MINUTES
Waterfront Development Committee
Thursday, March 4, 2004
Municipal Building Assembly Chambers

Waterfront Development Committee Members Present: Jeannie Johnson, Chair; Merrill Sanford; Budd Simpson; Johan Dybdahl; Stan Ridgeway
Members Absent: David Stone
Staff Present: Donna Pierce, Dale Pernula, Greg Chaney, Debbie Meyer

I. Call To Order
Chair, Jeannie Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. Agenda Changes
None

III. Approval of Minutes
Mr. Sanford moved to approve minutes of January 28, 2004
Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.

IV. Public Participation (10 Minutes)
None

V. Agenda Items

   A. Initial Review of Waterfront Development Plan Comments
      Two red folder items were handed out; a memo from the Planning Commission with comments on
      the Plan and a memo from Dale Pernula, CDD Director, which gave a summary of comments from
      various groups.

      Ms. J. Johnson said the goal of this meeting is to discuss the comments from the groups that were
      received. She would like the Committee to find common threads of where the groups are in
      agreement and where the Committee may need more information or additional help before sending
      it on to the Assembly.

      Ms. Pierce suggested they work through the Plan by geographic areas and gave examples.

      Mr. Dybdahl, Planning Commission Chair, stated the Commission liked the Plan in general, but
      where the Plan went into design criteria they saw problems in that it didn't dovetail with some of
      the existing things like the historic district for example and with the Plan it might become
      unworkable. There were also some things that the Commission felt would have to be changed.  
      What might be considered is possibly a bonus or incentive program in order to make the Plan work.

      Ms. Pierce made a comment about the importance of being clear in the Plan of industrial vs. 
      commercial development on the rock dump. She gathers from the comments that the Commission
      feels more needs to be done. It needs to be more explicit in the Plan. Brief discussion ensued

      Mr. Simpson, Docks & Harbors Board Representative, went through their concerns and the parts
      that they support along with their recommendations.
Docks & Harbors Board supports the concept of a Long-range Waterfront Plan, and fully endorses the following identified goals: enhanced community quality of life; strengthen tourism product offerings as well as downtown retail, entertainment, residential and service activity; improve Juneau’s image and attractiveness for investment; and recognize all current waterfront uses. They strongly support the Mental Health Lands Trust Subport development project. He also pointed out that the Draft Plan's proposal to extend the existing cruise ship dock is significantly at odds with the Board's extensive engineering and cost-benefit analysis.

The Docks & Harbors Board has concerns about the public polling process as it was finally implemented. The mail-in response is not a random survey method and therefore lacks statistical integrity necessary to be used as a meaningful planning tool. A follow-up survey by statistically proven method is needed.

Ms. Pierce summarized the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee's (PRAC) comments. They are very supportive of the open spaces and park areas in the Plan. Although it wasn't in their comments, she said they were supportive of the improvements to Marine Park that had been discussed earlier at the time we did the Plaza project and extending Marine Park northward towards Merchant's Wharf. One of PRAC's ideas for exploration is the elephant train possibility on an extensive seawalk, which would be something like a series of linked carts that would run along the seawalk. This would be something during the summer that would be helpful for those with limited mobility. PRAC also commented on extending the seawalk under the bridge to connect with the harbor. Also suggested pedestrian access to the AJ Dock and the Little Rock Dump. They did have concern about parking on the waterfront.

Ms. J. Johnson pointed out that there were also comments from The Trust Land Office, North West Cruiseship Association, Historic Resources Advisory Committee and two members of the public.

The Committee went through the list of concerns from Mr. Pernula's summary memo, and focused on the items that were a concern to more than one group.

Historic district not mentioned in the Waterfront Plan

Security should be revisited and plan modified to reflect these requirements

Lack of recommendations regarding parking issues

Validity of polling process questioned
  - Needed a simple, more focused poll.
  - Too much info given at once in survey.
  - Survey was intended to be part of the public process. Surveys are information for planners they are not advisory votes.
  - No need to re-survey items where there is a lot of agreement on already.
  - What information is most useful to get?
  - Can use McDowell again.

Mr. Dybdahl said the Planning Commission's perspective is to not go into too much detail in this Plan. It should be broad and incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Dybdahl said if one is able to insure flexibility on a certain issue, then you could preclude necessity to go out and survey it. Planning Commission and Community Development need tools to evaluate proposals.

Mr. Simpson said Docks and Harbors Board feels that this Plan relies heavily on what are statistically inappropriate results. He is not complaining about the results, but the methodology that to him taints the results.
Ms. Pierce agrees with Mr. Dybdahl. The Plan shouldn't be so specific that it makes itself obsolete. There were comments that said there should be a lot more economic analysis, there should be more cost benefits before the Plan is adopted. That has to be done before anything can go forward, but not necessarily before the Plan. The Plan should be a conceptual framework. She asked the consultant for clarification on the supplemental Plan proposal, but hasn't received it from him yet. She understands that he did intend it to be both within and outside of the current planning area to look at cruise ship berths around the borough. She does think that the Planning Commission and the Community Development Department need some tools to assess proposals. There should be some guidance. The consultant didn't propose any follow-up surveys. In the supplemental Plan he intended for the larger analysis to happen.

Mr. Ridgeway asked would we need the survey now or would we need to redraft the Plan? There are a lot of good questions from the various groups. Do we need to do a little bit more work so that the survey question would be a bit more appropriate? Timing of this is important.

Ms. J. Johnson proposed that we ask Staff to get a hold of McDowell so they can start thinking about this project. If they could come to our next meeting and talk to us about that survey and so they can hear what we are thinking and in turn give them a better idea of what we need. Then move forward as quickly as we can. The Committee agrees.

There was a discussion on having a map available for the next meeting on March 10th, that shows what is private and commercial property to help discuss projects. Mr. Simpson will check with Mr. John Stone to see if Docks and Harbors might have a map that shows property owners along the waterfront. Mr. Simpson believes the consultant did speak with everybody they identified as a stakeholder. B&A may have some kind of database with the stakeholders listed. Mr. Chaney said he believes it is on page 14 of the Plan.

Mr. Pernula will speak with Bruce Simonson, GIS Manager, regarding getting a more detailed map showing which is private and commercial property.

Mr. Ridgeway asked that after the public presentations of the Plan was done by the consultant, did anyone gather any information on the public comments? Mr. Sanford said he didn't think there were a whole lot of big comments because we knew we were going through this process. Ms. J. Johnson commented that hopefully by the end of the month we will have a public hearing on this.

Mr. Sanford asked if the map for the avalanche zone for the Little Rock Dump could be provided. He feels this should be incorporated into the Plan.

VI. Adjournment

Ms. Johnson made a motion to adjourn at 6:00 p.m.

Seeing no objection it was so ordered.