Abstract: Several recent studies have shown that living amid beautiful natural and built environments has a powerful impact on happiness and wellbeing, but beauty has not yet been included in alternative wellbeing indexes or surveys. This is a serious oversight. Strong evidence shows that beauty is not simply “in the eye of the beholder” but is a powerful universal feeling, developed through human evolution. We sense in beautiful environments a safe and flourishing place for human habitation and, far from distracting us from important issues like social justice and sustainability, beautiful habitats and settings enhance sustainable behaviors, tolerance, altruism and our passion for justice.

In his talk, John de Graaf will address these issues and present the story behind his new documentary film: STEWART UDALL AND THE POLITICS OF BEAUTY. Working toward a more beautiful world can also help us move beyond polarizing current political divisions, counter tendencies toward unsustainable consumerism, and promote cooperation and wellbeing. You can watch a short trailer for John’s new film here: Stewart Udall and the Politics of Beauty — Filmmakers Collaborative SF.