

SAN FRANCISCO BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

50 California Street • Suite 2600 • San Francisco, California 94111 • (415) 352-3600 • Fax: (415) 352-3606 • www.bcdc.ca.gov

December 29, 2011

TO: All Design Review Board Members

FROM: Ellen Miramontes, Bay Design Analyst [415/352-3643 ellenm@bcdc.ca.gov]
Ming Yeung, Coastal Program Analyst [415/352-3616 mingy@bcdc.ca.gov]

SUBJECT: James R. Herman Cruise Terminal Project – Piers 27 - 29, City and County of San Francisco – Third Review
(For Board consideration on January 9, 2012)

Project Summary

Project Applicants: Port of San Francisco

Project Representatives: Dan Hodapp, Port of San Francisco.

Proposed Project. The proposed project would be located at Piers 27 and 29, along the San Francisco waterfront, near the intersection of Greenwich and Lombard Streets with the Embarcadero, within the City and County of San Francisco. The proposed project involves demolishing the existing Pier 27 shed and a small office annex building and developing an approximately 84,500-gross-square-foot Cruise Ship Terminal in its place (used initially as a special events pavilion for America's Cup events), an approximately 130,000-square-foot (3-acre) Ground Transportation Area (GTA) in the valley area between Piers 27 and 29 to provide vehicular circulation, a provisioning area for Cruise Ships at the tip of Piers 27-29, improvements within the Pier 29 shed for public access, and an approximately 95,000-square-foot (2.18-acre) "Northeast Wharf Plaza" along the Embarcadero edge.

San Francisco Waterfront Special Area Plan. The project as currently proposed is inconsistent with several policies of the *San Francisco Waterfront Special Area Plan (SAP)*. The Port of San Francisco has submitted a request for an amendment to the policies of the SAP to allow for the project to proceed. The amendment is scheduled to be considered by our Commission on February 2, 2012.

The SAP contains specific policies for the design of the Northeast Wharf Plaza that will remain in place even after the amendment. These specific policies affect the design and quality of the public access at the Northeast Wharf Plaza, a plaza that is a key part of the public benefits package that the Port is required to provide in exchange for BCDC not applying the McAteer-Petris requirements that uses on piers be water-oriented and that there be no alternative upland location for the proposed uses. The policies state that the plaza design should, "be designed to create zones or activity areas and support both active and passive recreation uses. Activity areas should be integrated with adjacent commercial uses and designed to avoid concealed areas, and should also include adequate lighting to promote security and visibility." The SAP also requires a variety of appropriate plaza features including "landscaping, fountains, a small amphitheater, public art, small kiosks, sheltered areas for activities such as chess and checkers, food carts and temporary seating within the café zones that are clearly incidental to the plaza and that would enliven public recreation and enjoyment of the plaza."

San Francisco Bay Plan Policies. The *San Francisco Bay Plan's* policies on Public Access state that "a proposed fill project should increase public access to the Bay to the maximum extent feasible" and that the public access improvements provided as a condition of any approval "should be consistent with the project and the physical environment..." and "...should be designed and built



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to encourage diverse Bay-related activities and movement to and along the shoreline..." The policies require that the *Public Access Design Guidelines* be used as a guide to siting and designing public access consistent with a proposed project. The *Bay Plan* policies on Appearance, Design and Scenic Views further state that "all bayfront development should be designed to enhance the pleasure of the user or viewer of the Bay" and that "maximum efforts should be made to provide, enhance, or preserve views of the Bay and shoreline, especially from public areas, from the Bay itself, and from the opposite shore."

Board Issues. At its last review of the project on October 17, 2011, the Board commented on four issues.

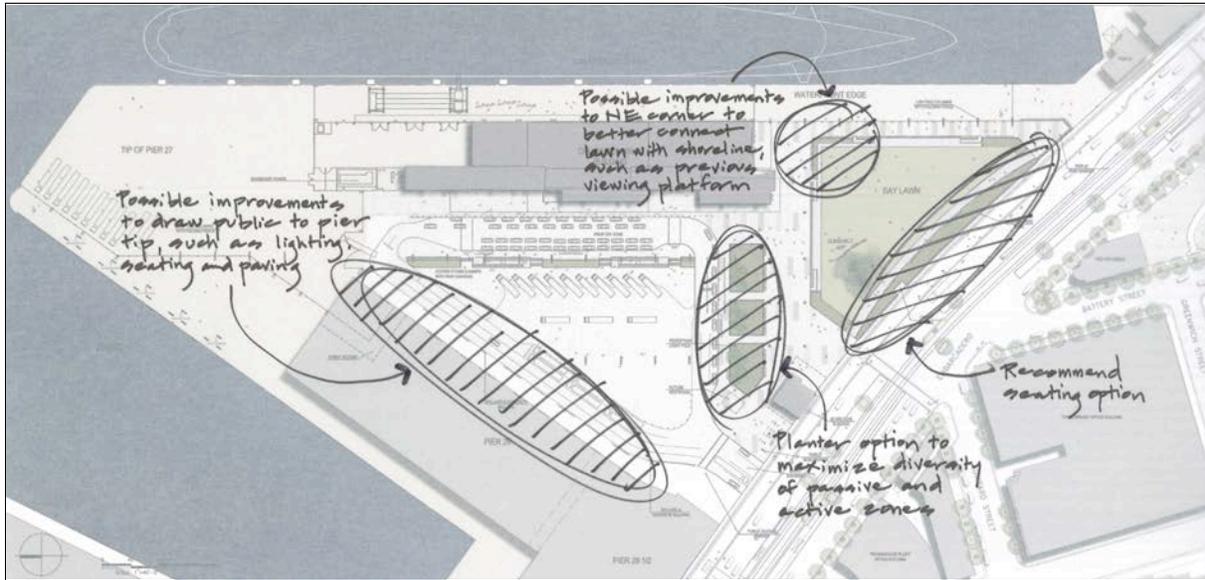
1. **Northeast Wharf Plaza** – The Board generally supported the arcing path along the Embarcadero but asked that the curve be taken all the way to the Embarcadero. The Board also supported the seating along the Embarcadero and the use of lawn and specimen trees. The Board stated that another layer of design of the plaza was needed, that universal access should be fully addressed, and that the plaza design should better respond to the Beltline building and create space for an outdoor café behind it. With respect to the division between the Ground Transportation Area (GTA) and the plaza, the Board recommended using bold moves while also allowing for intimate spaces.
2. **Ground Transportation Area (GTA)** – The Board stated that this area should be realistically addressed and that ground markings should be added to direct vehicles accessing the cruise terminal and be integrated with pavement colors, textures and treatments to respond to the use of the space as a plaza.
3. **Tip of Piers 27-29** – The Board requested that more work be done to re-evaluate the location of the sallyport and the space needed for provisioning in order to make a portion of the tip of Pier 27-29 available for public access at all times. The Board recognized this use of the Pier as part of a working waterfront and stated that such use should be clear and prominent and made available and attractive to the public.
4. **Fencing, Lighting and Signage** – The Board preferred the folding gates fencing alternative at the apron and requested more information on the sign program. They also supported the use of extending the light poles to connect the site, particularly to the Tip of Piers 27-29, but felt that they should be more substantial in size.

Board Advice. The Board's advice is sought on whether the Port has adequately responded to the Board's concerns on the four specific issues described above. Additionally, BCDC staff seeks feedback on the following questions:

1. **Variety of Uses.** Whether as a whole, the proposed improvements and public access spaces provide for a variety of uses as specified in the SAP policies for the Northeast Wharf Plaza, including "both active and passive recreation uses", "sheltered areas", and a "variety of appropriate plaza features." In particular, the staff requests the Board's advice on the following:
 - Whether the design options for the planter area dividing the GTA from the Plaza provide for passive uses and accommodate intimate seating options (see Exhibits, pp. 10-13). Are there specific design ideas for this area that would allow for passive, sheltered or quiet gathering spaces providing a different experience than that programmed for the large Northeast Wharf Plaza lawn?
 - Which of the seating options along the Embarcadero is preferred to provide a connection between the Northeast Wharf Plaza and the Embarcadero, activate the west side of the plaza and provide a seating area for resting and people-watching? (See Exhibits, pp. 14-16).

- Whether the treatment at the northeast corner of the Plaza responds to the Board's previous recommendations for universal access at the site (see Exhibits, pp. 10-11). The Port had previously, working with BCDC staff, developed an alternative for this corner that included a paved viewing platform connecting the lawn with the shoreline that provided a good viewing spot. This alternative has not been included in the attached exhibits but is supported by BCDC staff. The Board's feedback on this alternative is requested.
- 2. Tip of Piers 27-29.** The Port undertook a study with its consultants on the provisioning needs of the Cruise Terminal and developed a revised plan for the Tip of Piers 27-29 based on the minimum area needed for provisioning (see Exhibits, pp. 34-35, 39-41). Previously, the plan showed the entire tip closed during provisioning and the construction of a sallyport at the end of the GTA. The revised plan provides for a specific area of the tip to be open and available at all times (including a 30-foot-wide corridor at the far north) and allows for the public to view cruise terminal operations and the working waterfront. The Board's feedback is requested on the following:
- Whether the Pier 29 apron public access walkway is appropriately designed to encourage public access and is clear for users wanting to access the Pier tip (see Exhibits, pp. 32-33). In particular, whether the use of bullrails and bollards to separate this space from the GTA is appropriate. BCDC staff has suggested using paving material and/or lighting along this corridor to mark this area as a pedestrian walkway. The Port was supportive of the idea of extending lighting in this area, though this alternative is not shown on the attached exhibits. The Board's advice on this treatment is requested.
 - General recommendations on the public access through the Pier 29 shed (including the public access corridor to the Pier tip and the proposed Bayside History Walk). The design and detail of these areas are still being developed in coordination with BCDC staff and may be reviewed by the Board at a later meeting.
 - Whether the Port's proposed plans for signage, lighting, fencing, landscaping and architectural treatment responds adequately to the Board's recommendations (see Exhibits, pp. 10-11, 17-30).
 - Whether there are opportunities to improve the public viewing of ship provisioning activities.

Board Comments Desired on these Areas



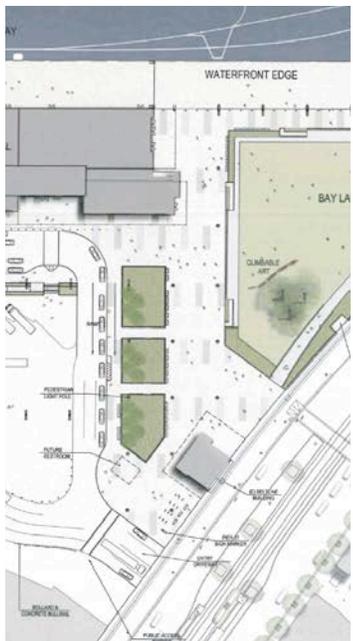
Design Options for Planter Area Dividing GTA from Plaza



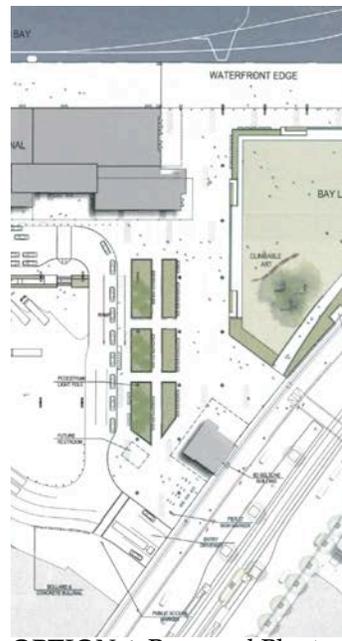
OPTION 1: Previous Planter Design reviewed by Board Oct. 7, 2011; Consistent with SAP policies



OPTION 2: Port's Revised Planter Design; Inconsistent with SAP policies



OPTION 3: Proposed Planter Alternative; Not as successful as Option 1 in meeting the SAP policies



OPTION 4: Proposed Planter Alternative; Not as successful as Option 1 in meeting the SAP policies