TO: Design Review Board Members

FROM: Lawrence J. Goldzband, Executive Director (415/352-3653; larry.goldzband@bcdc.ca.gov)
Andrea Gaffney, Bay Design Analyst (415/352-3643; andrea.gaffney@bcdc.ca.gov)

SUBJECT: Approved Minutes of the April 9, 2018, BCDC Design Review Board Meeting

1. Call to Order and Safety Announcement. Design Review Board (Board) Acting Chair Jacinta McCann called the meeting to order at the Bay Area Metro Center, 375 Beale Street, Yerba Buena Room, First Floor, San Francisco, California, at approximately 5:30 p.m., and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

   Other Board members in attendance included Board Members Cheryl Barton, Tom Leader, and Stefan Pellegrini. BCDC staff in attendance included Andrea Gaffney and Ethan Lavine. The presenters were Justin Aff (CMG), Kristen Hall (Perkins and Will), Enrique Landa (Associate Capital), and Sam Yao (SGH). No members of the public addressed the Board.

   Andrea Gaffney, BCDC Bay Design Analyst, reviewed the safety protocols, meeting protocols, and meeting agenda.

2. Report of Chief of Permits. Ethan Lavine, BCDC Coastal Program Manager, presented his report:
   a. The Oyster Point redevelopment project will be presented to the Board at 1:00 p.m. on April 19th.
   b. The Mission Rock redevelopment project will be presented to the Board in May or June.

3. Approval of Draft Minutes for February 26, 2018, and March 5, 2018, Meetings. Mr. Leader referred to page 9 of the February 26th minutes and asked to change “woods” to “ways” in his first paragraph and to change “almost on the level of a parking garage” to “almost at the datum set by the level of a parking garage” in his third paragraph.

   MOTION: Mr. Leader moved approval of the Minutes for the February 26, 2018, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission Design Review Board meeting as revised, seconded by Ms. Barton.
VOTE: The motion carried with a vote of 4-0-0 with Acting Board Chair McCann and Board Members Barton, Leader, and Pellegrini voting approval with no abstentions.

MOTION: Ms. Barton moved approval of the Minutes for the March 5, 2018, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission Design Review Board meeting as presented, seconded by Mr. Leader.

VOTE: The motion carried with a vote of 4-0-0 with Acting Board Chair McCann and Board Members Barton, Leader, and Pellegrini voting approval with no abstentions.

4. **Potrero Power Plant Station Mixed-Use Redevelopment (First Pre-Application Review).** The Board held their first pre-application review of a proposal by the California Barrel Company, LLC, to redevelop a 29-acre site at the location of the closed Potrero Power Plant Station, at the terminus of 23rd Street, on the southern waterfront of the City and County of San Francisco. The proposed project would include residential, hotel, commercial office, life/science office, retail, parks, community facilities, light industrial, and assembly. Public access improvements include parks and open spaces, over-water observation areas, a floating recreational dock, and other public amenities.

   a. **Staff Presentation.** Ethan Lavine, BCDC Coastal Program Manager, showed a video of the project site and pointed out areas of interest. He introduced the project and summarized the issues in the staff report including whether the project:

      (1) Accommodates the expected level of public access from new residents, employees, and visitors to this segment of the shoreline.

      (2) Takes advantage of the Bay setting and provides for adequate opportunities to get close to and experience the water.

      (3) Designs public access areas in a manner that “feels public” and makes the shoreline enjoyable to the greatest number of people.

      (4) Provides a sufficiently broad range of water-oriented recreational activities for a diverse population, including people of all races, cultures, ages, income levels, physical abilities, and interests.

      (5) Takes full advantage of the site’s historic and cultural attributes to create a project with a unique “sense of place” and identity.

      (6) Organizes shoreline development to allow Bay views between buildings and enhances and dramatizes views of the Bay from public thoroughfares and other public spaces.

      (7) Provides clear connections for all users to the Bay from Illinois Street.

      (8) Provides clear and continuous transitions for users of the Bay Trail with a clear and obstacle-free connection to the planned Pier 70 development to the north, along its alignment onto 23rd Street, and ultimately Illinois Street.

      (9) Minimizes the potential for conflicts among pedestrians and cyclists within the shoreline open space area.
(10) Has any adverse effects to the proposed public access improvements from anticipated sea level rise and has appropriate design responses to achieve resiliency to, and adapt to, these conditions.

(11) Includes additional opportunities to provide interim access closer to the shoreline and Bay waters as part of the proposed adaptation and resiliency measures.

b. Project Presentation. Enrique Landa, Associate Capital, the developer of the project, showed a slide of the project site from 1929, when the location was a dense industrial site with 180-foot buildings that were some of the tallest structures in San Francisco at that time. He stated this location was entirely closed to the public. The proposed project welcomes the public back to this portion of the waterfront, which is some of the most beautiful in San Francisco.

Kristen Hall, Urban Designer and Planner, Perkins and Will, introduced the project team. She provided an overview, with a slide presentation, of the historic context, stakeholder process, site planning, and land use. She stated, unlike most of Mission Bay, which is fill, the proposed site is on serpentine rock. This is why the site was densely developed early on as a power station, generating power for the refining of sugar and then later for most of San Francisco.

Justin Aff, Associate, CMG Landscape Architecture, continued the slide presentation and discussed the existing conditions, project site information, waterfront open space concept uses and circulation, and proposed seawall.

c. Board Questions. Following the presentation, the Board asked a series of questions:

Mr. Leader stated the meeting packet includes a special page titled “Block 9 Open Space without Unit 3.” He asked about the plan for Unit 3. Mr. Aff stated the goal of the project is to keep Unit 3, but an alternate plan without it is being considered for the environmental review, but it’s not a fully-developed alternate plan. He described the structure and function of the old plant and stated it is important to share that history. The plan is to add hotel rooms into Unit 3 and make it publicly accessible on the roof.

Mr. Leader asked if Unit 3 seems readily adaptable to that. Mr. Aff stated it was built well and will cost as much to remove it as to adapt it. Once the boiler is removed, what would be left is a well-maintained steel structure. The steel and foundation are in great shape.

Ms. McCann asked if the Board is reviewing the proposal without Unit 3. Mr. Aff stated the proposed project before the Board includes Unit 3. The project proponents are working to get appropriate inspections and clearances to keep the unit but has included an alternative plan for the area as a precaution. Mr. Aff stated the best educated guess is that Unit 3 will be part of the project.

Mr. Leader asked if the stack has been retrofitted to be earthquake-safe. Mr. Aff stated, while it is built on a good foundation, it will need additional modifications. The project team is currently investigating how that will need to occur.
Mr. Leader asked about the service access coming in near the atrium and how it would work with the hotel. Ms. Hall stated the hotel would be comprised of two buildings connected on an upper level. Loading activities would happen through that service access.

Ms. Barton asked at what point each aspect of the plan will come online, particularly the open space. Mr. Aff stated the first phase includes the residential, life science/office, and hotel buildings and the majority of open waterfront space. The site will be built from southeast to northwest. PG&E is currently remediating the site in some areas.

Ms. Barton asked if the active user area and the riprap are separated. Mr. Aff stated the riprap has not been designed to encourage public access, but the design does not prevent it at present.

Ms. Barton asked about the edge condition at the riprap. Mr. Aff stated some areas have space between the top of the riprap and the San Francisco Bay Trail. Certain places may have planting or seating areas. The riprap may extend above the trail elevation for safety, as fencing guardrails are not required.

Mr. Leader asked if there are places where a barrier is necessary between the multiuse path and the amenities in front of the buildings. Mr. Aff stated some areas will be enclosed, but public access is possible up to the buildings. Removable barriers would be useful.

Ms. Barton referred to Slide 36, the adapted edge diagram. She asked if the entire riprap area will be inundated with sea level rise. Mr. Aff stated it will. He clarified that the white areas on the slide depict the existing seawall. He pointed out areas that are riprap and other areas that will be built up.

Mr. Leader asked if the existing wall closer to current water level will be kept. Mr. Aff stated the idea is to leave it in place.

Mr. Leader stated the structural angle seems to require the new wall to be further back. Sam Yao, Senior Principal, Simpson, Gumpertz, and Heger (SGH), stated the new wall could be built against the existing seawall, allowing more room for the Bay Trail on the land side. Slide 36, the adapted edge diagram slide, shows the alternative. He stated SGH will study both options.

Ms. Barton asked about the grade changes at the connections to the Pier 70 development and the south end of the proposed project. Mr. Aff pointed out areas on a presentation slide. He stated Pier 70’s final design elevation will be several feet lower. He stated there will be a transition built in that has yet to be fully coordinated with the Pier 70 project team.

Ms. Barton asked if the transition will only be at the Pier 70 connection or if it will extend along the entire edge of the project. Mr. Aff pointed to an alley on a presentation slide and stated there is another connection along there. He stated grading along the edge had yet to be fully coordinated to date.
Mr. Landa stated PG&E is currently determining their remediation strategies for that area. The proposed project team is in constant communication with the Pier 70 project team and PG&E to ensure the elevations are in sync going forward.

Mr. Aff stated the project team has planned for what may have to happen at the south side connection. The plan includes a planting area that will provide separation for a sloped walk down.

Ms. Barton asked if the seawall will wrap around. Mr. Aff referred to Slide 36, the adapted edge diagram. He pointed out the seawall and stated the plan is to depress the walk and connect it around. He stated there will be transitions at both ends of the site. The Pier 70 side has the opportunity to work with the Pier 70 project team to make a graceful transition. The south side is more straightforward.

Ms. Barton stated the south side will be inundated at some point. Mr. Landa agreed that sea level rise for that property will be a problem, but it is not the proponent’s property. The project team is in constant communication with them as well. The owners of the other property are waiting to see what will be done with the proposed project, so they can consider their next steps.

Mr. Pellegrini asked about the anticipated program on the site. Ms. Hall referred to Slide 17, the land use diagram. She stated there will be approximately 2,600 units, 1.2 million square feet of office and life sciences space, 250,000 square feet of ground floor retail space, and a 240,000-square-foot hotel.

Mr. Pellegrini asked about the heights at the water’s edge. Ms. Hall stated the anticipated height will be 65 feet.

Mr. Pellegrini asked about the size of the frontage area between the water and the Block 4 and Block 9 buildings. Mr. Aff stated it is approximately 40 feet.

Mr. Pellegrini asked if that space will be owned and operated by the association but publicly accessible. Mr. Aff stated there has been some question as to long-term ownership. This site has a long industrial history with a series of agreements that dictate how it should be used. He stated it will be simpler to designate a single master developer that would be responsible for handling a risk management plan.

Mr. Pellegrini asked about bicycle and pedestrian access. Ms. Hall stated the Bay Trail runs primarily along Illinois Street, the main linkage in the district. The proposed project picks up Pier 70’s recreational path. It could come along the waterfront and 23rd Street will have a parking-protected bike lane on the north side and a dedicated bike lane on the south side. She pointed out active loading docks on a presentation slide and stated no parking will happen on the south side. The path connects back out to Illinois Street.

Mr. Pellegrini asked about the uses and activities anticipated at the existing recreational pier that can be retrofitted. Mr. Aff stated it does not yet exist. He pointed to the existing outfall of the power station to the south on a presentation slide. The proposed pier would be
similar in size and scale to Pier 1 1/2. The project team is working with the port to ensure it is feasible for the Bay conditions and that it is appropriate to create a recreational dock to allow the public greater access to the waterfront and for fishing opportunities.

Ms. McCann asked how the open space is characterized in contrast to the open space that will be provided at the Pier 70 development immediately north. Mr. Aff stated the path connects the properties. The plan is to make the areas similar and unified. There is more native coastal planting at the proposed project, a quiet zone that is contemplative and natural, and a hotel and retail program.

Ms. Hall stated the Pier 70 development is about the plaza that connects perpendicularly to the water and the views of the water. Activity frames the plaza. The difference in the proposed project is that the activity frames the waterfront edge. It is closer to the water and is similar to an urban European waterfront edge experienced in port cities that are densely developed along the waterfront, rather than being about an open space away from the waterfront. The two properties are both industrial sites on the waterfront, but they have very different histories. There is a history of ship repair and a history of power generation. Highlighting the differences with wild native habitat that is juxtaposed against the existing infrastructure versus the lay-down yards at Pier 70 will help individuals interpret that change that happens along those two massive sites.

Mr. Leader asked how long it will take before the determination can be made on keeping Unit 3. Mr. Aff stated the building can be designed now. It will be designed differently from the rest of the site, which will be covered through a design for development document with guidelines. The building is being designed from a structural perspective. There will not be a week this summer without some portion of design going forward. It is more how it will look than whether or not it will happen.

d. **Public Hearing.** No members of the public addressed the Board.

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

Mr. Leader stated the project is well-planned and well-organized.

Ms. McCann agreed that the proposal is well-thought-through.

Ms. McCann asked for details on the stormwater plan.

The Board responded to questions from the staff report as follows:

**Physical and Visual Access:**

(1) Is the proposed public access - in terms of area and the amenities provided — sufficient to accommodate the expected level of use from new residents, employees, and visitors to this segment of the shoreline?

Ms. McCann stated she liked the continuation of the grid. It sets up a clear way of moving around the site and to the waterfront.
(2) Does the design of the public space take advantage of the Bay setting, and does it provide for adequate opportunities to get close to and experience the water?

Ms. McCann asked about the position of the waterfront access within the 100-foot zone. There is an assumption that café spaces and spaces in front of the hotel will be publicly accessible. There is a leap of faith attached to that. She questioned whether the position of one straight shot north-south is the right position.

Ms. Barton stated it might mean, as the design progresses, that some things jump the path, so the outboard areas become like privatized areas but are public. That should be looked at.

Ms. McCann stated the community wants to see cafés, but this is a precious 100-foot width with a great deal of development behind it. The waterside of the Bay Trail, which is the most public side of the space.

Mr. Pellegrini stated providing greater flexibility may be more interesting from the public’s perspective to get close to the edges of Unit 3 in lieu of the proposed planting, similar to the Pompidou Center where the public access comes up to the buildings.

Mr. Leader agreed. He stated it could be 30 feet on the water side with 10 feet to the building side. He suggested a terrace with people sitting out with a wind screen that goes away at the end of the day. The worry is that these areas start getting built in and then it is no longer public.

Ms. McCann stated the need for greater refinement and clarity about how the semi-public spaces will be treated.

Mr. Leader stated it might be nice to get more asymmetrical from a design standpoint, more compact on the café terrace, and more expansive on the water side.

(3) Are the public access areas designed in a manner that “feels public” and makes the shoreline enjoyable to the greatest number of people?

(4) Will the proposed public access facilities provide a sufficiently broad range of water-oriented recreational activities for a diverse population, including people of all races, cultures, ages, income levels, physical abilities, and interests? Are there additional amenities needed to achieve this type of access?

Ms. McCann asked for comments on the proposed floating dock.

Mr. Leader stated he liked the idea to create a floating dock. It will be well-used.

Ms. McCann stated there have been questions raised at the Pier 70 site about what will be allowed to dock. She asked if the project team has looked into that. Mr. Aff stated they have. The shore conditions are very different in front of Pier 70 than they are at the proposed project site. He stated Mr. Yao has also looked at it. The port has asked the project
proponents to speak with their Bay engineer. Those conversations are currently being scheduled. Putting a dock in this location is not a small challenge. The reason for the chosen location is because it is the space that was clear of PG&E’s active remediation in the Bay. The outfall of the power station created a deeper and cleaner location than other places.

(5) Does the design take full advantage of the site’s historic and cultural attributes to create a project with a unique “sense of place” and identity? What are the Board’s thoughts on appropriate means of interpretation of the site’s historical and cultural attributes to the public?

Mr. Leader stated he hoped Unit 3 will survive the process. It has massively interesting public space potential. He stated he liked the atrium.

Ms. Barton suggested making the different histories between the proposed project and the Pier 70 development very clear.

Mr. Leader stated the story and how it is told is key. He asked if there are plans for help with the story. Mr. Landa stated the project team is currently interviewing interpretive design firms to put together and tell the stories. There are three rich histories of the site:

(a) The power generation from the early days of manufacturing gas to the “peaker” plant and how it was closed. The environmental justice story is there.

(b) The Spreckels Sugar Factory where much of the United States’ sugar was produced and distributed. The story of sugar needs to be told.

(c) The San Francisco early industrial history. Mr. Landa gave the example of one of the first zonings in San Francisco. San Francisco determined that gunpowder manufacturing was too dangerous to do on Sutter Street, so they moved it to the proposed project site. That is part of the story.

Ms. Gaffney asked if any other buildings will be retained on the site. Mr. Landa stated the site has 22 structures, the majority of which are utilitarian sheds for pieces of equipment. There are three industrial ruins that are other former power plants and accessory buildings, which were partially demolished. Project proponents are exploring ways to incorporate the ruins into portions of the buildings that will come.

Mr. Leader suggested a program of artists who typically engage with these kinds of situations in telling the story. Rather than plaques and signs, he recommended using something like Rosie the Riveter to dig deeper into the story and make the art a series of installations that are site-specific and tell the story in that way. It would add value to the site.

(6) Does the design organize shoreline development to allow Bay views between buildings, and does it enhance and dramatize views of the Bay from public thoroughfares and other public spaces?

Mr. Pellegrini suggested views that show that Unit 3 and the stack can continue to be a strong visual terminus for the neighborhood as a marker that shows where the waterfront is, such as a view down 23rd Street and/or a view along the new portion of the Blue
Greenway. Because it is at the southeast corner of the site, it has an opportunity to provide strong connections for individuals who are traveling east from the city and south along the waterfront. He asked the project team to help the Board better understand the thinking behind that.

Mr. Pellegrini stated one way that the project site is different from the Pier 70 development is that Pier 70 will have a cluster of preserved buildings that are interwoven with the new buildings. The proposed site creates a blank slate; the orientation of Unit 3 will be an important part of the story.

Ms. McCann stated looking at the two blocks of park and plaza spaces to the immediate west of Unit 3 and then looking at the road connection to the west between Blocks 6 and 10, it would be interesting if the road connection utilized that view corridor of Unit 3.

Mr. Pellegrini stated the way he understands the sections is that they are being built up to approximately 17 and a half feet and then pulling that back so there is a reverse ramp that is happening for portions of the project. But around Unit 3 it is down at grade level. Around the stack there is a semi-sunken area at elevation 14 feet. The grade would have to resolve down to the existing grade. He stated the need to think about how to enter the building and how to transition off of that. There is also an interesting part of the story there at Unit 3 that would be publicly accessible and how to step off streets or the public right-of-way along the Blue Greenway into that historic precinct. He asked to see that more elaborated.

Ms. McCann agreed. She stated there currently is an idea around Unit 3 and an idea around the stack. It would be interesting if it was one idea around both.

Mr. Leader agreed. He asked if the project proponents really wanted to have two separate expressions instead of one.

Mr. Pellegrini agreed. He stated he would love to see that. It is an important part of a unified design experience.

Ms. McCann stated the presentation included a great description of how connected Unit 3 is to the stack.

Mr. Leader suggested having something piazza-like with a focal point at the base of the stack.

Circulation

(7) Does the proposed project provide clear connections for all users to the Bay from Illinois Street?

(8) Does the designated Bay Trail route provide clear and continuous transitions for users? Will a clear and obstacle-free connection be provided where it connects to the planned Pier 70 development to the north? Along its alignment onto 23rd Street and ultimately Illinois Street?
(9) Does the design minimize the potential for conflicts among pedestrians and cyclists within the shoreline open space area? Would certain areas benefit from providing additional physical public access?

Ms. McCann asked for comments on bicycle access or visitors who want to drive in and park their vehicles. She asked for a presentation slide that shows the bicycle access. Mr. Aff stated there is no bicycle access diagram in the presentation. Ms. Gaffney directed the Board’s attention to page 3 in the meeting packet, which showed the overall transportation and bicycle network.

Mr. Leader asked about the width of the multi-use trail. Mr. Aff stated the minimum width is 20 feet. He stated 22nd Street, which is part of the Pier 70 development, is a primary bicycle route. There are dedicated bicycle lanes on Maryland Street, which connects to the Pier 70 development.

Ms. McCann stated the need to make the grade change between Pier 70 and Power Plant properties navigable. Mr. Aff stated the plan matches grade on Maryland Street and the shoreline with the Pier 70 development.

Mr. Leader stated the project looks like a logical urban network based on blocks. Mr. Aff stated there are two mid-block pedestrian crossings through the site and around the stack. The street design focuses on safety and accessibility.

Ms. McCann asked about the primary access street in Phase 1 and, secondarily, Humboldt Street, which will connect to Maryland Street. Mr. Landa stated 23rd Street will be the primary access road. It is the only road the proposed project connects. Georgia and Maryland Streets will come at a later phase due to PG&E equipment at the site.

Ms. McCann asked when the waterfront public space will be built.

Mr. Landa clarified the extents of the phase one waterfront development run from south of block 4 to the southern edge of the property.

Ms. McCann noted the PG&E switchyards are an unattractive welcome mat for the project and it is a long stretch to get down to the waterfront. Just finding the waterfront in Phase 1 may be challenging. She asked if the project team had considered this. Mr. Landa stated PG&E has committed to enclose the switchyards and modernize and beautify the area. The street design of 23rd Street and how it is activated will be crucial. The project team is looking at ways to light the stack.

**Sea Level Rise:**

(10) What are the potential adverse effects to the proposed public access improvements from anticipated sea level rise, and what are appropriate design responses to achieve resiliency to, or adapt to, these conditions?

(11) Are there additional opportunities to provide interim access closer to the shoreline and Bay waters as part of the proposed adaptation and resiliency measures?
Ms. McCann stated the conceptual design is a clear approach to the 66 inches of sea level rise.

Mr. Leader stated the big issue mentioned earlier was about water coming around Spreckles into the low zone until the other property’s owners do something.

Mr. Leader stated there is a lot of riprap along the water’s edge. He suggested more organization with more architectural character. Portugal and Lisbon use revetments that are done the way they used to do them. He asked if there could be shelves in it or a different kind of stone. It will add to the value of the location.

Mr. Leader stated the hope that the northern part with the seawall only sets back a little from the existing wall or else is built out to the front face. If it were set back three to four meters, the questions become what will go in there instead and how much that will shrink the areas on the top.

Ms. Barton asked for more definition of the open spaces and edge conditions that come online during sea level rise.

f. Applicant Response. Mr. Landa invited Board members to tour the site. He responded positively to the Board’s discussion and suggestions. He stated the design team will take the Board’s comments into consideration and will come up with an improved design.

Mr. Landa stated riprap has challenges since much of the shoreline has existing conditions including PG&E remediation and seawall requirements. Reorientation between Blocks 6 and 10 is unlikely. They are different buildings with different scales that would change the program significantly. While it is a view corridor, Georgia Lane will be more like a back of a house. The real opportunity for pedestrians to spend time is on the Louisiana Paseo.

g. Board Summary and Conclusions. The Board made the following summary and conclusions:

Physical and Visual Access:

(1) Ensure that the spaces adjacent to the buildings feel public.

(2) Clarify the proposed uses of the spaces adjacent to the buildings and how those spaces will be treated.

(3) Explore something more to help ensure that the space on the waterfront side of the multi-use trail within the 100 feet is as generous as possible.

(4) Ensure that the unique industrial heritage of the site is exposed as much as possible during design development. The more that is done to make the character of the proposed industrial site feel different from the Pier 70 development the better. The connections and access must tie together but consider how much can vary beyond that.

(5) More information on the thinking behind the combination of Unit 3, the stack, and how that can work effectively as a terminus of views. It is important to understand the relationship between Unit 3 and the stack in relation to the view corridors.
(6) Between Blocks 5 and 6, is there an advantage gained to the view corridor by repositioning the access point and focusing on the terminus of Unit 3?

(7) Understand the stormwater strategy in relation to the waterfront tied to grade, cross-sectional changes, and other environmental factors that come into play there.

(8) More diversity in character for the riprap or a more intentional organization as a surface treatment.

(9) Consider the setback of the retaining walls to preserve as much space as possible for usable public areas.

(10) Better define the edge conditions.

(11) Consider whether a more unified ground plane between the stack and Unit 3 would be worth exploring.

Circulation:

(12) There was a need for a clear bicycle circulation plan.

(13) Reveal as much as possible from the heritage of the site to help visitors with wayfinding and experiencing the site.

(14) Work with someone who can build the heritage into the waterfront landscape and the experience of the site.

6. **Adjournment.** There being no further business, Acting Chair McCann adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ANDREA GAFFNEY
Bay Design Analyst

Approved, with corrections at the Design Review Board Meeting of May 7, 2018.