks better, standing for a few moments.

A man should always remain standing as long as there are any women standing in the room.

A man should never take any article from a woman’s hands—book, cup, flower, etc.—and remain seated, she standing.

Do not take young children when making formal calls.

Do not take pets with you.

Do not meddle with, or stare at the articles in the room.

Do not toss over the cards in the card receiver.

Do not call across the length of the room if you

wish to address any one. Cross the room and speak to him quietly.

Do not walk around the room, examining pictures, while waiting for the hostess.

Do not introduce politics, religion or other weighty topics for conversation when making calls.

Do not, if a gentleman, seat yourself upon the sofa beside the hostess, or in near proximity, unless invited to do so.

Do not scratch your head or use a toothpick, ear spoon or comb.

Use a handkerchief when necessary, but without glancing at it afterwards. Also be as quiet and unobtrusive in the action as possible.

Do not tell long stories, argue, talk scandal or rumors and do not attack the religious beliefs of anyone present.

Do not enter a room without first knocking and receiving an invitation to come in.



CLIMATE CHANGE IS HAVING the predicted effect on business, although startups in natural products, such as water, might prove wildly profitable.

Wealthy Shopper Boot Camp

By Lou S. Bidder

Shoppers flush with money but incapable of navigating panhandler-laden streets can gain new confidence and physical stamina at the Downtown Berkeley Association's new Boot Camp for the Wealthy Shopper.

"We're going to make it fun," raved DBA Executive Director Deborah Bahdia. "This won't be your typical sweaty workout. We'll work on the complicated physical moves required to dodge annoying panhandlers, of course, but we'll also tailor the course to the rigorous lifestyle of the financially gifted and the extreme shoppers we hope to draw downtown."

"I'm signed up already," stated one local shopper. "When some sad-looking person holds an empty cup in my direction, I just can't take it. I quake, I quiver, and I'm likely to forget my ATM code."

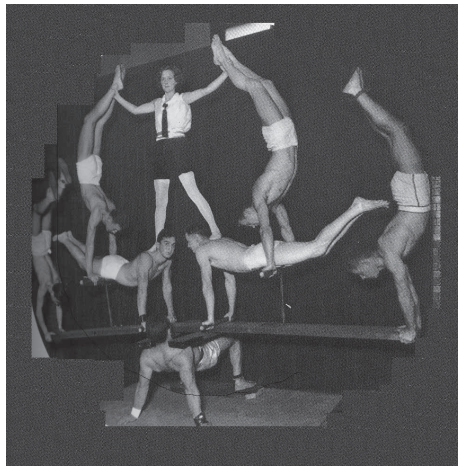
"It's just not enough that the city council and the commissions are dominated by wealthy developers and architects," agreed another shopper. "We need more tools to put these poor people in their place."

The proposed schedule is as follows, although it will be tailored to local sales:

7:00 am - Warm-up exercises with credit card.

8:00 am - Practice sliding expensive clothing down the bar of clothing rack.

9:00 am - Practice bending, stretching out foot, trying on shoe.



WEALTHY SHOPPERS can get ready for the challenges of streets at the new gym, designed to give them the mental and physical stamina to spend money enthusiastically in the presence of panhandlers and poverty.

10:00 am - One hour cell phone break to plan lunch date.

11:00 am - One hour cell phone workout relaying important cell-phone gossip gleaned during previous cell phone break.

12:00 pm - 2:00 pm lunch at the finest local restaurants, with special pep talk by Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates on the "Public Commons for Everyone Initiative" and why it is a class imperative and an economic necessity.

2:00 pm - Practice saying "I prefer to invest my extra funds" to panhandlers.

3:00 pm - Upper arm exercises with latte cup.

4:00 pm - Finger and wrist exercises for check-writing health.

5:00 pm - Dinner at the finest local restaurants with fellow wealthy shoppers.

* * * * *

Synthetic biology is only the beginning. Look forward to...

By Ulricka Havoc

Synthetic astronomy:

An entirely synthetic laboratory-born night sky sparkles with dazzlingly authentic-looking stars, perfect for those areas where over-development makes it tough to wish upon anything but the first sound of gunfire!

Synthetic climatology:

Instead of having to work within the old definitions of climatology, scientifically defined as weather conditions averaged over a period of time, you have the fun of tossing out all the almanacs and starting over with a new, fresh sense of adventure about the weather. The upside of global warming is the exhilarating challenge of being freed of the old, staid, weather patterns, and possibly having the fun of establishing some of your very own!

Synthetic zoology:

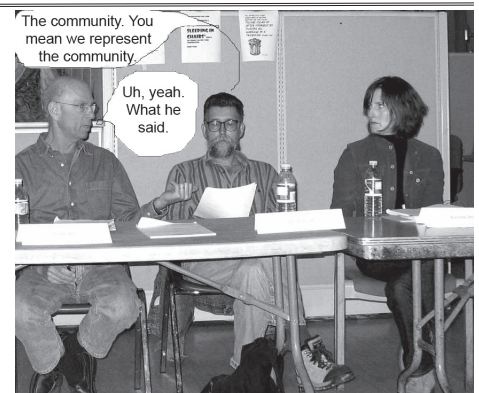
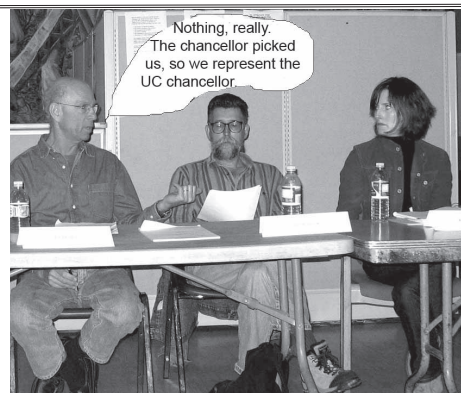
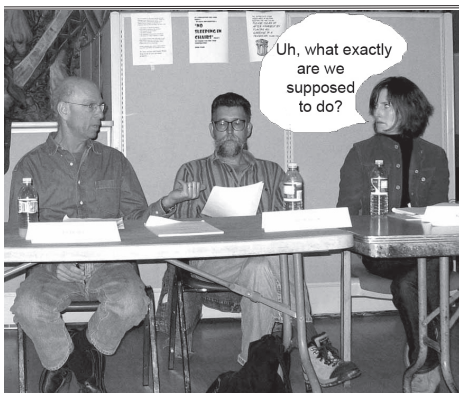
Once the study of animals, now includes the study of exotic new forms of life slipping through both the old, tired semantic definitions and physically escaping through the windows and waste products of laboratories across the globe. Enjoy making up brand new names for life forms with exciting, unknown consequences!

Synthetic history:

A new twist on the old way of looking at the past which might include patenting and re-branding well-known icons for commercial uses!

* * * * *

We Can't Draw Comics by Franz Toast



THE PEOPLE'S PARK "Community Advisory Board", appointed by the UC Chancellor, is eager to begin construction in the park so they can prove that all the hippies are gone, the sixties are over, and the homeless should just get a job already.

Sample Questions from the MKThink Survey on People's Park

Do you loathe People's Park, or merely find it nauseating?

Which activist do you hate the most?

Which would you rather have built on People's Park: a tennis court, a bocce ball court, or a softball field?

Would you rather have the activists jailed, tortured, or both?

Should the university use wooden bullets or pepper spray to clear the park of protesters for the next round of construction?

Should tie-dye be considered criminal, or just subject to civil liability nuisance suits?

Should the Telegraph Avenue merchants be forced to pay their own damages during the inevitable riot over park construction, or should the university foot a portion of the bill?

Do you find the community gardens in People's Park scruffy, too full of vegetables rather than hybrid roses, or just badly in need of topiary?

Should People's Park's history be put in a time capsule and buried six feet under the free speech circle in Sproul Plaza, or put on a 4"x5" plaque with a smiley face?

Should the People's Park concession stand serve caviar or sushi?

Should the murals in People's Park be



replaced with tasteful reproductions of the masters, or advertisements for local shops and businesses?

Should people found sleeping in People's Park have all their belongings confiscated, be jailed, or merely be transported to Oakland?

Should People's Park be renamed for Chancellor Birgeneau, Ronald Reagan, or Dick Cheney?

Should the People's Park dress code require pearls, sequins, or merely fur?

Rather than a park, would you choose to construct more student housing, more university office space, or a parking lot with drive-through latte service?
* * * * *

Next issue, Spinning Lettuce with Celebrities

The Pepper Spray Times gratefully accepts donations, death threats, mailing list additions, etc., at:



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Pepper Spray Times is made possible by the natural comedy inherent in the local political landscape and all its inhabitants, best exemplified by...

Available at some of the finest public meetings, or mailed to your door for a hefty bribe. Plagiarize wildly.

We appreciate those who understand that satire is serious business.

* MacBeth