The argument on May 24 should have been followed by apologies and reconciliation. Instead, Mr. Rucker chose to go to court. It’s really a lost opportunity.

In the meantime, we remain committed to what sometimes feels like an impossible ideal, and yet is critically necessary for livable cities: as many greened public spaces as possible in San Francisco.

We want the best and fairest use for this parcel, which starts with public involvement in the decisions governing its future. We know after talking with this neighborhood for five years that people imagine all kinds of uses for it: bioswales, fruit gardens, a place for pedestrians. There’s no reason that it shouldn’t receive the same level of debate and advocacy that other open spaces like JFK Promenade have received.

It would be easy to pass this incident off as a stupid clash between open space advocates and nearby property owners. That would be a mistake. It is, instead, a struggle between the present moment, in which cities try to re-envision land use and the future we know is coming: higher temperatures, unstable climates, and unhealthy conditions brought about by a rapidly shifting environment.

We think the city should plan for a greener future. All it takes is vision, leadership and political will.

Jay E. Martin
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