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Sharp Park vote was a good behind-the-scenes show

C. W. Nevius

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Connoisseurs of City Hall politics surely gave the City Operations and Neighborhood Services Committee meeting five stars on Monday.

There was a woman in a frog hat, allegations of gamesmanship directed at Chairman [John Avalos](#), and dozens of speakers.

Technically the issue was the future of the Sharp Park Golf Course and the frogs and garter snakes that live there. But the behind-the-scenes maneuvering was the real show.

Avalos denied it, but it certainly looked as if he was playing pretty fast and loose to get an ordinance passed that would give the course to the National Park Service, which doesn't have much interest in it. Conspiracy theorists think Avalos was trying to rush this to a vote - the San Francisco Public Golf Alliance called it "the rocket-docket method" - before Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi leaves to become sheriff. They add that the ordinance was transferred from Budget and Finance to City Operations so Avalos could shepherd it through. They also claim that his late revision of the ordinance last week was an attempt to avoid having to do an environmental impact report, which would drag things on beyond Mirkarimi's stay.

But the showmanship may be much ado about nothing. The ordinance will be at the full board today. It will likely get six votes to pass, but not enough to withstand a likely veto by Mayor [Ed Lee](#).

And it will all have been sound and fury that accomplished nothing.

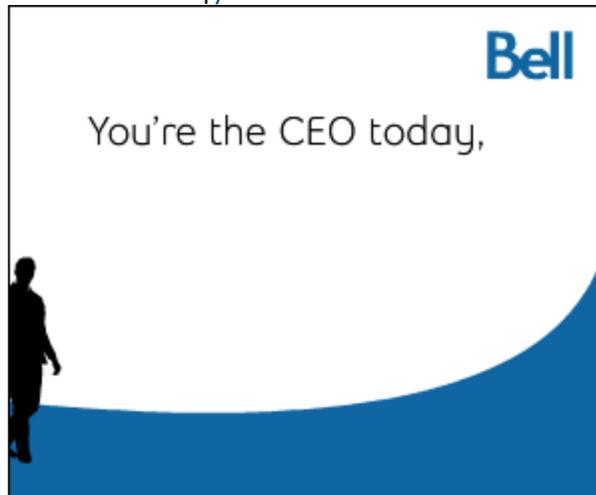
An awkwardly placed Muni shelter on the sidewalk in front of Washington Square has rankled North Beach residents.

Frankly, they have a point. The shelter is jammed into a small space among trees and a lamppost with almost no room to get through. When it was installed almost a year ago, Ken Maley, of the Friends of Washington Square, warned that someone would get hurt.

Sure enough, JoAnna Papai, a disabled woman, says she fell and broke her ankle attempting to navigate the shelter slalom.

"I fell, and the next thing I knew I was eating cement," she said. "I don't know whose idea this was, but they probably should be shot."

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I had a feeling the words "disabled woman" and "broken ankle," would get action. Municipal Transportation Agency spokesman Paul Rose says a new, smaller shelter will be installed in late February.

The annals of crime - it-was-just-a-thought. "S (subject) walked in to bank, approached V (victim) and handed him a note demanding money. V refused to give money and told S to leave. S grabbed his note and walked out of the bank."

C. W. Nevius' column appears Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. E-mail him at cwnevius@sfchronicle.com.

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