MINUTES
Waterfront Development Committee
Tuesday, June 8, 2004 ~ 5 PM
Assembly Chambers

Waterfront Development Committee Members Present: Jeannie Johnson, David Stone, Merrill Sanford, Jeff Wilson, Stan Ridgeway

Members Absent: Johan Dybdahl, Don Etheridge

Others Present: Dale Pernula, Greg Chaney, Angela Hull, Howard Lockwood, Chip Thoma

I. Call To Order
Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

II. Agenda Changes
None

III. Approval of Minutes
Mr. Sanford moved to approve the minutes of May 25, 2004.

Hearing no objections, the minutes are approved as presented.

IV. Agenda Items

A. Issues in Waterfront Plan Area C

This is the last area to address. Dale Pernula provided a June 7, 2004 memorandum outlining the important issues pertinent to Waterfront Plan Area C, outlining the issues. This area is packed with issues; some more complicated than others. Chair Jeannie Johnson asked for Mr. Pernula to address each item individually and the Committee would comment as they went through them

1. The Committee asked Mr. Daniel Glidman, Merchant’s Wharf Manager to speak to this item. Mr. Glidman relayed to the Committee that the owners would likely either eliminate the building or close the building. The costs associated with building maintenance have caused the property to exceed its economic life. The owners do not want to continue to pump maintenance cash into the building that is operating at a loss. These changes will occur within the next two to five years

There is no way that the owners will consider half of the building being sold. Their goal would be for CBJ to purchase the entire site and the Seadrome Building. It is not structurally or mechanically feasible to try and split the building in half. Where the “cut” would be is where the electrical service for the whole building comes into the property. Also, the retaining wall along the sidewalk is severely undermined. There are temporary measures that could be undertaken to enhance and reconstruct this area, but it
would be a waste of energy and funds. They would like to see as much of this property purchased by CBJ as possible for the expansion of Marine Park.

Mr. Glidman addressed the pier/dock concept document that he distributed to the Committee. This concept is in direct response to the plan presented by the Docks and Harbors Department at the last meeting, which was unacceptable to the owners. Putting up a finger pier off the city dock does not make a lot of sense. You're buying park land and then covering it up by having two ships come right in front of that land. The concept presented by Mr. Glidman is an updated version of a plan that the DBA presented in the early to mid-nineties. Preliminary engineering has been done in the past and PND did an update on the engineering 2 years ago. Based on that updated information, just for the pier process, the cost was approximately $11 million.

The direction they are going, Phase I, is penciling out the costs of a new building which would house a new Hangar restaurant and limited shops, but would function primarily as support for luxury/cruise ships, and security needs. It’s about a 9,000 square foot footprint. The current footprint of the building is 20,000 square feet.

The Committee and staff discussed the concept and how to incorporate multiple uses for a single area into the Master Plan. Mr. Pernula commented that the Committee is reviewing a plan. The first priority is to deal with the plan, to approve or reject it, then move forward to look at other concepts. Mr. Stone expressed that with a master plan process, caution in being overly prescriptive needs to be exercised.

Chairperson Johnson directed staff to remove the possibility of cutting Merchant’s Wharf in half out of the plan. Mr. Sanford suggested that we leave something in the Plan in the event that the building should fall down there should still be an option to buy the triangle-shaped portion identified in the plan. Mr. Stone suggested that the wording be similar to: to the extent the building becomes available the city would look at purchasing either part or all of it, depending on the City’s needs.

Mr. Sanford wanted to reiterate to the Committee that it is imperative that parking options be seriously considered. No matter what is done, anytime we remove parking from one place in the downtown area, we need to provide it somewhere else. Regardless of whether you want it on the waterfront or not, if you take options for parking to use the space for something else you must find somewhere to replace that parking.

Mr. Ridgeway proposed that if this were to become a city dock, we should remember the floating aspect for accessibility, that was one of the favorable things about the other plan was that it would deal with issues for people with limited mobility.

The Committee discussed that it likely will not be this committee that decides where a finger pier will go, perhaps recommendations of the area where it may go but the configuration of that would be left to other committees. All new construction would have to go through Community Development and all the attending requirements. Any new additional piers should take into account parking, ADA, and security issues.

The survey that was conducted did not reflect a positive indication to purchase the Merchant’s Wharf property. The survey did not address the possibility of the building
just closing down. That possibility could change the how the public views the city purchasing the facility.

2. Aviation History Center. The Committee will recommend that there be an aviation/maritime type museum but not be site specific. Parking issues must be addressed in the plan.

3. Recommendation: to widen the walkway for a seawalk and possible outdoor dining:

4. Recommendation: retain general terminology to maximize circulation.

5. Recommendation: Remove language to purchase a portion of Merchant’s Wharf.

6. Recommendation: Retain as written.

7. Recommendation: Retain as written.

8. Recommendation: Retain as written.

9. Recommendation: To retain the structural integrity of the parking garage/library but to soften the ground floor with commercial/cultural venues outside the perimeter that do not conflict with private retail uses in the downtown area. Leave the parking unchanged.

10. Recommendation: Remove the reference to “near the Red Dog Saloon”. The cultural gateway should not be listed in the plan at a specific site. Insert notations to tie the cultural gateway(s) into the Wayfinding Project, not as a substitute but as an integrated part of that project. Remove the blue-colored bars on the plan (page 55) that indicate site specificity.

11. Recommendation: This is listed in the plan and the standards conflict with the Historic District standards. Deal with in the same way as Area C.

12. Recommendation: This should not be required. Use the word encouraged.

13. Recommendation: Change the word “removed” to “reconfigured”.


15. Recommendation: Instead of no structures allowed on the 16-foot seawalk, insert no enclosed structures that would impede pedestrian traffic. This would allow for weather coverage, rest areas, and various types of covering.

16. Recommendation: Change the word “should” to “recommended”. Reconfiguring Egan Drive, although a great goal isn’t really possible at this time.

There is a downtown parking plan that is incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. It is important to reference the parking plans, but not tie the Waterfront Plan to a specific parking site.

B. Area B Recommendations

Mr. Pernula reviewed his memorandum that summarized the Area B Recommendations made by the Committee at the last meeting. In item 3, the language regarding parking directs the downtown community needs to be prepared to give up more parking. This should be changed to reflect that the users of the parking need to plan for other parking solutions. Dialogue with the State needs to be initiated again. Mr. Sanford will begin that exercise through the Lands Committee and will schedule that with Steve Gilbertson and Sam Kito.

Mr. Ridgeway talked about looking into a circulator bus/shuttle service for offsite parking. Ms. Johnson would like to see this plan also address a circulator to move passengers from the private dock and return them to the private dock. It’s an issue of quality for the passengers and she will be discussing this further with John Hansen of NWCA. The plan should not require, but could recommend this item.
There were no comments on items 1 or 2.

C. Other

Dale Pernula will go through and make a specific comparison between the Waterfront Plan and the proposed Subport Plan to make sure that the two plans work in concert and not in opposition.

Mr. Chaney sent a letter to FEMA’s Region 10 director and will follow up with a phone call. No word from Scott at B&A on the FEMA issue. There was discussion regarding perhaps involving the lobbyists or Senator Stevens office. Mr. Chaney reminded the Committee that CBJ has received an answer to this question, the answer they gave us was no. Mr. Sanford recommended that Mr. Pernula discuss this with the City Manager and formulate a plan of action.

Mr. Pernula will come to the June 29th meeting with a memo combining all of the previous discussions on the different areas and a comparison between the Waterfront Plan and the proposed Subport Plan. He requested further direction on cruiseship docks. The Committee is still in an information-gathering mode on this issue. They would like to hear more from the Docks and Harbors Department.

The Committee will address the table at the end of the plan after reviewing the comparison document and the combined recommendation memorandum.

V. Next Meetings Scheduled:

The meetings for June 15 and June 22, 2004 are cancelled. The next meeting will be June 29, 2004 at 5 PM in Assembly Chambers.

VI. Adjournment

Chair Johnson made a motion to adjourn at 6:35 PM

Hearing no objection it was so ordered.