

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

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TO: Bay Fill Policies Working Group Members

FROM: Lawrence J. Goldzband, Executive Director (415/352-3653; larry.goldzband@bcdc.ca.gov)
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SUBJECT: June 18, 2015 Commission Fill Policies Working Group Meeting Summary

ATTENDEES: Commissioners: Barry Nelson, Chair, Jim McGrath, and Sean Randolph. Public attendees included John Coleman (Bay Planning Coalition) and Jill Singleton (Cargill).

1. **Roll Call, Introductions and Approval of Agenda.** Chair, Barry Nelson, called the meeting to order at approximately 11:00 am.
2. **Comments on the May 21, 2015 Meeting Summary.** The summary was approved.
3. **Committee Discussion of Future Meetings.** The Working Group (WG) discussed possible topics for future meetings and requested further guidance from BCDC staff. Discussion highlights included:
 - a. Collaboration with NOAA-funded *Policies for a Rising Bay Project* Steering Committee; Discussion topics could parallel those of the NOAA project, but on a broader level.
 - b. WG members preferred to use historic projects as examples of projects that would face challenges with sea level rise and directed staff to ensure that scenarios or case studies from the *Policies for a Rising Bay* project raised the issues the Commission and WG were likely to confront regarding Bay fill.
 - c. With regard to the Bay Plan transportation finding that roads and bridge approaches are not water-oriented uses, and therefore not allowable on Bay fill, WG members requested that the scenarios illustrate the inconsistency between the policy and the shoreline protection policy that allows fill for flood protection, e.g., fill for a levee to protect a road may be permissible.
 - d. John Coleman asked that the scenarios focus on goods movement generally, not just roads, e.g., rail, seaports and air freight.
 - e. Avoid pre-judging of the feasibility of certain projects, including scenarios with overlapping jurisdictions and uses.

- f. The WG requested that the scenarios help the WG grapple with the question under what circumstances a road might be relocated, elevated to a causeway, protected by a levee or raised in place. The scenarios should help clarify the tradeoffs from all perspectives, environmental, economic and general public benefits.
- g. WG members noted that different roads have different, and in some cases, more feasible alternatives - e.g., whereas it may be infeasible to relocate HWY 101, it may be possible to relocate Hwy 37.
- h. The WG asked how an environmentally superior alternative would be considered, if it was inconsistent with Commission policies, e.g., could the Commission amend the plan to allow it?

For future meetings, The WG suggested that staff invite experts, such as Christina Hill – Climate Readiness Institute, Mitch Avalon from the Contra Costa Flood District (or other agencies, such as CalTrans or MTC for transportation, Bay Planning Coalition members for good movements, David Williams from Bay Area Clean Water Agency for wastewater treatment, Coastal Commission staff to highlight the issues that flood control districts and others face, and to learn how they are grappling with them.

Other potential topics for future meetings fit into certain themes or bins:

- a. Development and infrastructure projects under consideration reflected in scenarios or case studies developed as part of the Policies for a Rising Bay project
 - b. Plan NYC may have some good ideas that can be relevant in the Bay Area
 - c. Coordinating with others (NOAA project, RSL, etc.)
 - d. Economics of Bay fill and dredging – both ecosystem and economic values
 - e. How to consider the project life when authorizing projects, particularly those located in areas at risk of flooding
4. **Discussion of Potential Economic Analysis.** A general discussion of how to integrate economic values ensued. As a regulatory body through its Bay Plan, BCDC struggles to define how fill is valued monetarily. It's easy to look at things like highway 101 and know its value, but valuing natural resources, such as Corte Madera Bay or the restored South Bay Salt Ponds is difficult. The WG wants to look at these values in market and non-market terms and BCDC's previous economic evaluation in terms of property value, but a more intensive economic analysis will be needed (costs fixed to loss of labor, closing of airports, etc.) What is the value of levees, mudflats and marshlands?

There is a value proposition associated in each proposed location of Bay fill. We need to identify what these value propositions are, so we can put into context how we make decisions for these places in the future.

We need to determine whether it is better to consider the economic values region-wide or on a scenario, project or site basis? The sub-geographies of the regions are so diverse, that it is hard to look at them in terms of a regional context. A better understanding of value will help the Commission and the public to identify the areas that are at a tipping point, where economics will determine whether we discuss flood protection measures or potentially retreat.

- a. Economics of Bay fill/dredging – as a regulatory body through its Bay Plan, BCDC will struggle with how fill is valued. It's easy to look at things like highway 101 and know its value, but what about Corte Madera, South Bay Salt Ponds, etc.?
- b. The WG needs to look at these values in market and non-market terms.
- c. A review of BCDC's previous economic evaluation in terms of property value would be helpful, but a more intensive economic analysis will be needed (costs fixed to loss of labor, closing of airports, etc.)
- d. Are we better off thinking about the economics region-wide or on a scenario basis?
- e. What are the value of levies, mudflats and marshlands?

5. **Selection of a new name for the working group.** The Working Group agreed to postpone selecting a new name until the next Working Group Meeting.

6. **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:30 p.m.