

# San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 10600, San Francisco, California 94102 tel 415 352 3600 fax 415 352 3606

**TO:** Design Review Board Members  
**FROM:** Lawrence J. Goldzband, Executive Director (415/352-3653; larry.goldzband@bcdc.ca.gov)  
Ellen Miramontes, Bay Design Analyst (415/352-3643; ellen.miramontes@bcdc.ca.gov)

**SUBJECT: Approved Minutes of September 14, 2015 BCDC Design Review Board Meeting and Port of San Francisco Waterfront Design Advisory Committee**

1. **Call to Order and Attendance.** Board 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, Cheryl Barton, Tom Leader, Michael Smiley, Karen Alschuler and Jacinta McCann. Waterfront Design Advisory Committee (WDAC or Committee) members in attendance included Chair Dan Hodapp, Marsha Maytum, and Kathrin Moore. BCDC staff in attendance included Bob Batha, Tinya Hoang, Ming Yeung and Ellen Miramontes.

2. **Approval of Draft Minutes for the July 13, 2015 Meeting.** The Board approved these minutes with no revisions.

3. **Downtown SF Ferry Terminal (Third Review)** On September 3, 2015, staff mailed the Board a memo from the project representatives summarizing the Board's previous comments on the project and providing their responses to these comments, including updated exhibits. The comments were specific to: desired changes at the southwest corner of the proposed plaza and entryway, the specific design details, and on the canopy structures.

a. **Staff Presentation.** Ming Yeung introduced the project and highlighted the previous comments made by the Board on the project at its last meeting.

b. **Board Questions.** Following the staff presentation, the Board then proceeded with questions pertaining to the project.

Mr. Kriken asked about the grade changes between the Agriculture Building and the new Ferry Plaza. Mr. Dramov clarified these changes.

Mr. Smiley asked how the edge/ramp on the edge of the Agriculture Building would be addressed. Mr. Dramov explained they were thinking of possibly adding some benches and a thin guardrail. Mr. Smiley suggested perhaps a wide bench could be enough and eliminate the need for a guardrail. Mr. Dramov agreed.

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Mr. Smiley also asked about plans for the interpretive signage program for the space. Mr. Dramov stated that the northeast corner of the new plaza would have signage explaining the need for the grade change and how the design accommodates sea-level rise.

Ms. Moore asked how the project would tie in with plans for the South Bayside Promenade and the Ferry Plaza. Mr. Dramov explained that improvements in those areas are not a part of this project but some of the ideas of this project could extend to the Ferry Plaza. Mr. Hodapp added that the Port is creating a vision for the space at the Ferry Plaza and that it could take cues from the improvements being made as part of the Downtown SF Ferry Terminal project. Some ideas include better striping and connections between the two spaces and other uses for the Ferry Plaza such as special events.

Mr. Kriken asked why there would not be any handrails on the plaza steps. Mr. Dramov explained that they would like to avoid unnecessary handrails such as at Union Square but that where appropriate, a handrail would be installed.

c. **Public Hearing.** There were no public comments.

d. **Board Discussion.** The Board then discussed the following:

Mr. Thompson commented that the project should avoid a lot of handrails and only include what is needed.

Mr. Kriken agreed with Mr. Thompson's comments but was concerned that with the number of people visiting on Saturdays, some handrails could be useful.

Ms. McCann clarified that handrails should be added when needed.

Mr. Hodapp read a formal recommendation by the WDAC that it finds the project is consistent with its policies and that it would recommend it for approval to the Port Commission and the City Planning Department.

Mr. Smiley commented that the project is a model and represents a great solution for addressing sea level rise along the waterfront. He commented it is one of the better resilience applications they have seen and that interpretive signage will serve as useful information for the public.

e. **Board Summary and Conclusions.** The Board was pleased to see the applicants' design responses to their feedback from previous reviews and agreed with the proposed changes.

The Board discussed the need for railings at the plaza stairs and along some of the plaza edges. They agreed that it was important to incorporate railings for accessibility and safety although recommended that the railings have a "light touch."

The WDAC members departed at this point in the meeting, given that their joint review of the Downtown SF Ferry Terminal had concluded.

4. **Richmond Ferry Terminal Project (Second Review).** The Board conducted a second pre-application review on a proposal by the Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) and the City of Richmond for the Richmond Ferry Terminal project and associated public access improvements at the Ford Peninsula in the City of Richmond. The proposed project involves the removal of an existing gangway and ferry float and replacement with a new ferry terminal consisting of a new 660-square foot covered walkway, 704-square-foot gangway, and 1,953-square-foot passenger ferry float. The proposed public access improvements include the relocation of a kayak launch facility, improvements to an existing trail spur, and a trail extension.

a. **Staff Presentation.** Tinya Hoang introduced the project, highlighted previous comments made by the Board at the last meeting, and described revisions made to the project in response to the Board's comments.

Ms. Hoang made note of comments received from Lee Huo of the Bay Trail Project and distributed these to the Board. Mr. Huo had expressed concern about the proposed passenger shelter with regards to view impacts and potential conflicts between passenger queuing and the Bay Trail. He also expressed the Bay Trail's desire to adopt the new public access trail as part of the Bay Trail alignment. Although he stated that the proposed pathway along the western shoreline would need to be widened beyond the eight-foot-width and connect back to Harbour Way South at the northern end of the parking lot in order for this trail section to be adopted as part of the Bay Trail.

b. **Project Presentation.** Chad Mason of the Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) made comments regarding WETA's coordination with the project proponents of the Point Sheridan Public Art project to address the Board's comments from the last meeting.

Chadrick Smalley of the City of Richmond introduced himself and expressed the City's strong support of the project, including support from the Mayor and City Manager.

Kent Royle of Marcy Wong Donn Logan Architects then provided a presentation of the revisions to the project. Mr. Royle described the changes made to the allees and pathways in the parking lot, and to the paving at the plaza in order to improve the cohesiveness with the Sheridan Point Public Art project. He also described the new proposed passenger shelter and how it was designed to consider wind and rain direction, view impacts, its proximity to the ferry terminal entrance and potential Bay Trail conflicts. Mr. Royle then described the shoreline walkway and the "nodes" along the western side of the parking lot and provided more detail on the design of the allees.

Heather Dunbar of GLS Landscape Architecture then provided an overview of the proposed plant palette for the project. Mr. Royle continued the presentation and described the choice of benches, additional improvements to the walkway to Sheridan Point, the location of the bike lockers, the design of the parking lot driveways and the types of lighting.

c. **Board Questions.** Following the presentation, the Board then proceeded with questions pertaining to the project.

Ms. McCann asked what surface is being proposed east of the turnaround at the end of Harbour Way South. Mr. Royle responded that the existing lawn would remain.

Ms. Barton asked about how the stormwater requirements are being handled and who is leading the grading design. Mr. Royle explained that these aspects of the project were being handled jointly by the civil engineer and landscape architect.

Mr. Smiley asked whether the passenger shelter would be available for queuing before the vessel arrives. Kevin Connolly of WETA explained that it would be open 10-15 minutes before the vessel arrives. The gates could be controlled by electric locks or remotely. Mr. Mason added that passengers typically show up 1-2 minutes before the boat leaves. Mr. Smiley asked about the inside dimensions of the passenger shelter and commented that adequate space for bicyclists should be provided. Mr. Royle explained that the walkway was previously designed to be eight feet wide, but the walkway was widened with the passenger shelter, such that it is ten feet wide, measured from the outside, and approximately nine feet, measured from the inside.

Mr. Kriken commented on the shape of the turnaround and expressed that a stronger intersection is needed. Mr. Mason explained that the turnaround has a bus waiting area, and therefore, the turnaround is asymmetrical.

Ms. Barton asked about the height of the passenger shelter. Mr. Royle explained that the shelter would be below the height of the existing light pole at the southern end of the plaza (approximately 12 feet high.)

As was desired at the Board's first review of the Richmond Ferry Terminal and the Point Sheridan Public Art project, the Board asked that the art project be presented next so that they could discuss the two projects together given the close relationship between the projects.

#### **5. Point Sheridan Public Art Project, City of Richmond (Second Pre-Application Review).**

The Board conducted a second pre-application review on a proposal to install artwork consisting of seven sculptures, seating elements, landscaping and lighting components, located at Point Sheridan (also called Ford Point) at the end of Harbour Way South, west of the Craneway Building (formerly the Ford Assembly Plant building), in the City of Richmond, Contra Costa County. The proposed site is located on an approximately 33-foot by 65-foot unpaved section of land that looks out to Richmond's Inner Harbor and is located just northwest of the planned Richmond Ferry Service project being undertaken by the Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA). The proposed artwork would consist of seven vertical "eelgrass" sculptures, each 20-feet high and fabricated in marine grade stainless steel with a bronze patina at the lower ends.

a. **Staff Presentation.** Ming Yeung introduced the project and the issues raised by the Board during their last review, which included ensuring that the project is coordinated with the Richmond Ferry Terminal project.

b. **Project Presentation.** Regina Almaguer, who serves as the project manager on behalf of the City, provided a presentation of the revisions to the proposed public art project. She described the project and surrounding context in detail. She explained that the planting and circulation paths were being planned in coordination with WETA and certain areas had been widened and changed, including the addition of a sidewalk between the project site and the street terminus

c. **Board Questions.** Following the presentation, the Board then proceeded with questions pertaining to the project.

Ms. Alschuler asked whether the oyster benches were still part of the project or if they had been removed. Mr. Royle explained that the oyster benches are still proposed for the art project site area and a variety of new benches are proposed for the ferry terminal project. The existing benches at the site will be removed.

Mr. Smiley noted that he was not present for the first review of the project. He commented that the art installation appears to be in a “picture frame” but is also an area intended for people to walk through. He wanted to understand the reasoning behind the siting of it and asked the artists whether it is sited the way they envisioned it. He also asked whether the “picture frame” approach is desirable for the work and the piece.

Ms. Miramontes explained that the City of Richmond was seeking art space. The proposed art site is an area that is required public access under the BCDC permit for the Ford Building and was the subject of an enforcement case, which required the area to be landscaped. However because the City began considering the site for the ferry terminal, BCDC recognized that the design for this area would likely change and so decided not to enforce this requirement.

Mr. Smalley from the City of Richmond further explained that the Richmond Ferry Terminal project had been long in development but it wasn't until just earlier this year that a funding plan was developed to allow WETA to move forward on that project. Ms. Seville from the City of Richmond, speaking on behalf of the art project site selection, explained that the City received funding from the Port of Richmond for an art project. The City reviewed several sites at the Port and this site was found to be the most desirable because it could have the most public impact and greatest accessibility. The site was chosen at the time without awareness of the WETA project. Mr. Smalley concluded by saying they are two separate projects that happen to be located in the same spot and happen to be occurring at the same time.

Ms. Madden, one of the artists, commented that she wanted to ensure that views through the sculptures to the water not be impeded so trees were moved and the curb and sidewalk were extended to the east. She likes the fact that the art piece is framed and that they are able to do their own landscaping. She stated that she did not set out to create a “picture frame” art piece but realizes that is what resulted and believes it works. Mr. Reed, the other artist, stated that while the art piece may seem like a “picture frame,” the public will undoubtedly move through the space because it is the most direct route to the ferry terminal.

Mr. Kriken expressed concern about the view down Harbour Way South by bus or vehicle and was worried that there isn't a stronger structure drawing one's eye down the street.

d. **Public Hearing.** There were no public comments.

e. **Board Discussion.** The Board members proceeded with discussion pertaining to both projects.

Ms. Alschuler raised the comments made by Mr. Huo and asked about making the trail an official part of the Bay Trail. Mr. Royle expressed that the City was concerned about the removal of trees along the western shoreline in order to accommodate a wider trail. Further, it would infringe upon parking. Ms. Alschuler said that the trail as it is designed would invite people to Sheridan Point and commented that she likes that it is inviting. Mr. Kriken said that the trail does not need to be officially classified as the Bay Trail in order for the public to enjoy it and that the project proponents have done a good job. He also stated that the two allees through the parking lot would connect the public back to Harbour Way South and that the circulation works well.

Ms. Alschuler questioned the value of the passenger shelter if it is only open 10 minutes prior to ferry boarding. She said that the shelter should be exciting and inviting, and noted that the proposed shelter serves more of an organizational purpose rather than providing shelter. Mr. Mason commented that there would be approximately 80-100 people getting on or off, and that there would be little two-way traffic as compared to the San Francisco Ferry Terminal. Mr. Leader said that he likes that the shelter is there, even if it provides only a few minutes of protection from the wind and rain. Mr. Kriken said that the shelter should be humble but exciting.

Mr. Smiley commented that he likes the inclusion of a ferry shelter and that it is simple and utilitarian in nature. He is also struck by the art piece and likes the simple nature of the structure combined with the showcase art piece.

Mr. Kriken said that he likes the shelter design and suggested that some night lighting be added. Ms. Alschuler stated that the sculpture should shine and that the lighting on the shelter should be more subtle.

Ms. McCann stated that the design relationship of the two projects together has improved. She wants to ensure that there are enough places to sit and recommended adding more benches closer to the art sculpture along the shoreline. She also recommended replacing the existing traditional lawn on the east side of the turnaround with the same native grass proposed around the art sculpture in order to create a relationship to the other side of the street terminus.

Mr. Leader liked the trees chosen because of their toughness and ability to withstand the environment. He applauded the use of the yucca in the plant palette.

f. **Board Summary and Conclusions.** Although the Board's periods of questions and discussion pertaining to the two projects were intertwined, their summary and conclusions have been divided below for each project. One of the conclusions is repetitive between projects.

5. **Summary and Conclusions for the Richmond Ferry Terminal Project**

a. **Design Coordination Between the Ferry Terminal and Public Art Project.** The Board stated that design coordination between the ferry terminal project and the public art project had progressed greatly since their last review and that the two projects now work well with one another to create a cohesively-designed shoreline.

b. **Ferry Terminal Shelter.** One Board member questioned the need to provide a shelter that would block views to the Bay and only provide shelter for 10 minutes prior to ferry boarding. Overall the Board expressed that if a shelter were needed, the proposed location would be the best location for it. Many stated that the shelter should be very simple in design and have some type of signage identifying the terminal entry point. One member stated that it would be very important to ensure that the internal clearance dimension of the shelter accommodate for the passage of a person with a bicycle on each side (42 inches would be needed in each direction). Some members stated that they liked the relationship of the shelter with the art project.

c. **Landscaping and Seating.** One Board member complimented the landscape architects on the proposed plant palette. Another suggested incorporating use of the native grass to be used around the art project (*Juncus patens*) in the existing lawn area that lies on the eastern side of the street terminus. One Board member noted that an additional bench, closer to the art sculpture and facing south along the inland side of the walkway to Point Sheridan would be desirable.

6. **Summary and Conclusions for the Point Sheridan Art Project**

a. **Design Coordination Between the Ferry Terminal and Public Art Project.** The Board stated that design coordination between the ferry terminal project and the public art project had progressed greatly since their last review and that the two projects now work well with one another to create one cohesively-designed shoreline space

7. **Adjournment.** Mr. Kriken adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ELLEN MIRAMONTES  
Bay Design Analyst

Approved, with no corrections at the  
Design Review Board Meeting of December 7, 2015.