MINUTES
Waterfront Development Committee
Wednesday, March 10, 2004
Municipal Building Assembly Chambers

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

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

II. Agenda Changes
None

III. Approval of Minutes
Mr. Sanford moved to approve minutes of March 4, 2004
Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.

IV. Public Participation (10 Minutes)
None

V. Agenda Items

A. Follow-up on additional survey
Ms. Pierce has been working with McDowell Group the last few days to try and capture what the Committee thought about an additional survey, not to replicate the last survey, but to delve deeper into what some of the issues are. In using a statistical survey go back out and seek more information.

Susan Bell presented the McDowell Group, Inc. proposal to conduct a "Juneau Waterfront Supplemental Survey" of 400 to 500 randomly selected Juneau households. The primary objective of the survey is to gather additional information from Juneau residents that focuses more narrowly on major issues identified in the previous Waterfront Survey conducted by Bermello, Ajamil & Partners, Inc. as part of the larger Long Range Waterfront Plan. The new supplemental survey is not intended as a repeat of the 2003 survey but rather as a necessary next step in gathering information essential for City and Borough of Juneau planning decisions on waterfront development. The secondary objective is to gather this supplemental detailed information that will accurately measure opinions of all Juneau residents. They are recommending a sample size of 500. Will do pretest to make sure people understand questions and will rework survey if needed.

The primary focus of the supplemental survey will be to investigate the reasons for favoring or opposing options for cruiseship pier development. Secondarily, the survey will ask residents about cruise facility options outside the core downtown area.

Ms. Bell provided suggested survey questions for consideration by the Committee. Exact wording will be finalized by McDowell Group after the Committee decides on content and topics.
Upon the Committee's approval of this proposal, McDowell Group would require a minimum of two days to design and pretest the survey instrument. If survey design is completed by the end of this week, they can begin surveying on March 13th. Fielding is anticipated to continue through March 21st. Coding and data processing would be completed by March 29th. Topline data will be available for internal review by March 30th and a draft report will be produced by April 5th.

The Committee discussed how survey questions are asked. Questions could be formulated so that there is some middle ground, not necessarily for or against a particular issue. Some issues can be quite different, for example, some issues are geographical and some are capacity issues. Make sure we understand the nature of the response so we can try and mitigate them. There was a concern with a telephone survey that some people would be confused about locations that are referred to in the survey questions. The pretest will help to determine if people are not understanding what the survey is talking about and then changes could be made to improve it. Plan should preserve options, but not dictate it, which would make it a broad plan. Whenever we survey we shouldn't get to a point of exclusion. Need to preface questions so that they don't cause alarm if it is unwarranted. Make sure the introduction in the survey is read in such a way that people understand the questions and what the current option is on the table.

Ms. Pierce said procedurally she checked with Purchasing regarding using the professional services exemption because of the timing of the survey and that McDowell was a partner in the last waterfront survey. Purchasing approved the exemption so we don't have to do the competitive bidding process. There is additional planning funds of approximately $130,000, that were originally set aside for the waterfront plan.

There was a concern that B&A were not part of the process. Ms. Bell said they have had numerous contacts with Scott Lagueux of B&A and they seemed comfortable with the process of the survey.

Committee agreed to review the survey questions and then have the survey of 500 households be launched the weekend of March 20th, at a cost of $18,000.

B. Review of Area "A" - Gold Creek to Juneau-Douglas Bridge

Mr. Stone and Mr. Simpson brought to the attention of the Committee that they had spoken to the City Attorney regarding a conflict of interest with some of the areas in the Waterfront Plan that involve some of the companies properties that they work for. They were advised that they are able to vote on properties that they are not involved with.

The Committee will try to identify the broad planning in the 7 identified areas and make sure they are systematically looked at in every geographic area of the Plan. The Committee looked at the comments from Mr. Pernula of the planning perspective of area "A" and "F" and a memo from the Planning Commission concerning the latest draft of the Plan. Maps were handed out breaking down the various areas along with a map indicating property ownership.

Mr. Pernula went through his memo regarding the 6 planning issues. The issues discussed for area "A" were land use, access and circulation, parking, design guidelines, view corridors and tidelands. A graph was used to help prioritize the different planning issues in the various areas.

Staff along with the Planning Commission recommend adoption of a bonus system which would allow for higher buildings in exchange for preservation of view corridors or other amenities. Wider sidewalks could possibly be included in the bonus system. Mr. Pernula stated that when you get into some of the more congested areas of South Franklin and so on, you need to have 12 or 14 foot wide sidewalks. The further complication in those areas is that these encroachments of upper floors, being able to encroach into the setback, conflicts with the historic guidelines.
Mr. Pernula agrees with the Planning Commission that design guidelines shouldn't go into all the provisions in the Plan but making sure that the Plan has some implementation criteria that is clearly flexible.

It was suggested that view corridors should also be looked at from both directions, looking in and out at the various views. The Plan only indicates the views looking out.

Mr. Dybdal had a question regarding the Gold Creek protection zone as to how it tied into the total Plan and any agreements that might be attached to the Corp of Engineers and the overall permit.

Mr. Simpson said that Docks and Harbors have been involved extensively with the rehabilitation project to the Gold Creek protection zone in area "A". He said Mr. Stone, Port Director, would have more information about where the protection zone is and what could and could not be done there. It has been looked at in the context of the boat harbor.

Ms. J. Johnson asked Mr. Simpson to have this information available for the next meeting.

In the discussion regarding building height, the Plan suggests a 35-foot maximum, which is consistent with the current height limits, but would be measured from a different point on the building. Mr. Pernula said one thing that is different is they measure from half the height of a gabled roof. The proposal was to measure from the top of the building.

The code has been changed to not permit building berms to allow extra height on buildings.

Private property and zoning changes are planning issues that were added to the check list to be considered with each area if necessary. Mr. Pernula would like to analyze the zone changes a little further.

Ms. J. Johnson asked as the Plan sits now, is it specific enough for 5 or 10 years from now? Mr. Chaney said it is a logical progression and the Plan doesn't lay it out that way, but that is the way it is going to happen. Mr. Sanford asked that since we are going to do a proposed LID for 9th Street right now, is that half way conformed to the Plan or is it completely different. Mr. Chaney answered that he thinks the LID is a step in the right direction, but it doesn't do all the amenities the Plan is calling for and it is a big step up from what is there right now. Mr. Sanford said if it was going to meet the goals of the Plan to be done in a traffic calming way like the Plan suggests, it should be considered now.

Some of the Committee's general thoughts for area "A" were to focus on buildings that are there already and not the removal of buildings, stick to the possible, focus on shop area, develop park area, make road access nicer, don't put in road along water, but develop seawalk. The connection between 8th and 9th, and the connection beneath the north side of the bridge are easily implementable on City owned property and make a lot of sense.

Committee Action: Mr. Sanford moved to recommend moving toward the plan of getting rid of the maintenance shop and moving it into a consolidated facility and changing that area into a park. Looking at the street right-of-ways for 8th and 9th Street and doing the loop when that property comes available. Look at purchasing the land where the seawalk starts going east and west. Don't develop the road around the perimeter next to the water.

Ms. J. Johnson asked if there were any objections. Hearing no objection, it was so ordered.
Mr. Pernula at the next meeting will come up with some flexible language to insert into the Plan. Planning Commission suggests taking every section/area and zone separately in respect to design.

May need to reschedule March 25th meeting to another date.

C. Review of Area "F"

To be discussed at next meeting.

VI. Adjournment

Ms. Johnson made a motion to adjourn at 6:30 p.m.

Seeing no objection it was so ordered.