Minutes
Waterfront Development Committee
Monday, April 18, 2005 – Noon
Assembly Chambers

Waterfront Development Committee Members Present: Chairman Stan Ridgeway, Jeff Bush, Marc Wheeler, Johan Dybdahl, Dan Bruce, Don Etheridge
Members Absent: Jeff Wilson
Other Assembly Members Present: Merrill Sanford
Staff Present: Donna Pierce, Rorie Watt, Greg Chaney, Skye Stekoll, Frances Vlahos-Rohm

I. Call to Order
Meeting called to order at 12:02pm

II. Approval of Minutes
No objection to approval of minutes from 2/14/2005.

III. Public Comment (not to exceed 10 minutes)
No public comment

IV. Discussion Items
A. Waterfront CIP
Ms. Pierce introduced the Waterfront CIP list and the Manager’s Preliminary recommendations. A brief summary of the projects and funding sources was given. The Manager’s recommendations made to the Marine Passenger Fee Committee will go to the Finance Committee for discussion soon. Staff recommended that funding for the Cultural Gateway project could come from the Port Development fund and money that remains in the Plaza Project funding. The Gateway project was a part of the adopted Plaza project - Phase I, which ran out of money. Mr. Dybdahl addressed the $20,000 intended for the Cruiseship operational study and asked whether the study would be completed. Staff noted that it would be crucial and worthwhile to have a rudimentary study in place. This needs to be discussed at a meeting with the local Industry representatives.

Mr. Bush asked about the South Franklin right of way purchase. Rorie Watt addressed his question. There are two current projects involved in this issue. The widening plan has not been adopted or acted on. The committee encouraged staff to make the entire project happen. Mr. Ridgeway asked if there was any opposition on the committee recommending making the purchases immediately. There was no opposition to the purchases, but some concerns about everything falling into place in a timely manner. Rorie Watt discussed the options with the five available properties within the project. The original proposal included exchange of tideland properties. The scope of the project is open to some interpretation. Not all of the potential funding sources have been pursued. State (DOT) funding may be a possibility. Other suggestions could involve a Local Improvement District. The $250,000 from the list, could leverage the discussion and be used to find property corners and determine what direction to take in the actual purchases. Mr. Dybdahl suggested that the purchase and development of the right of way would push owners further into tidelands, affecting their costs more. There was a lot of discussion about what the $250,000 would do. The widening plan may need to be re-presented with new information. FEMA decisions are also key in this discussion.
The actual cost of the Seawalk was addressed in the discussion. Mr. Watt gave an estimate in excess of $1,000,000. This includes a fall startup for the project as recommended by the PRAC and Docks and Harbors Committees. To begin the project with $750,000 may effect priorities and change the scope of the project. Over 700 feet of seawalk built on pilings is a costly project. The recommendation is to break it into smaller pieces and look at funding in smaller increments. Staff is directed to come back to the next committee meeting, with some hard numbers. After hearing cost figures and a meeting with Industry about money for the Seawalk, the committee would probably recommend moving ahead with Seawalk as soon as possible. There may be about $70,000 available from Waterfront Planning CIP. Other sources may be available. The Manager will be asked to attend the next Waterfront Committee meeting to discuss the Open Space Acquisition and status of the Merchant’s Wharf property. There is a question about the timeframe for that purchase and the possibility of diverting the 1.3 million for Merchants Wharf to Seawalk funding. Staff is being asked to provide information about Seawalk estimates and other possible funding sources available. Mr. Watt said the entire project could conceivably be completed by the 2007 tourist season.

B. Seawalk
The Seawalk discussion was mainly covered under the CIP Planning and Design items from the Managers Recommendations. The consensus is to fund the project, but the committee will expect more information from staff and a meeting with the cruise industry prior to making specific recommendations to the Assembly.

V. Information Items

FEMA Update
FEMA agreed that community flood insurance program will not be penalized. FEMA will be here to remap the Juneau coastline. CBJ engineering will be working with them to ensure good flood plain maps. This covers all of shoreline and streams in the area of developed Juneau. The Planning Commission will still have jurisdiction over granting the variances. This will not jeopardizing Juneau’s flood plain insurance program.

Subsection of Waterfront Plan information report will be presented at next meeting.

Language in Title 49 on Seawalks needs to be updated due to all the southward development. This info will be presented at next meeting.

VI. Next Meeting
Monday, May 2, Noon – Chambers

VII. Adjournment
Adjourned at 12:50pm.