

Hayes Valley park to be named after green activist

Melanie Carroll, The Examiner
Aug 25, 2006

SAN FRANCISCO -

The woman credited with the creation of a mini-park near the site of the old Central Freeway won't be forgotten, since the green space will soon carry her name.

Patricia Walkup, the founder of the Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association, will be honored by the park's new appellation: "Patricia's Green in Hayes Valley."

The Recreation and Park Commission voted unanimously on Aug. 17 to name the greenery between Fell and Hayes streets, on the middle lanes of the new Octavia Boulevard, after the neighborhood advocate. She died June 6 at 59.

"If not for Patricia, that park would not be there," said Robin Levitt, an architect, friend and member of the Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association. "If she hadn't done that work, we would have a freeway there."

The rectangular-shaped park is a "beautiful space" that gives children and dogs a place to play, said neighborhood resident Brooke Arroyo, who frequents the park.

Arroyo didn't know Walkup but said it's appropriate to name the park after the woman who championed its creation.

Walkup lobbied for the creation of Octavia Boulevard and the park in lieu of the old Central Freeway, which was damaged in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake.

"Her pleasant personality was one of many soft-spoken but hardworking and consistent people in the neighborhood that overcame seemingly insurmountable odds to remove the Central Freeway north of Market Street," said AnMarie Rodgers, a city planner who worked with Walkup.

A naming ceremony is scheduled to take place Sept. 10, Recreation and Park Department spokeswoman Rose Marie Dennis said.

"We will have a sign. A classic [Recreation and Park Department] sign to honor her," Dennis said. "She made a real difference."

Examiner