

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

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October 28, 2016

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: Draft Minutes of October 17, 2016 BCDC Design Review Board Meeting

1. **Call to Order and Attendance.** Design Review Board (Board) Chair Karen Alschuler called the meeting to order at the Milton Marks Conference Center - San Diego Room, 455 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, California, at 5:40 p.m., and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Other DRB members in attendance included Cheryl Barton, Stefan Pellegrini, and Steve Thompson. BCDC staff in attendance included Andrea Gaffney, Ethan Lavine, Brad McCrea, and Jaime Michaels. Also in attendance were David Beaupre (Port of San Francisco), James Heilbronner (Architectural Dimensions), Richard Kennedy (James Corner Field Operations), Joanne Park (Architectural Dimensions), Kelley Pretzer (Forest City), and Jack Sylvan (Forest City).

Jaime Michaels, BCDC Chief of Permits, introduced Andrea Gaffney, BCDC Bay Design Analyst.

Ms. Gaffney stated she will send out Outlook Calendar invites to confirm future attendance at meetings.

Ms. Gaffney stated the next Board meeting is on November 7th. Two India Basin projects will be reviewed.

2. **Approval of Draft Minutes for September 12, 2016, Design Review Board Meeting.** The Board approved these minutes with no revisions.

MOTION: Ms. Barton moved to approve the Draft Minutes for the September 12, 2016, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission Design Review Board Meeting as presented. Mr. Pellegrini seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

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DRB MINUTES
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3. **Report of Chief of Permits.** Ms. Michaels reviewed the following items:

a. The redevelopment project in the city of San Leandro and the office campus project in the city of Burlingame are moving along. Staff is working with project proponents to incorporate Board comments and will keep the Board updated on any changes in these projects.

b. The Commission issued permits to the Treasure Island Redevelopment Project and the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge bicycle-pedestrian path, which is a Bay Trail connection, and a SFO parking garage project in the South Bay.

c. The San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority's (WETA) San Francisco Ferry Terminal Expansion Project will be heard in the December Commission meeting.

d. The applicant for the proposed hotel in Alameda on Harbor Bay has requested to present at the December or January Commission meeting.

4. **West Gateway Public Access Area at the former Oakland Army Base, City of Oakland, Alameda County (First Review).** The Board reviewed a proposal by the California Capital Investment Group and the City of Oakland to redevelop an approximately 91,476-square-foot public access area located at the Oakland Touchdown of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, at the terminus of Burma Road and west of Wharf 7 in the West Gateway area of the former Oakland Army Base, in the City of Oakland, Alameda County.

The proposed project would include approximately 80 to 100 parking spaces, drive aisles, walkways, landscaping, site furnishings, and an improved viewing area at the south end of the public access area, along with other amenities as determined by the design review process.

a. **Staff Presentation.** Brad McCrea, the BCDC Regulatory Program Director, presented a brief overview, accompanied by a slide presentation, of the vicinity, structures, purpose, Bay Bridge access, and existing landscape of the West Gateway project.

b. **Project Presentation.** Jim Heilbronner, the President of Architectural Dimensions for the Oakland Army Base redevelopment, provided an overview, accompanied by a slide presentation, of the site plan, shoreline access, existing elements, proposed parking area, paved public access path, lighting features, signage, landscaping, and custom security fencing of the West Gateway project.

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

Ms. Alschuler referred to the location map slide shown by Mr. McCrea and the barges lined up around the edges of the proposed project site. She asked how the applicant expects to use this area and if the barges will conflict with smaller water craft. Mr. Heilbronner stated the depth of the water varies at the site; ship access is limited to the areas of greater water depth.

Ms. Alschuler asked about the number of access gates into the project and which one is considered the primary gate. Mr. Heilbronner pointed out the two gates into the proposed site and a section that is a dead end and is only going to be used as a secondary emergency exit from the break bulk terminal. The primary entrance for goods and materials is by train.

Ms. Barton asked about the edge condition. Mr. Heilbronner stated the site is under the 2020 sea rise elevation, but most of the site is just above the projected sea level rise at high tide elevations. The rail line is outside of the projected sea rise elevation.

Ms. Barton suggested it a good idea to show cross sections with sea level rise information and existing grades.

Mr. Pellegrini asked about the elevation of the deck above the existing boardwalk. Mr. Heilbronner stated the recycled lumber will be laid directly on top of the existing concrete deck to allow for greater public accessibility.

Mr. Pellegrini asked if trucks will travel the length of the parking lot and enter the site at the southern end. Mr. Heilbronner stated truck traffic will use the primary security entrance at the Burma Road cul-de-sac; the secondary entrance will be used for emergency exit only. The train, which crosses the property, provides another access point.

Mr. Pellegrini asked what drives the 65-foot-width standard for the parking lot. Mr. Heilbronner stated there was no special consideration; it is a standard parking lot size.

Mr. Pellegrini asked about the dimension of the concrete base that holds the light poles extending from the sidewalk. Mr. Heilbronner stated the concrete base for the light poles is approximately 18 inches in diameter and serves as a security barrier around the poles against damage from automobiles. Mr. Pellegrini noted the drawing dimension appeared to equal height of 36 inches.

Ms. Alschuler asked for more information on the guard rail and fence that assures it will not obstruct the view. Mr. Heilbronner stated the top of the guardrail is 42 inches, standard code height. The vertical and horizontal wood rails are bolted into the concrete deck and are filled in with a wire mesh insert that meets the four-inch spacing rule, and would be specified to allow for views.

d. **Public Hearing.** Ms. Gaffney summarized the written comments and questions provided by Lee Chien Huo, the Bay Trail Planner of the San Francisco Bay Trail Project, which were included in the meeting packet.

Ms. Gaffney asked about the west side where the guardrail ends; there is a note that says the existing fence is to remain. Mr. Heilbronner stated it is an existing army fence. He pointed out features of the fence shown on the slide.

Ms. Gaffney asked about the possibility of removing the old army fencing. Mr. Heilbronner stated it is possible and suggested further discussion on that point.

Ms. Gaffney asked how the site plays into the larger Gateway Park plan design. Mr. Heilbronner stated a bicycle/pedestrian connection can be made at the north edge of the pathway across Caltrans property to the Bay Bridge bike path, but several agencies need to provide input and collaborate on how the connection will be paid for.

Mr. Thompson asked about the net open space on the path impacted by the light fixtures. The 11-foot path is already at the minimum requirement. Mr. Heilbronner stated the light fixture will protrude 18 inches into the 11-foot path, so there will be a nine-foot clearance on the water side past the poles. He stated, if the light poles were put on the water side and further back, it will eliminate the necessity for the concrete base because the poles will be a safe distance from automobile damage.

Ms. Barton asked if the city will be responsible for maintaining the path. Mr. Heilbronner stated it is in the area of the city of Oakland's maintenance jurisdiction.

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

Ms. Gaffney stated there are three timeframes that this project will operate in: short-term is the isolated parking lot area and how to program that; mid-term is the Bay Bridge Bike Path access point; and long-term is the overflow parking for Gateway Park.

Ms. Barton stated the need to discuss if there is anything that gets in the way of making the site an even better place. She asked about landscaping on the southeastern side to provide a visual barrier to soften the sense of the security fencing.

Ms. Barton suggested separating the ideas by phase.

Mr. Thompson stated the area above the walkway in L-1 has the possibility of being an attractive location, but the other side has no possibility of being attractive - it is for industrial use and has the security fencing.

Ms. Alschuler stated that the view is particularly nice from there. She suggested differentiating the east and west edges and making more human-related improvements on the side where individuals will walk and bike.

Mr. Pellegrini suggested increasing the width on the public access side by shortening the parking area from 65 feet to 56 feet. He suggested extending the boardwalk down the edge in a future phase of the development. He suggested including more than just benches in the viewing areas, such as picnicking areas.

Ms. Alschuler referred to Mr. Huo's question about mixing pedestrian and bicycle traffic on the trail. Mr. Pellegrini stated he does not see a problem with it.

Mr. Thompson stated it is a dead end and differentiating one type of transportation from another in the pathway does not make sense, but the path should be made as large as possible.

Mr. Thompson stated the L-shaped piece beyond the second cul-de-sac does not have a defined use. He questioned why the area has several benches that face away from the view. Mr. McCrae stated it may be years before other program uses are developed. What to do with the terminus area in the interim is a challenge.

Mr. Thompson suggested the terminus area can be a multi-program activity area, which does not need defining.

Ms. Alschuler stated there are no services in that section for running events or festivals, but suggested power and water would facilitate these types of activities.

Mr. Pellegrini stated services can be put in during a later phase.

Mr. Thompson referred to slide L-1 and stated the slides show an 80- to 100-space parking lot, which has been treated as if it is a classical lot. He suggested that the parking lot be informal and maybe the tree planting only one-sided.

Board members agreed that the trees were unnecessary in the parking area and may obstruct the view. Ms. Barton suggested they could be clustered for a more organic experience.

Ms. Alschuler stated the need for assurance that the trail will connect to the Burma Road connection and towards the crossing. Mr. Thompson referred to slide X-1914C and stated there is space at the Burma Road connection to make the transition quite pronounced, regular, direct, easy to use, and simple to bicyclists because nothing is going on in that space except the possible "end of landscaping."

Ms. Gaffney stated the fence grade is low but the drawing depicts the pathway tight to the fence. She asked if the area will be backfilled to put in the sidewalk. Mr. Heilbronner stated he is unsure how it will be treated until the drainage issue is assessed.

Mr. Pellegrini stated he liked the use of the recycled lumber to form the boardwalk. He suggested continuing the use of recycled lumber at the end of the wharf.

Mr. Pellegrini stated cars need to make a circular movement as they navigate the roundabout, but there is no reason to define that circular space. He suggested squaring off the boardwalk, which would make the deck rectilinear, which would be a nicer feature. Creating the unprogrammed space with a uniform surface would add to its flexibility of use.

f. **Applicant Response.** The applicant offered clarifying points to questions raised by the Board during the Board discussion.

g. **Board Summary and Conclusions.** The Board would like to review this project again once more details have been approved.

5. **Pier 70 Waterfront Site; City and County of San Francisco (First Pre-Application Review).** Ms. Gaffney stated Jacinta McCann and Gary Strang recused themselves from the discussion and decision-making with regard to this agenda item pursuant to Commission policy.

The Board reviewed a proposal by Forest City and the Port of San Francisco to redevelop an approximately 28-acre site within the 69-acre Pier 70 property, bound by Illinois Street to the west, the BAE Ship Repair Yard to the north, the Bay to the east, and the former Potrero Power Plant to the south, in the City and County of San Francisco.

The proposed project would include a shoreline open space area with a public lawn, picnic, seating areas, large gathering spaces, art installations, an event pavilion, a café terrace, access to existing historic craneway structures for fishing and Bay viewing, and a path.

a. **Staff Presentation.** Ethan Lavine, the BCDC Principal Permit Analyst, introduced the project and summarized the issues identified in the staff report, including the design of the public access; the adequacy of the proposed public access widths, circulation, and connections; the potential project impacts on scenic views; and the resilience of public access areas to sea level rise.

Mr. Lavine noted a correction to the staff summary: a view corridor to the Bay is not created by extending 20th Street.

b. **Project Presentation.** David Beaupre, the Senior Waterfront Planner at the Port of San Francisco, stated 20th Street will provide a view closer to the terminus. He noted that the Board-approved design for Crane Cove Park will begin construction shortly. He showed a slide of a map of the vicinity to provide regional context for the proposed project.

Kelly Pretzer, the Pier 70 Development Manager at Forest City Enterprises, stated there are a number of slides not included in today's presentation about proposed land uses and community outreach, but they are available to the Board.

She introduced Jack Sylvan and Andy Wang, from Forest City; Justin Semion, from WRA; and Richard Kennedy, from James Corner Field Operations. She stated Dilip Trivedi and Christopher Devick, from Moffatt and Nichol Engineers, who are key members of the team, were unable to be in attendance today.

Richard Kennedy, Senior Principal at James Corner Field Operations, the landscape architect for the proposed project, provided an overview, accompanied by a slide presentation, of the Pier 70 context, open space zones, historical aspects, illustrative open space diagram, connectivity and public access, site plan, public access and pedestrian circulation, shoreline improvements, waterfront terrace, waterfront promenade, and landscape and pavement areas of the Pier 70 Waterfront project.

Mr. Kennedy stated the goal of the project is to increase the range and mosaic of the creative attractions and entrepreneurial activity of Pier 70, to leverage the industrial character, to be an extension to the surrounding community, and to honor the unique historical value of the site.

The design incorporates a loosely-arranged collection of functional spaces of various sizes and orientations strewn about the site with specific relations to the historic buildings.

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

Ms. Barton commended the proponents on their use of riprap. She asked if there are any foreseen challenges due to the scale and variety of riprap used. Mr. Kennedy stated the riprap details are fairly standard in profile, rock size, and pitch. The site benefits from many elements that help break up the riprapped edges.

Mr. Pellegrini asked about the slide with the cross-section of the waterfront terrace with the roadway in front of the building. He also asked about the condition of the area in front of Block B, with the sidewalk, roadway, and edge. Mr. Kennedy stated the condition will continue but will remain flush all the way across, as opposed to stepping down, and is replaced with turf grass.

Ms. Alschuler asked where automobile traffic will be allowed on the site. Mr. Kennedy stated the waterfront promenade only has access for service maintenance vehicles. Ms. Pretzer pointed out areas on the presentation slides where automobile traffic is allowed.

Ms. Alschuler asked about the arrival sequence from Illinois and 22nd Streets to the water's edge. Mr. Kennedy pointed out entrances and exits for pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles on the presentation slides. Ms. Pretzer stated Building C-1 is a district vehicle parking structure. Good signage and available parking will minimize vehicle traffic throughout the site. Ms. Alschuler noted the site plan was difficult to read because they could not understand what are the existing buildings versus new ones, and what are the proposed land uses.

Mr. Pellegrini asked about access to the water from the site. Mr. Beaupre stated a beach for human-powered boats is under construction at Crane Cove Park.

Ms. Alschuler asked about the six-foot walkways and how the disability community can access the site. Mr. Kennedy stated the areas with six-foot walkways are in the more intimate, parklike settings. Walkways and ramps are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible.

Mr. Thompson stated he loved the variety of spaces and the edge of the site is decorated nicely, but there is no clear way to access it or clear direction of what to do or where to go once an individual gets there. Mr. Kennedy stated intuition will guide visitors to the water. The parking garage is located somewhat central and street parking is priced based on demand. The walking time is approximately five minutes from the garage to any other place on the site. From Illinois Street to the water's edge is roughly a quarter of a mile.

Mr. Thompson asked about the timeline of the project. Ms. Pretzer stated the draft environmental document is expected to be published this year, the project will be entitled in the third quarter of 2017, and construction will begin soon after that.

Mr. Pellegrini asked about the relationship between the public spaces and the artist program related to the site. Mr. Kennedy stated indoor and outdoor activities are blurred; specifically, Buildings E-4, 12, and 21 that extend from the core of the site out to the waterfront are envisioned to be retail or arts- and culture-based to draw in individuals from afar to events and exhibits. The thinking is that events can spill out to the park. The site is designed to allow for flow inside and out.

Ms. Alschuler asked about the slipways area. Mr. Kennedy stated the majority of the site is lifted up to be above projected sea level rise. The idea of the Slipways Common Park is that it does capture central slipways. The brown red frames are meant to evoke historic elements and the fingers are preserved as accessible promontories that allow for other interpretive storytelling to occur that looks back to the legacy of shipbuilding.

d. **Public Hearing.** No public comments were heard.

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

(1) Is the proposed public access for the project sufficient to accommodate the expected level of use, designed to take advantage of existing and new site characteristics, and an appropriate scale?

Ms. Alschuler asked how all the hard space will be used.

Ms. Barton asked who will operate and maintain this long-term.

(2) Does the proposed project provide adequate and desirable connections to future shoreline open space areas and adjacent developed areas?

Mr. Pellegrini stated the views presented today are restrictive, making it hard to visualize the potential. He suggested a greater description of the east/west connections that go into the site to better understand the concept. The permeability of the ground floor clearly extends beyond the demarcated public space. It would be helpful to understand the potential connectivity, such as the plaza space or the space between Buildings 2 and 12 into the slipway. The idea of pulling the streets away from the shoreline and creating the central spine is fantastic, but more information is required to understand the permeability and connectivity that is being provided. He suggested showing the experience from Irish Hill to the waterfront.

(3) Do the viewing pavilions enhance or detract from Bay views and visual access to the Bay?

Ms. Barton stated the viewing pavilions frame certain views, not all views, but it is an arresting concept to grab views and creates a space, providing a framing operatic effect. Staging them for various performances would be terrific. They are a counterpoint to catching your own view.

Mr. Thompson stated the viewing pavilions are three or four blocks apart, which is not crowded.

Mr. Pellegrini stated he liked the way the viewing pavilions are presented but was skeptical that they can continue to have that beautiful, subtle profile. He asked about the role of public art, how that relates to the overall strategy, and whether or not it should be part of a permanent program or if it would change over time.

Ms. Barton stated the pavilions could also be galleries that contain art.

(4) Have the proposed public access areas been sited and designed to adequately avoid significant adverse impacts from sea level rise and shoreline flooding?

Ms. Barton stated it is well thought out. She suggested a design view showing the shade and shadow patterns.

Mr. Lavine asked if there were other elements in terms of site furnishings and features missing, particularly as they relate to the water's edge.

Ms. Alschuler suggested including a sense of the shipways by including historical artifacts to help tell the story.

Mr. Thompson stated the open spaces are predominantly north/south and the Bay is in the east, and the way to get from inland to the water's edge is missing except for two streets.

Ms. Alschuler stated the broken street grid is a good contrast to other areas of the city. Ms. Barton asked if dogs and kids have been considered in the design.

f. **Applicant Response.** The applicant offered clarifying points to questions raised by the Board:

Mr. Kennedy stated navigating to this location is one of its charms. It balances the two main streets with the small spaces and places to explore.

g. **Board Summary and Conclusions.** The Board did not summarize their conclusions.

6. Adjournment. There being no further business, Ms. Alschuler adjourned the meeting at 8:49 p.m.