

SAN FRANCISCO BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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TO: All Design Review Board Members

FROM: Will Travis, Executive Director [415/352-3653 travis@bcdc.ca.gov]
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SUBJECT: San Francisco Marina West Basin Expansion Project; Second Review
(For Board consideration on June 7, 2010)

Project Summary

Applicant: San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department

Project Representatives: Craig Lewis, Winzler and Kelly; Mary Hobson, San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department; Jake Tobias, WRT.

Project Site. The project area is within the West Basin of the San Francisco Marina, which is located along the northern waterfront in the City and County of San Francisco, between Crissy Field to the west and Fort Mason to the east (Exhibit 1). The West Basin is bounded by Marina Boulevard and the western edge of the Marina Green to the south, Yacht Road and the outer jetty to the north, the harbor entrance to the east, and Yacht Road to the west. The Golden Gate Yacht Club and the St. Francis Yacht Club are also located along the shoreline of the West Basin (Exhibit 2). Existing facilities within the project site include the Harbormaster Office Building (which houses public restrooms and tenant showers), a refreshment concession stand at the west end of the marina, four parking areas (a total of approximately 719 spaces), and slips to accommodate 322 boats (Exhibits 3 and 4).

Project Purpose. The goals of the proposed project are to: (1) upgrade the marina facilities and utilities to meet current marina standards and to provide ADA-compliant features; (2) install breakwaters to attenuate wave and storm energy; and (3) provide a new layout that improves navigation and berthing conditions and accommodates larger and more boats in the West Basin.

Project Status. The Commission will likely hold a public hearing and vote on the project sometime this summer. The Design Review Board (Board) previously considered the project at its April 12, 2010 meeting in San Francisco.

Proposed Project. Proposed improvements to the West Basin include: (1) installing a 300-foot-long by 15-foot-wide floating breakwater and a 185-foot-long by 1.5-foot-wide fixed sheet pile breakwater; (2) removing the Scott Street mole (breakwater) and a portion of the West Street mole; (3) replacing, expanding and reconfiguring the floating docks and boat slips which would result in an increase in the number of boat slips from 322 to 369; (4) upgrading the electrical, water, and telephone systems, installing a fire suppression system, and adding new lighting to the docks; and (5) placing rip rap to repair the existing sea walls and outer jetty (Exhibit 5). In addition, the project includes renovating the interior of the existing harbormaster's office to install showers and



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rest rooms for tenants and to upgrade the existing public restrooms so that they are ADA-compliant, and renovating the vacant Degaussing Station building for use as the new Harbormaster's Office.

Proposed Public Access. To compensate for the loss of 2,700 square feet of public access on the Scott Street mole and to provide new access opportunities, the project would: (1) open the entire West mole to the public and provide eight benches; (2) construct a 2,200-square-foot public access plaza at the Scott Street terminus and provide four benches; (3) install four benches at the grassy circle to the east of the St. Francis Yacht Club; (4) construct two-seating areas along Marina Boulevard (a total of 840 square feet); (5) construct a 200-foot-long by six-foot-wide pedestrian pier atop the proposed fixed breakwater at the entrance to the west basin; (6) install new interpretive and directional signage around the project area; (7) construct a 1,700-square-foot guest dock and a new 600-square-foot human-powered boat launch at the east end of the West Basin (both of which would be usable by the public, but located behind locked gates and subject to a fee); and (8) make various improvements along Marina Boulevard including installing a new crosswalk and making other sidewalk improvements (such as striping, fixing uneven pavement, and removing bollards). The proposed improvements would provide a net increase of approximately 8,985 square feet of new public access.

New and Revised Public Access Improvements

1. **West Mole Public Access Area.** The public access area as proposed by the applicant at the April 12 meeting has not changed, however, based on recommendations from the staff, the applicant has added a new loading/unloading zone for tenants and vendors to compensate for the elimination of vehicle access from the mole. This zone would consist of three or four parking spaces that are clearly marked and reserved for tenants and vendors along the sea wall on Scott Street (Exhibit 7).

Currently, tenants and vendors are allowed to drive their vehicles onto the west mole through the security gate on the north side of the office. There are approximately 10 parking spaces on the mole that tenants can use to unload equipment from their vehicles and/or park overnight. A chain link fence currently prohibits the public from accessing the mole. Based on the staff's recommendation, the new public space on the west mole has been designed to eliminate the existing parking spots and provide public seating (Exhibit 7). The staff has engaged in extensive discussion with the applicant as to whether it would be possible to design the mole for public access while still allowing vehicular use of the area and staff believes the two uses are incompatible, given the size of the mole. The West mole is fairly narrow, approximately 30 feet in width, and vehicles that drive onto the mole must perform a three- or four-point turn in order to drive out. In addition, when one or more vehicles is parked on the mole, the space for other vehicles to maneuver and turn around is further reduced. The staff believes that allowing vehicles on the mole would create a safety problem and a conflict between vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists. In addition, in order for vehicles to access the mole, they would cross the waterfront trail and move through the proposed public access plaza at the Scott Street terminus further impacting public access in the immediate area. Further, the staff believes that parking vehicles on the West mole would also impacts views to the marina and the Bay from Marina Boulevard. Some tenants have made prior use of the mole to park their vehicle while taking overnight or multi-day trips aboard their boats. Staff believes the loss of this overnight parking on the mole is not a significant loss given that there are approximately 63 parking spaces reserved for tenants (for both daily and overnight use) in the immediate vicinity of the mole and harbormaster's office and an additional 143 spaces reserved for tenants elsewhere around the West Basin. For tenant and vendors who have made prior use of the west mole to load and unload equipment from their vehicles, as mentioned above, the applicant would provide a new loading and unloading zone along the Scott Street sea wall

(Exhibit 7). Tenants and vendors using the mole to unload equipment have to walk down the gangway and along the floats (up to several hundred feet depending on the location of their boat). Staff believes that moving vehicles to the proposed loading/unloading zone, located approximately 120 feet from the locked gate on the south side of the harbormaster's office, would not significantly burden tenants or vendors.

2. **Public Access Pier.** A pedestrian pier atop the proposed fixed breakwater, at the southeast end of the west basin, is a new improvement that has been added to the project since the April 12 meeting. The pier would extend out 90 degrees from the shoreline along the Marina Green seawall and would function as a pedestrian walkway offering a similar viewing experience to the Scott Street Mole and allowing the public to have the experience of being out over the water. The pier would be approximately 200-feet-long and would consist of a 15-foot-long ramp connecting from the seawall to a cantilevered walkway atop the 185-foot-long fixed breakwater (Exhibit 10). Railings would be constructed on either side of the pier. In addition, a 15-foot-in-diameter, pile-supported circular platform would be attached to the north end to allow the public to linger and view the Bay and the marina. The platform would likely be constructed with galvanized steel grating. There would be two navigation lights cantilevered at the north and south end and a third near the middle of the fixed breakwater (with about 90 feet between each light). There would also be a day marker cantilevered at the north end of the fixed breakwater for safety. The pier would have a gate at the south end that would be closed and locked for safety during non-operation hours and inclement weather. The pier would be open daily from 8:00 a.m. until dusk.
3. **Floating Breakwater/Dock.** The applicant has proposed that the floating breakwater may function as a temporary docking facility for guest vessels (those who are not paying tenants of the marina) and for the St. Francis Yacht Club's youth sailing program and other youth programs. Guest vessels would be docked at the floating breakwater overnight. Youth sailing programs would use the breakwater to berth their boats for a short period of time to allow multiple boats to gather before sailing into the Bay together. Additionally, regular marina users may use the floating breakwater for safe berthing when under duress, during the many racing and recreational sailing events held throughout the year, for staging of on-water events, and as an additional viewpoint during major events such as Fleet Week, Independence Day fireworks, and opening day on the Bay among others.
4. **Seating Areas Along Marina Boulevard.** While the design and dimensions of the two proposed seating areas along Marina Boulevard have not changed, the applicant has moved the location of the seating areas so that they would be aligned with the termini of Broderick and Scott Street (Exhibit 11c). The changes in location were made in response to comments by the Board at the April 12 meeting (see the "Prior Board Review and Applicant Response" below). At the June 7 meeting, the application will provide additional information regarding the seating areas as well as a visual analysis of views from Broderick and Scott Streets.

Prior Board Review and Applicant Response. The Design Review Board first reviewed this project at its April 12, 2010 meeting in San Francisco, and commented on several aspects of the public access design, including:

1. **Scott Street and West Moles.** The Board raised concerns that the proposed public access area on the west mole may not be sufficient to offset the loss of the public access on the Scott Street mole. Several members of the Board felt that access on the Scott Street mole is of higher quality since it is more connected to the water and adjoining pathways and streets. The Board asked for a visual analysis of the views from the Scott Street mole and the West mole in order to better understand the difference between the two locations.

Applicant Response. As noted above, the applicant has stated that the Scott Street mole is not structurally sound and that it is not feasible from an engineering or cost standpoint to rebuild the mole. In addition, the mole has to be removed to achieve the project goals of reconfiguring and expanding the berths, improving navigation in and out of the basin, and improving circulation. To help offset the loss of the Scott Street mole the applicant has added a new pedestrian pier to the public access proposal. The new pier, to be constructed on top of the proposed fixed breakwater at the southeast end of the West Basin, is intended to provide similar views and a comparable experience to the Scott Street mole. Further, by opening up the West mole, the applicant would be providing a public access area that is roughly three times the size of the Scott Street mole and contains a larger and better array of seating. Finally, the removal of the Scott Street mole, the relocation of the existing dumpster, the removal of fencing and other obstacles at the northeast corner of the harbor master's office, and the addition of a new plaza at the Scott Street terminus would result in a seamless connection between the west mole and adjacent public spaces. The applicant will provide additional information on the west mole and will further address this issue at the June 7 meeting.

The Board's opinion is sought as to whether their concerns about views and the public access experiences on both the Scott Street and West moles have been sufficiently addressed. In addition, the Board's comments are sought as to whether the proposed pedestrian pier would provide a diverse, water oriented experience as well as adequate views of the Bay and the marina to compensate for the loss of the Scott Street mole.

2. **Benches in the St. Francis Green and Seating Areas Along Marina Boulevard.** The Board commented that they liked the proposed benches in the grassy area to the east of the St. Francis Yacht Club. The Board also liked the two proposed seating areas along Marina Boulevard and felt that these areas would help open up views to the Bay. In addition, the Board felt that the elimination of four parking spaces along the seawall would not adversely affect tenants given the adequate number of spaces that would remain along the seawall (approximately 52 spaces) and the given ample parking elsewhere around the West Basin. The Board requested that the location of the seating areas be moved slightly so that they aligned with the termini of Broderick and Divisadero Streets. The Board further stated that the installation of planters and other landscaping near the seating may not be necessary and might clutter the area.

Applicant Response. As stated above, the locations of the two seating areas have been changed so that the areas are now aligned with the termini of Broderick and Scott Street (Exhibit 11c).

The Board's input is sought as to whether the revised locations of the seating areas satisfy their concerns and provide a better visual connection between Broderick and Divisadero Streets and the Bay.

3. **Floating Breakwater.** The Board requested more information regarding the floating breakwater in order to understand its appearance and potential view impacts. The Board also requested additional information as to whether the structure would be lighted and, if so, what types of lighting would be used.

Applicant Response. The applicant has prepared several visual simulations, which have been included with the staff summary showing the location and appearance of the proposed floating breakwater (Exhibits 9a and 9b). The floating breakwater would sit approximately three feet above the water line and would rise and fall with the tides thereby creating less of a visual impact than a fixed rubble mound breakwater. The applicant has been advised by the

National Marine Fisheries Service to increase height of the breakwater to prevent pinnipeds from hauling out on the breakwater. However, given the increased cost and proposed recreational uses of the breakwater, a final design height of three was chosen. The floating breakwater would have two navigational lights, which are self-contained solar marine beacons, mounted on eight-foot-high posts at either end of the breakwater and eight 44-inch-high power pedestals. The applicant will provide additional information regarding the proposed location, design, lighting, and recreational uses of the floating breakwater at the June 7 meeting. The applicant will also provide additional information regarding the proposed use of the breakwater as a temporary docking facility for small boats and guest boats.

The Board's input is sought as to whether the appearance and design and location of the floating breakwater would adversely impact views. Further, the Board's opinion is sought as to whether the proposed use of the breakwater for docking boats is an appropriate use and whether this recreational use would also have visual impacts.