

# San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

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**TO:** Design Review Board Members

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

**SUBJECT: Approved Minutes of July 13, 2015 BCDC Design Review Board Meeting**

1. **Call to Order and Attendance.** Board Chair John Kriken called the meeting to order at approximately 5:45 p.m. Other Board members in attendance included Vice Chair Steve Thompson, Karen Alschuler, Cheryl Barton, Ephraim Hirsch, Tom Leader and Jacinta McCann. BCDC staff in attendance included Bob Batha, Tinya Hoang and Ellen Miramontes.

2. **Approval of Draft Minutes for the May 11, 2015 Meeting.** The Board approved the minutes with no revisions.

3. **Richmond Ferry Terminal Project (First Pre-Application Review).** The Board conducted a first 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 (no longer in use) and replacement with a new ferry terminal consisting of a new 704-square-foot gangway, 496-square-foot ramping system and 1,920-square-foot passenger ferry float. The proposed public access improvements include the relocation of a kayak launch facility, extension of a Bay Trail spur, and improvements to existing segments of the Bay Trail.

a. **Staff Presentation.** Tinya Hoang introduced the project and the issues identified in the staff report, which included: whether the proposed project would provide attractive new public access areas; whether the connections to and through the public access spaces would be adequate and appropriate; whether the proposed project would maintain public views to the Bay; and whether the proposed kayak launch would provide adequate amenities and is designed to avoid or minimize potential conflicts with the Bay Trail.

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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 that there be adequate separation between the ferry queuing area and the Bay Trail in order to minimize user conflicts. He also stated that the improved and expanded trail around the parking lot should be widened beyond the proposed eight-foot-width and be connected back to Harbour Way South at the northern end of the parking lot.

b. **Project Presentation.** Chad Mason of the Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) made some introductory remarks regarding WETA's ferry service, described the project location, mentioned history of ferry service in the area following the Loma Prieta earthquake, and noted the planned opening date of 2018 for the proposed terminal.

Kent Royle of Marcy Wong Donn Logan Architects then presented the proposed project in detail. He described the site's existing features, explained the ferry terminal design and components, and reviewed the proposed public access improvements. In response to Bay Trail concerns, he pointed out the proposal to add striping to and embed wording in the pavement that would note "Ferry Queuing Area." Mr. Royle also addressed Bay Trail's comment about connecting the trail back to Harbour Way South at the northern end of the parking lot. He explained that the very large, existing light poles cause a physical constraint and a row of parking would be lost. He further noted that the Richmond Yacht Harbor is very supportive of accommodating non-motorized small boat improvements at the existing launch ramp area. The area near the proposed new kayak launch has existing kayak storage and an ADA bathroom nearby.

Following Mr. Royle's presentation and prior to the start of Board questions regarding the ferry terminal project, Vice Chair Thompson stated that he would like for the presentation of the meeting's fourth agenda item (the City of Richmond's Point Sheridan Public Art Project) to proceed so that he may understand the two projects in context with one another before asking questions and discussing the projects.

4. **Point Sheridan Public Art Project, City of Richmond (First Pre-Application Review).** The Board conducted a first 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.** Ellen Miramontes introduced the project and the issues identified in the staff report, which included: whether the proposed project would adequately preserve views to the Bay and maximize the public's enjoyment of the waterfront area; whether there are adequate connections to and through the public access space to

accommodate ferry patrons crossing from the parking lot to the ferry; whether the proposed site layout and proposed design would provide usable and inviting public spaces that are oriented to the Bay, compatible with the surrounding public access areas, and incorporate unique and special amenities that draw the public to them, create a “sense of place”, are safe, and feel public; and whether the proposed landscaping treatments would be appropriate.

b. **Project Presentation.** Regina Almaguer, who serves as the project manager on behalf of the City, provided a presentation of 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. She further noted that there has been great public support for the project and enthusiasm for this particular design. She also made note of three letters of support for the project from the Richmond Fire Marshal, a Senior Planner stating the Historic Preservation Commission’s support, and the Senior Assistant City Attorney/ADA Coordinator stating that the project would meet ADA requirements.

c. **Board Questions.** Following presentations of both projects under review at this meeting, the Board then proceeded with questions pertaining to both projects.

Mr. Leader asked why no shelter had been included with the proposed ferry terminal project. Kevin Connolly of WETA responded that their passengers have consistently expressed a desire for shelter at terminals but it had not been proposed due to BCDC’s desire for open views to the Bay. It was also discussed that with these types of ferry terminals with large parking lots, oftentimes passengers will wait in their cars until they see the boat arrive. It was noted that the situation is very different at the San Francisco Downtown Ferry Terminal, where there is no parking and shelter is needed to a greater extent.

Mr. Kriken asked what the width of the gangway for the ferry terminal project would be to which Mr. Royle answered it would be eight feet wide. Mr. Connolly explained that they wanted to minimize the amount of fill on the project and so had chosen this width.

Ms. McCann asked why lighting was included on the proposed path along the western edge of the parking lot. Mr. Royle explained that lighting had been provided for the safety of the ferry passengers that would depart as early as 3 a.m. and arrive as late as 9 p.m.

Mr. Thompson asked WETA to elaborate on the proposed routes and schedule for the ferry service. Mr. Connolly explained that this route would only go back and forth to San Francisco and would take 25 minutes each way. There would be approximately three departures in the morning and three arrivals in the evening primarily serving commuters. Service could grow to midday and weekend service. Occasionally special ferry service to games or other events may also be provided.

Mr. Kriken asked whether the parking lot currently fills up. Mr. Royle stated that it does not fill up now and added that they would be adding approximately a third more parking. Mr. Kriken also asked about cars blocking views to the Bay and Mr. Royle explained that cars already park there and block these views now.

Mr. Leader asked why the eastern end of the wharf on the other side of the Ford Craneway Pavilion had not been chosen for the ferry terminal location given the restaurant and the Rosie the Riveter Museum that exist there now. Mr. Royle explained that abundant parking on the west side was one factor and also a longer trip would result due to slower boat speeds required upon entering Marina Bay.

Ms. Alschuler asked whether there would be enough parking for both existing employees in the area and the new ferry patrons given that this area will likely see extraordinary change over the coming years. It was explained that the parking had been determined to be sufficient. Ms. Alschuler also asked whether boats besides the ferries would be allowed to berth at the new dock facility. Mr. Royle explained that boats attending events at the Ford Craneway Pavilion have typically docked there at a previously existing dock, which has recently sunk. Mr. Mason explained that WETA would offer access to the dock extension for such continued berthing, though the dock extension is not owned by WETA.

Mr. Thompson asked how much parking was proposed and how this number was arrived at. Heather Dunbar with GLS Associates stated that 375 total parking spaces would be provided. Mr. Connolly stated that this number had been determined to be sufficient for the foreseeable future.

Mr. Kriken asked about the nature and design of the existing railing along the Ford Craneway Pavilion wharf. Mr. Royle described the railing as open horizontal metal members with periodic roped openings. He stated that their hope was to improve these existing railings.

Ms. Alschuler asked about the design of the entry to the gangway. Mr. Royle pointed out the proposed entry design depicted in the section drawings. Ms. Alschuler stated that there should be a design element that draws attention to the terminal. She further stated that a shelter could make it a regional destination and that it could have a nicely designed cover with signs for the terminal on it. BCDC staff noted that a shelter had not been proposed during the course of several pre-application meetings over the last few years and stated that the Commission would carefully consider view impacts if it were to be proposed.

Mr. Leader stated his desire that these two totally separate projects be coordinated as one project together. Mr. Connolly noted that the City of Richmond would be a co-applicant on their project and would also serve as the applicant for the art project. He further noted that the projects were on separate timelines and that the WETA project had started in 2009 whereas the art project had started in 2013. Michele Seville, Arts & Culture Manager with the City of Richmond, noted that the timeline of their art project was being held up by the ferry terminal project.

Ms. McCann asked how one would enter the southernmost portion of the parking lot. Mr. Royle explained that bollards were proposed at this southern opening in order to reduce conflicts with pedestrians along this street edge and that these bollards would be removed when needed for large events occurring at the Ford Craneway Pavilion.

Mr. Thompson noted that 84 passengers were depicted in the queue shown on the drawings and asked whether this would be a realistic number. Mr. Connolly noted that the proposed ferry boat's capacity would be 149 and that the largest boats in their system hold up to 400. He believed the queuing area would be adequate. Mr. Thompson also asked about the adequacy of the proposed bike storage. Mr. Connolly explained that while their catchment area for ridership at this proposed terminal would extend quite far, most bicycle commuters prefer to bring their bikes on board with them.

Mr. Kriken expressed the thought of focusing on Harbour Way South as the "principal open space" and designing around this. Mr. Royle described the elements currently existing along Harbour Way South including the blue light poles. Mr. Kriken further noted that the terminal should be designed to be adaptable in order to easily accommodate additional elements, such as a shelter, that may be needed in the future.

Mr. Thompson asked to better understand the light element in the proposed art project. Jeff Reed, one of the project artists, passed around the model and described the proposed LED lighting elements. He explained that there would be a string of LED lights on both sides of the eel grass sculptures, these would be visible when looking down Harbor Way South, their colors would depict the changing tides, and they would appear as "glowy things."

Mr. Hirsch asked whether the lights would appear individually or as a "wash." Mr. Reed explained that the lights would be placed 4-inches-on-center and appear as a glowing element that could transform into many colors. Mr. Hirsch asked how people would know the meaning of the various light colors. Jennifer Madden, one of the project artists, responded that there would be interpretive signage explaining the relationship of the light colors with the tides. The signs would include some mention of the lights, but the signage would primarily talk about the historic use of the site and the loss of eelgrass. Mr. Thompson asked whether the lean of the eelgrass shows the dominant wind direction. Someone Mr. Reed replied that it would. Mr. Hirsch mentioned his memory of the Golden Gate Exposition with all the bright lights and how this art piece reminded him of that.

Mr. Thompson asked whether the art installation could be continued in other areas as well. Ms. Madden explained that the total budget was \$175,000 and that it was unlikely that it could be continued.

Mr. Hirsch asked how the eel grass pieces would be socketed into the ground. Mr. Reed described how this would be accomplished and further described the form of the eel grass.

Ms. Barton asked whether the eel grass pieces would flex in the wind, which was affirmed.

Ms. Madden explained the importance to her of keeping the area behind the eel grass (north) closed off from foot traffic in order to create a protected seating opportunity.

Mr. Leader commented that it is a “long, wind-blown drive” down Harbour Way South to the water and there is a desire to have something “welcome” you at the end. He believes there is a missing component that could frame views to the Bay and it seems “unfair” not to have a shelter here. He sees an opportunity to merge the art piece with something that could also shelter people. Ms. Madden agreed that it was a very windy and “almost soulless” site. Mr. Thompson mentioned that there may be an opportunity to place a shelter off to one side.

Ms. Alschuler asked about the progression of views to the Bay, and asked if the public could see Brooks Island from the road. Mr. Batha said that the one can see Brooks Island, Treasure Island and San Francisco. Ms. Alschuler noted that the proposed gangway for the kayak launch was only 4.5-feet-wide and expressed concern whether this would be wide enough. Craig Lewis, project engineer, stated that this is a pretty typical width for such a project.

Mr. Thompson discussed the potential conflicts between the Bay Trail and the proposed Water Trail site and stated that he felt such trails are fairly “permeable” and there would not be a problem for people to pass by one another. Mr. Kriken observed that one of the most exciting things to watch along the water was people putting their boats in and out of the water.

d. **Public Comment.** There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

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

Ms. Barton stated that more effort should be made to create a sense of place and that the “whole edge should be changed.” It currently feels like three to five different projects that have not been put together functionally. The physical elements have not come together and the materials do not work together. She stated that the two teams should connect with one another that another “round” should be taken to join the projects.

Mr. Kriken stated that the most powerful landscape feature is the shoreline and there should not be a series of independent spaces along it.

Mr. Leader expressed doubt that the art project could be completed for \$175,000 and that in order to accomplish something cohesive the projects should be interlocked. Ms. Madden explained that she and Mr. Reed realized that \$175,000 would not cover all of the project expenses and that they were providing this sculpture as a “gift” to the City of Richmond.

Ms. McCann loves the proposed sculpture and sees it as being more related to the western part of the site and, as such, should have a better interface in this direction. The paving choices and design of the art project should tie together with the adjoining spaces. She further noted that it is “very tight” between the sculpture and the roadway and more space should be given between them. Ms. Madden noted that there is 10 feet between the sculpture and the roadway.

Ms. Alschuler agreed that the projects should be put onto one plan together.

Mr. Hirsch stated that the art project is “strong enough to stand on its own” regardless of what is on the ground although noted that the “paving and paths are amorphous.” There is a connection that is missing to resolve these geometries at the water’s edge. Mr Hirsch also asked about the ADA-accessible path and whether it stops at the sculpture. This was explained.

Mr. Leader stated that the walkways between parking aisles are often not used and that this space should be given over to bio-swales and planting.

Ms. Alschuler noted that the formal line of proposed trees at the northern end of the western shoreline edge should be revised to match the more informal grouping of Eucalyptus trees that exist to the south.

Mr. Thompson noted that some type of shelter would be nice. Mr. Kriken noted that a shelter could be added at some point in the future at the end of the street if found to be needed. Mr. Connolly stated that WETA would be “thrilled” to provide a shelter and may consider a fixed shelter of some kind on the shore side of the project.

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. A few of the conclusions are repetitive between projects.

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

a. **Coordinate the Design of the Ferry Terminal and Public Art Project.** The Board stated that the ferry terminal project and the public art project did not appear to be coordinated with one another. The Board emphasized the importance of tying the geometries and material choices between the projects together. The Board asked that the project applicants work closely with one another to create one cohesively-designed shoreline space.

b. **Ferry Terminal Shelter.** Some Board members expressed a desire for a shelter to be included in the project and encouraged the applicants to explore this addition to their project.

c. **Landscaping.** The Board recommended that the proposed landscaping along the northern edge of the western shoreline follow the more natural pattern of the existing Eucalyptus grove rather than a new rectilinear row of trees along the parking lot edge.

d. **Additional Review.** The Board asked that both projects return to them for additional review following project revisions.

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

a. **Art Design.** The Board collectively expressed support for the design of the proposed public art project and noted that it would be a strong feature along the shoreline.

b. **Coordinate the Design of the Ferry Terminal and Public Art Project.** The Board stated that the ferry terminal project and the public art project did not appear to be coordinated with one another. The Board emphasized the importance of tying the geometries and material choices between the projects together. The Board asked that the project applicants work closely with one another to create one cohesively-designed shoreline space.

c. **Additional Review.** The Board asked that both projects return to them for additional review following project revisions.

6. **Adjournment.** Mr. Kriken adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ELLEN MIRAMONTES  
Bay Design Analyst

Approved, with no corrections at the  
Design Review Board Meeting of September 15, 2015.