

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

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December 23, 2014

TO: Design Review Board Members
FROM: Lawrence J. Goldzband, Executive Director (415/352-3653; larry.goldzband@bcdc.ca.gov)
Bob Batha, Chief of Permits, (415/352-3612; bob.batha@bcdc.ca.gov)
SUBJECT: **Draft Minutes of December 8, 2014 BCDC Design Review Board Meeting**

1. **Call to Order and Attendance.** The Design Review Board's Chair, John Kriken, called the meeting to order at approximately 5:45 p.m. Other Design Review Board (DRB or Board) members in attendance included Vice Chair Steve Thompson, Roger Leventhal, Ephraim Hirsch, Cheryl Barton, Tom Leader, and Karen Alschuler. Cheryl Barton, Tom Leader, and Karen Alschuler recused themselves for the review of the Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island Redevelopment Project. BCDC staff in attendance included Brad McCrea, Bob Batha, Rosa Schneider and Ming Yeung.

2. **Approval of Draft Minutes for the October 6, 2014 Meeting.** The Board approved the minutes with no revisions.

3. **Brickyard Site, McLaughlin Eastshore State Park (First Review).** The Design Review Board conducted its first review of a proposal by the East Bay Regional Park District to construct a 50-acre public park near the intersection of University Avenue and Interstate 80 in the City of Berkeley, Alameda County. The project would be constructed in phases. Phase I of the project was the focus of this meeting and would include enhancing existing wetlands, beach areas and a 'managed wetland area' by removing invasive plant species and planting native species; constructing managed meadow areas for active recreation (approximately 2.5 acres); constructing three picnic areas with a total of 20 to 25 sites; constructing a trail network of approximately two miles of ten-foot-wide all weather paths; creating an entry plaza with restrooms (an approximately 1,000-square-foot building), signage, drinking fountains, bike parking, and seating; creating a bike and pedestrian entrance point from the Bay Trail; and installing a parking area (45 standard stalls and 3 ADA stalls). Subsequent phases and future improvements would include a new park entrance for automobiles, more signage, a parking area with 43 stalls, and a concessionaire building (approximately 3,000 square feet) with outdoor seating and picnic areas, additional parking areas (up to 51 stalls, if needed), an outdoor interpretive exhibit including a map of San Francisco Bay, replacement of shoreline reinforcement, shoreline overlooks, an area to accommodate a service building (approximately 3,000 square feet) and yard, and an area to accommodate an interpretive facility.

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DRB MINUTES
December 8, 2014

a. **Staff Presentation.** Rosa Schneider introduced the project and the issues identified in the staff report, which included: physical access to the park, visual access to the Bay, adequate, usable, and attractive public spaces, human-wildlife interactions, and sea level rise. She requested that the Board focus its review on Phase I of the proposed project.

b. **Project Presentation.** Ren Bates, Landscape Architect at the East Bay Regional Parks District (District), gave an overview of McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, described how the Brickyard site is zoned in the Eastshore State Park General Plan, described current and proposed access to the site, and described existing conditions. He then described the proposed improvements and presented the exhibits.

Mr. Bates stated that the Brickyard Site is a central access point within McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, which is 8.5 miles long between the Emeryville Crescent to Richmond. He explained that Interstate 80 (I-80) is a barrier to accessing the Brickyard Site and the Bay shoreline, but that the pedestrian bridge over I-80 provides one main access corridor, and that Brickyard is one of few places in McLaughlin Eastshore State Park with upland areas and places to park. The Bay Trail runs along the park, except where it is interrupted by Golden Gate Fields.

Mr. Bates explained that the Eastshore State Park General Plan has designated areas within the Brickyard site for conservation, where lower intensity recreation compatible with wildlife is allowed, and for recreation, where more intensive use is permitted, including parking and other amenities and infrastructure.

Mr. Bates described existing conditions at the Brickyard site, including the large earthen mound up to 50 feet high that remains from the site's previous use as a soil brokering stockpile. The public currently uses the site informally and enjoys the mound as a vantage point. He stated that the existing concessionaire, the Seabreeze Café, is very popular, but not situated ideally, as patron's primary view is of traffic.

Mr. Bates stated that the soil from the mound has been characterized, and a small portion is contaminated with arsenic and would be removed in preparation for the first phase of work. Grading and soil removal would occur in 2015, with Phase I improvements occurring in 2016. He explained that Phase I improvements would include a parking lot, entrance plaza, paths, turf areas, parking lot, and entrance plaza.

Mr. Bates presented photos showing views to the Bay from different elevations on the existing mound to demonstrate the visual access to the Bay that would be provided by proposed mounds, and stated that leaving some of the mound would also lower project cost. Mr. Bates explained that the grading plan would open up views to the southwest and from the parking lot to the Bay between two mounds, and that pedestrian traffic would be directed between the mounds. All of the mounds would be less than 35 feet high, which is the elevation of the pedestrian bridge across I-80, and would be oriented to protect visitors from dominant winds. The mound face above Brickyard Cove would be used as a natural escarpment to reinforce the conservation of that area. The District may also build up some small mounds on the peninsula to provide separation from the freeway as well as to provide vantage points. Some soil would be used to spread three feet of clean fill over the entire site. Bricks, which are plentiful at the site, may be crushed and reused as pavement material for the paths.

During Phase II, the concessionaire would be relocated closer to the Bay and away from the road, and the southernmost entrance on University Avenue would be removed. Future improvements would include repairing the shoreline reinforcement and possibly installing interpretive exhibits, such as a scale model of the Bay similar to the popular model of the Delta at Big Break Regional Shoreline.

c. **Board Questions.** The Board members asked several questions.

Ms. Barton asked about the how the District is choreographing programming between this site and the Berkeley Meadow and Cesar Chavez Park. Mr. Bates explained that the Brickyard site is viewed as an access and launching point for further exploration of other locations in McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, and clarified that Cesar Chavez Park belongs to the City of Berkeley. He stated that the Brickyard Site is seen as a place for passive recreation, and could potentially serve an interpretive function if a model of the Bay were constructed.

Ms. Barton then asked if riprap is present around the perimeter of the site and if water access is planned. Mr. Bates responded that no water access is planned at this time; the riprap is mostly along the western edge of the site and would need to be replaced, and water access would be dangerous there. Brickyard Cove itself is a conservation area and mudflat, and thus not compatible with water access. A City of Berkeley launch is located nearby off of University Avenue.

Ms. Alschuler asked for more information about the conservation and recreation areas called out in the General Plan. Mr. Bates explained that the conservation areas include the Cove and surrounding upland area, and is bounded by one of the proposed trails. The escarpment would act as a physical buffer to the conservation zone, and no formal access to the Cove would be provided.

Mr. Leventhal asked about the difference between the managed meadow and upland areas, how invasive plants would be controlled, and if any lessons can be drawn from the Berkeley Meadow area of McLaughlin Eastshore State Park. Mr. Bates answered that the managed meadow area is envisioned as a turf area that can be mowed, and that the District is planning to use lessons learned from the Berkeley Meadow.

Mr. Leventhal asked if access to the park would be 24-7. Mr. Bates responded that the parking lot is currently closed at dusk and would remain so with the proposed project.

Mr. Leventhal asked if the public fishes at the site; Mr. Bates said that he has not seen anyone fishing there.

Mr. Leventhal asked for the datum used on the cross sections; Mr. Bates responded that the datum is NAVD 88.

Mr. Leader asked if any fill would be exported. Mr. Bates responded that over 60,000 cubic yards of soil would be exported, with the intent to keep it within McLaughlin Eastshore State Park. It may be used to fill in low spots in the Berkeley Meadow and may be stockpiled in the North Basin, both areas within the State Park. The City of Albany could potentially use some of it in the Bulb area.

Mr. Hirsch asked if the soil is contaminated. Mr. Bates responded that there is a small portion with high arsenic levels that would be removed, and that the remainder is essentially clean.

Mr. Thompson asked if the proposed human-wildlife interaction strategies are adequate, and what the District intends to do about preventing people from walking dogs on the beach. Mr. Bates answered that the current intent is to provide signage about the Cove's sensitive resources, not provide direct access to the Cove, and possibly close the area seasonally, but acknowledged that it will be difficult to completely prevent it, and this will be an ongoing operational issue. Mr. Thompson said that in other areas, short fencing has been used to deter dogs and dog walkers.

d. **Public Comment.** Patricia Jones, Executive Director of Citizens for Eastshore State Parks (CESP), stated that her organization has been instrumental in creating McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, and is pleased to see that work is beginning on this site after many years, and that some of the issues that CESP has raised to the District have been addressed. Though in the past CESP wanted the mound removed, the group has since changed its opinion, as the mound blocks some of the freeway noise. CESP approves of keeping some of the mound, the plan to reuse some of the bricks, and the decision not to provide water access or trails in and around the Cove. However, CESP is concerned about how to actually keep people and dogs out of the Cove. CESP still has questions about proposed improvements for later phases, such as how the service yard would be accessed, and if service vehicles would have to drive through parking lot and park. CESP wonders how much parking is actually needed. Finally, CESP is advocating for one concentrated building rather than several buildings, which would save money and energy, and wants the Dwight Steele Interpretive Center to be built, which is called out in the General Plan.

e. **Board Discussion.** The Board members discussed the following:

Mr. Kriken said that the DRB will want to see more specific drawings and plans for the project, that it would be good to provide views to the west or towards Albany, and that there could be a hierarchy of trails in which one trail might be a connector to a network of trails leading to a variety of destinations.

Mr. Leventhal agreed that a hierarchy of trails would be a good approach, and that bicycles and hikers could potentially be separated.

Ms. Barton suggested including Gateway Park in the programming for this park, and that even though there are multiple jurisdictions it would be great to have one vision for the shoreline parks at some point.

Ms. Alschuler suggested using interpretation to teach visitors how this park fits into other parks and help them plan their visit. She asked about the corner and how the public Eastshore Park and how visitors would be introduced and invited to the park. She asked how the public would know that they are arriving at an extraordinary location and stated that drivers would need to know to stay on University Avenue rather than going on the freeway to get to the park.

Mr. Kriken said that he can envision some accommodation of cars without overwhelming the area with vehicles. He said that Crissy Field is an example of a larger park along the shoreline where parking doesn't overpower the natural environment and is largely hidden from the shoreline, but brings people comfortably to the area.

Ms. Alschuler asked what the multiple buildings are and why they are separate. Mr. Kriken concurred that the Board would need more information on these buildings when it next reviewed this project.

Ms. Barton asked to see more context for the site, such as information on the Berkeley Meadow, and added that dispersing buildings can be done well.

Bob Nisbet, Assistant General Manager for the Land Division at the District, explained that the proposed buildings include a concessionaire, service yard, and restroom. A prior version of the proposed improvements included another concessionaire near the Bay Trail, but the District has eliminated it for now until it can be determined if there would be a market for it. Mr. Bates added that the General Plan allows 25,000 square feet of buildings, and these three buildings would total only 11,000 square feet.

Mr. Leader said that the clean dirt provides an extraordinary opportunity for shaping landform, and that 3D or other modeling should be done to explore options and to see how the proposed forms would appear and affect views from the University Avenue vehicle bridge, the pedestrian bridge, and both directions on I-80. He added that the landforms could be the personality of the park, separating it from the other parts of McLaughlin Eastshore State Park.

Ms. Alschuler requested more information on proposed strategies to separate humans and wildlife, and stated that by making the hills fun places to be that attract dog walkers, they may accept not being able to go on the beach. Mr. Hirsch suggesting building up a berm so the public cannot access the Cove.

Mr. Leader, referencing comments sent from Bay Trail staff, asked about creating a connection to the Bay Trail at the southern end of the site. Mr. Bates responded that the area is a wetland depression, and that the General Plan calls for habitat enhancement and increasing freshwater flows in that particular location. Mr. Leader asked if the Bay Trail was purposefully not connected at that location, and Mr. Bates responded that though the wetland could potentially be bridged in the future, for now State Parks would like it to remain.

Mr. Kriken said that the shoreline parks should be connected and enlarged over time, including the big park under the new Bay Bridge, and that planning should recognize the need for incremental changes over time. Mr. Nisbet brought up the General Plan, and explained that it was created by multiple agencies and with public participation. Mr. Kriken asked that a discussion of the General Plan be included at the next presentation.

Mr. Leventhal asked what datum the 10.3 on the sections was based on, and asked Mr. Bates to provide this information when the project comes back before the DRB.

Ms. Alschuler asked if any of the trails could be wider, for instance 12 feet wide. Mr. Leventhal suggested that the main full access trails should be wider, and agreed with the need for a hierarchy of trails. Mr. Leader said that the straight lines of trails don't flow, and that a trail could sweep around Strawberry Cove. Mr. Thompson stated that about half of the trails appear to be redundant, as they are not far enough apart to give a sense of isolation, and that unless there are unique opportunities on each trail, dividing the park into so many segments does not seem to make sense. He approved of locating the parking next to the freeway.

Mr. Kriken recalled that UC Berkeley raced small sailboats along that stretch of shoreline, and suggested that there could be a location in the park to view this if it is still occurring.

f. **Board Summary and Conclusions.** The Board summarized their comments and recommendations as follows:

(1) The project should return to DRB. The Board would like to see this project again, and would like more exhibits detailing the proposed improvements.

(2) Trails and Landforms. The Board requested that the District consider a hierarchy of trails and consider reducing the number of trails. The Board requested that the District model the landforms and consider how they relate to the proposed trails.

(3) Context and Programming. The Board would like more information on how public access and programming at the Brickyard site fits into the larger McLaughlin Eastshore State Park. The Board would also like more information on the difference between the managed meadow and upland areas.

(4) Conservation and Recreation Areas. The Board would like more detail on how the District plans to separate these areas and prevent adverse human-wildlife interactions.

(5) Entry Point and Bay Trail Connection. The Board would like more information on how the public will be invited into the park, and for the District to consider a potential future connection to the Bay Trail across the wetland area at the southern end of the site.

(6) Sea Level Rise. The Board would like more information on how sea level rise would affect the proposed park.

(7) Buildings. The Board would like more information on the design, siting, and access to the proposed buildings.

g. Project Proponent Response. Mr. Bates said that he did not have a response to the Board's comments at this time, and thanked the Board. Mr. Nisbet said that he will provide the General Plan to BCDC Staff and the DRB, and that it will be clear that a lot of thought went into creating it. He also is concerned about separating conservation and recreation, and said that the District's approach generally is to introduce public access at low levels and with adaptive management, increase usage. He said that a recent study in Tilden Park compared the effectiveness of signage and low fences in keeping dogs out of a creek, and found that without enforcement, this is difficult to achieve. The District is focusing on adaptive management and does not want to put up barbed wire fences.

4. Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island Redevelopment Project. (Fifth Pre-Application Review) The Design Review Board conducted a fifth pre-application review of a proposal by the Treasure Island Community Development (TICD) and Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA) to redevelop Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island (YBI) in four phases over 10-15 years. The project includes: 8,000 residential units; 450,000 square feet of retail space; up to 500 hotel rooms; a cultural center; a new ferry terminal and transit program; approximately 300 acres of new public park and open space; and an approximately three-mile-long public shoreline trail around Treasure Island and various trails on Yerba Buena Island.

a. Staff Presentation. Ming Yeung introduced the project and explained the focus of the evening's review identified in the staff report, which includes more detail on the design of two open space areas included in Phase 1 of the project: the Cityside Waterfront Park and Clipper Cove Promenade. She explained that the Board had reviewed the project on four previous occasions and tonight's review was to focus on these two Phase 1 open space areas.

b. Project Presentation. Mr. James Suh, the applicant's representative and consultant, began by attempting to respond to four questions that arose at the last review. This included questions on: (1) phasing and public access; (2) future design review process; (3) explanation of the tidelands/public trust setback; and (4) information on the urban form including building height and massing. Chris Guillard of CMG Landscape Architecture then provided a description of the programming and open space design features for the Cityside Waterfront Park on the

west side of Treasure Island. He explained that the park is designed as six areas or “experiences” that include (moving from south to north): the “Pavilion Grove”, the “Bowl”, the “Picnic Meadow”, the “Run”, the “Overlook Lawn”, and the “Beach Above the Bay”. Mr. Guillard provided information on the program and circulation, views, scale and diversity, sea level rise strategy, and planting design for these areas.

Mr. Blake Sanborn, of Aecom, Inc. then provided a description of the programming and design features for the Clipper Cove Promenade on the south side of Treasure Island. He described the open space concept along this edge as consisting of four areas that include (moving west to east): the “City Side Balcony”, “Clipper Cove Terrace”, “Island Lookout”, and “Bridge Overlook”. He also described the three overlook “nodes” that utilize existing structures over the Bay for public access.

c. **Board Questions.** The Board members asked several questions.

Mr. Kriken asked whether ramps were being provided along the Clipper Cove Promenade edge to allow boats to enter the water and access the marina and whether marina services such as boat repair would be accommodated at the marina. Mr. Suh explained that the marina was a separate project, not part of the Treasure Island Redevelopment project, but that the project would create connection points for sewer, water and electrical for any future expansion or work on the marina by the lessee, Treasure Island Enterprises. Bob Beck, from the Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA) explained that the Treasure Island Marina is a berthing marina with limited services and not a traditional fully built-out marina. For instance, fuel oil is not provided at this location. Mr. Kriken also asked about the 35-foot-wide pathways designed along the shoreline at the Cityside Waterfront Park and how it compares with the pathways at Crissy Field. Mr. Guillard responded that the pathways along Cityside Waterfront Park range from 20-25 feet to 30-35 feet and are designed to be comfortable widths for bicycles and pedestrians.

Mr. Leventhal asked whether the overlook “nodes” along the Clipper Cove Promenade would provide amenities for activities other than eating, noting that the roadway divides the waterfront overlook area from the rest of the development. Mr. Sanborn responded that the nodes would include moveable seating, benches, and perhaps there could be some accommodation for food trucks at certain locations.

Mr. Hirsch asked whether public restrooms would be provided. Mr. Sanborn explained that no public restrooms are proposed along the waterfront edge of the Clipper Cove Promenade but restrooms and other amenities would likely be available within the mixed-use development area across the roadway. Mr. Guillard explained that along the Cityside Waterfront Park, restrooms would be provided at Building 1, midway within the “Picnic Meadow” area, and at the end at the Point within the “Beach Above the Bay”.

Mr. Thompson asked whether the City would be reviewing the open space areas further. Mr. Beck responded that the open space areas would be reviewed by the Arts Commission and the TIDA Board but not by the City or its Recreation and Parks Department.

d. **Public Comment.** Mr. Brian D. Daher from the Office of Job Corps, asked a clarifying question regarding the use of alcohol within public areas, particularly in regards to programming along the Clipper Cove Promenade. Brad McCrea of BCDC staff explained that local jurisdictions may regulate alcohol in public areas but this is not an area that BCDC reviews or controls.

e. **Board Discussion.** The Board members discussed the following:

(1) **Cityside Waterfront Park.** There was concern that the large-scale nature of the open space made it difficult to begin discussion on the specific details of the open space areas and that more design development is needed to understand the purpose of each of the spaces. However, the Board commented that the general approach was a good one by differentiating the entire Cityside Waterfront Park into six smaller areas, each with distinct programming and design details. One Board member commented that though the areas appear to be separate pieces, they fit together in a progression with the more natural area towards the north, which makes sense as the public access area approaches the undeveloped area at the north of Treasure Island. The Board commented that the design for the Cityside Waterfront Park was a move in the right direction and that this approach makes the large area more interesting and designed for different users. There were questions and comments about proposed lighting, the windrows with trees extending into and from the development, and the specific and final location of pathways.

(2) **Clipper Cove Promenade.** The Board commented on the need to provide areas for the marina, such as loading areas to offload supplies for boaters who might want to spend a weekend on the Bay, public restrooms and other marina amenities.

(3) **Sea Level Rise.** The Board requested further review and feedback on the sea level rise projections and numbers, particularly ensuring that the projections include the Mean Higher High Water (MHHW) elevation, the 100-year storm level event, and the projected sea level rise number (36 inches) on top of those elevations. In the previous review, the applicant's engineer noted that it is utilizing site-specific elevations rather than FEMA's latest projections. The Board commented that if this project is intended to be used as an exemplary model in addressing sea level rise, it should use the higher FEMA projections and not seek an exception, that the tides are likely to be higher in the future and the projections should reflect this, and that there is a unique opportunity here to construct the project in the right way. The Board requested more information on the sea level rise projections, requested that all exhibits uniformly include the elevations and tidal datum cited above, and that the applicants provide more detailed information on the sea level rise adaptation strategies around the perimeter of Treasure Island.

f. **Board Summary and Conclusions.** The Board summarized their comments and recommendations as follows:

(1) The Board liked the general design framework and approach of the Cityside Waterfront Park and the attempt to break down the large scale of this area into smaller, differentiated areas.

(2) More details are still needed such as how the open space area would be lit, how the public access areas are adapted for sea level rise, landscaping details, the interaction of the windrows with the public paths, merging the parks with a softer edge, and the location of public restrooms (particularly along the Clipper Cove Promenade edge).

(3) Along the Clipper Cove Promenade edge, more information is needed on how the edge will provide the amenities needed for the marina, such as loading and drop-off areas, ramps, parking, public restrooms, etc.

(4) More information is needed on the sea level rise projections and adaptation strategy for the entire site.

g. **Project Proponent Response.** Mr. Guillard thanked the Board for their comments and stated that the structures, diagonals, and pieces of the park have been designed to flow from one to the other but acknowledges the comment that the pieces be designed to merge together. He stated that the lighting has not been developed in detail but the preliminary thinking is that taller posts would be included along Cityside Waterfront Park and lower lighting would be designed for Clipper Cove Promenade. In response to the sea level rise comment, he indicated that the elevations included in the exhibits all add +100 to the numbers which are based in NAVD88 datum and that the numbers account for the base flood elevations, plus the projected sea level rise number (36 inches), and wave run-up.

6. **Adjournment.** Mr. Kriken adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:19 p.m.