

Victory at the Planning Commissioners June 18th 2014 Meeting

Last night East Oakland stood up for all of Oakland! Communities for a Better Environment is delighted to announce excellent news for East and West Oakland residents. On Wednesday evening the Planning Commissioners made the right decision in support of our health. The power of an organized community, equipped with facts and passion for environmental justice guided this decision. The Commissioners voted unanimously in favor of what we all wanted since the beginning.

For the past two and a half years, the community of East Oakland has expressed its strong opposition to the Stewart Enterprises crematorium proposal. The community has communicated a clear message to all Oakland elected officials, staff and Commissioners- that new policy changes governing crematoriums must protect the most impacted communities of East and West Oakland. We also have a strong business ally standing with us, widening our strategy and enabling to reach a final victory!

We want to thank the Commissioners for choosing the best options offered by the City Planning Department staff. In fact, they gave us what we were asking for all along. Of the three options presented, they agreed to:

1. Amend the planning code to insert the word “crematorium” into Extensive Impact Civic Activityⁱ, which means we would get a Conditional Use Permit.
2. Create a separate section in the planning code for crematoriums that says all new and expanding crematoriums must perform a CUP and a Health Risk Assessment.

We have won an important victory but the fight is still on!

We still need to keep up the good fight and continue working to a final and complete victory (Keep Stewart out of Oakland!). This permanent ordinance language approved last night will help our fight, but the Stewart lawsuit against the City is still pending (remember Judge Grillo’s ruling in 2013- that said Stewart’s permit was vested). The judge’s order is not final until the whole case is over.

Even though this seems like its dragging on, each day that Stewart is not operating in East Oakland, is a victory for the communities’ health.

There must be an end to the discriminatory policy that has allowed checker-board zoning practices. CBE has a vision to **Revitalize & Invest in Oakland**- this policy will propose the City to establish *Green Zones* that will target pollution prevention, reduction and green investments enabling these areas in Oakland to thrive and provide a healthy environment for our families! Oakland elected officials and policy makers have a duty to protect our air and water, and build new pathways to prosperity. They have a responsibility to protect our health and expand economic opportunity for all Oaklanders.

ATTEND OUR NEXT CBE MEETING AND COMMUNITY BUILDING ACTION:

- Thursday, July 24th at 6pm and Saturday, 26th at 11am at Tassafaronga (975 85th Ave., Oakland, CA)
- Visit our website: www.cbecal.org and sign our petitions
- Become a member of CBE and fight for a better, brighter and cleaner Oakland!

ⁱ Extensive Civic Impact Activities are those Civic Activities that could exist anywhere in Oakland, but by their nature may present some public health, noise or other environmental impact and therefore require a Conditional Use Permit prior to project approval.

