

**WATERFRONT COMMITTEE
MINUTES
Thursday, September 1, 2005
Conference Room
Albany City Hall-1000 San Pablo Avenue
7:30 p.m.**

Members Present: Steve Granholm
Preston Jordan
Bill Dann
Robert Cheasty
Susan Moffat

Members Absent: Jerri Holan, Billy Blattner
Staff Present: Nicole Almaguer

Others Present: Thelma Rubin, Norman LaForce, Matt Middlebrook, Linda Perry, Water
Transit Authority (2)

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Steve Granholm at 7:35 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Almaguer announced that Coastal Cleanup Day would be held September 17, 2005
8:30am-Noon at the Albany Beach and Waterfront Trail Park.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

V. CONSENT CALENDAR

- a. Approve Minutes from the August meeting (Attachment 1)
Minutes from August meeting, as amended by Moffat, approved with motion by Dann,
seconded by Jordan.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Discuss options for developing a master plan and/or rezoning at the waterfront
Moffat motioned the Committee request City Council start the process for development
of a waterfront master plan funded by the City, independent of any development
proposal. Cheasty seconded the motion.
Moffat stated that many other cities have developed waterfront plans on their own.
Examples were provided at the meeting including the San Francisco Plan for the Central
Waterfront Neighborhood, North Richmond Shoreline Specific Plan, Treasure Island
Plan, and the Alameda Point Preliminary Development Concept Plan.
Moffat would like the City to determine what citizens want and make it real in the form
of a plan and zoning that is not contingent or reactive to a developer.
Dann stated that the plan should consider that the racetrack might leave.

Jordan asked about the timing of developing a plan since a master plan takes a lot of time
to develop, and asked if it would confuse the public if the City initiates something around
the time Caruso comes out with a development proposal.

Dann stated that he hasn't heard Caruso has given any timing.

Granholtm stated that if the Committee passes and sends to City Council and they approve, the items could run concurrently.

Almaguer stated that the plans could run concurrently, and that there could also be an opportunity for the developer to pay for a portion of the overall plan, with the City acting as project manager. The option of developing a master plan is one of the many options being provided to Council at the October meeting. The estimated cost for developing a master plan ranges between \$500,000 to \$1 Million. Timing for a completed plan ranges at about 1 to 1½ years.

Jordan asked what the other options being proposed to the City Council.

Almaguer stated that the options haven't been fully developed, but include developing a master plan for the waterfront, and working with a developer to fund creation of a master plan. The fact sheet and list of options will be made available to the Committee once they have been submitted to City Council.

Moffat stated that she would like to send a simple message to Council that the Committee would like the City to plan its own destiny.

Cheasty stated that having an open forum for the community to discuss visions for the waterfront is something that could be initiated without a decision for the detailed zoning portion. The community dialogue could be the first step towards developing the overall master plan.

Granholtm asked what type of outcome would come out of the community process Cheasty suggested.

Cheasty stated it would not be a binding document but a series of recommendations from the community, and the document would be similar to the proposal developed for the Albany Portion of the Eastshore State Park in 1995.

Moffat stated that the motion stands as stated, and prefers a document that has implementing powers including the zoning factor since vision plans can be derailed.

Zoning is an important component, and the plan would require a vote under Measure C, resulting in a guiding document for the waterfront that is very clear.

Although there was a lot of work put into the Proposal for the Albany Portion of the Eastshore State Park, which is a great plan, a lot of things discussed in the Plan have not occurred. It is important to head towards something concrete such as zoning.

Granholtm stated that the Proposal for the Albany Portion of the Eastshore State Park was the result of a lot of work, and that the City Council approved the document.

Cheasty stated that the State adopted the recommendations within the Albany Portion of the Eastshore State Park, and that the proposal was folded into the Eastshore State Park General Plan.

Comments by the public:

Norman LaForce: Provided detail on the history of previous development proposals at the waterfront. The planning process could be simple, a study area is chosen, and the developer pays for the study if there is a development interest.

Cheasty stated it might turn out that the City is unable or slow in addressing the issue.

The Committee or another group could start the public process and dialogue, creating a forum so the community can discuss visions for the waterfront.

Granholtm stated that this is an alternative to Moffat's previous motion.

Cheasty stated that funding could be a concern, and that the City may not be able to take on developing a master plan since the costs are so significant.

Jordan asked Cheasty's opinion regarding Norman Laforce's statement that the developer could pay for the planning process.

Cheasty responded that the developer could pay for the process, however it is preferred to have a planning process take place independent of a developer so that the process is more

productive, the outcome is not developer bound, and the developer is not upset with a missed outcome.

Granholtm stated there are two options for the Committee to consider: 1) Develop a planning process similar to what was developed for the Proposal for the Albany Portion of Eastshore State Park, or 2) Pursue Moffat's motion to request that the City Council initiate a master plan process for the waterfront, funded by the City, independent of any developer.

Moffat stated that she is reluctant to spend the amount of time the first option would take with the chance that it wouldn't result in action in the long run. The outcome of the planning process needs to be codified and include thorough technical studies of the area to provide information for the public to make educated planning decisions. It is possible the City Council won't take on a master plan, but at least the Committee could send the message of what they would like to see which includes a professionally run process by the City in coordination with an planning firm that could bring out public participation by members of the public that haven't come out yet.

Jordan stated he would like to vote on the motion prior to considering other options.

Granholtm opened up the conversation for another round of comments.

Norman LaForce: What Moffat is talking about is what happened in the 1980's. Santa Fe paid for the process but there was not an outcome because of vote to Measure C. Other developers could pay for a planning process too. Any developer with sophistication would know that the planning process might result in them getting nothing out of it.

Cheasty stated the technical components of the planning process are not as important of a priority, and can first pursue the common interests of the community, then the developer could take on the technical studies/detail that would be required.

Granholtm asked Moffat about the payment options for developing a master plan, and whether it must be independent of a developer.

Moffat stated that she wants it independent of a developer because a lot of people wouldn't see it as legitimate if a developer paid for the process.

Dann stated he is still unclear and would like to table this item until the next meeting.

Granholtm stated the motion is clear and should be voted on. The one difficult item is to not allow developer to provide funding.

Jordan stated it would be ideal for the City to fund the planning process, however if not able to then the developer should be allowed to assist. Jordan is willing to make this statement at the City Council meeting.

Cheasty provided a proposed friendly amendment to Moffat's earlier motion: request that City Council start the community planning process to create a waterfront master plan funded by the City and independent of any development proposal.

Vote: Motion approved unanimously.

Almaguer will draft letter for Granholtm's review and signature.

b. Establishment of an Albany/Berkeley Ferry

Linda Perry was present in Holan's absence to present this agenda item. There is a draft resolution as included in the packets distributed by Perry for the Committee. The resolution requests that City Council ask the Water Transit Authority (WTA) to proceed with its environmental review of ferry service for all sites within Albany and Berkeley in conjunction with the WTA's long range plan to expand ferry service in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Dann discussed an article written by Paul Kamen, member of the City of Berkeley's Waterfront Commission. The article was in the Berkeley Daily Planet and raised concerns regarding the Albany and Gilman ferry sites because the locations would

require up to a mile of dredging. Also, fuel costs to come to the Gilman/Albany locations are higher than that for the University location.

Perry stated that the WTA spent \$14 Million in studies as opposed to the commentary by a single person. All of the sites would be thoroughly studied during the EIR process, and the EIR will provide much more information on all environmental concerns including dredging.

Moffat wants Albany to definitely be considered within the study, and there are many benefits to locating a ferry in Albany in comparison with the perceived issues. The ferry location should be one where the users can walk or bike to, and it could be a good way to connect the Albany area to the larger waterfront.

Perry stated she is supportive of whatever is determined to be the most useful site. Both Transportation and Waterfront Commissions within the City of Berkeley passed the resolution unanimously.

Cheasty thinks locating the ferry within Albany is a bad idea. Berkeley has the existing infrastructure and the Berkeley Marina is a good location. Cheasty would like to make a substitute motion that the City Council does not support WTA including Albany within the study area for potential ferry sites.

Moffat strongly disagrees with Cheasty's statement, as it does not take sustainability into mind, and it is not supportive of transit-oriented development.

Granholtm agrees with Cheasty and thinks a ferry within Albany is a bad idea.

Jordan asked if the WTA would pursue a study for a specific area such as Albany even if they thought it was an unlikely site.

WTA replied that the study would give a lot more information on proposed sites, and it would assist in making an educated choice between sites.

Jordan asked what the alternative sites would be if the Gilman and Buchanan sites were not studied. WTA replied that there are a few different locations at the Berkeley Marina.

Moffat stated she would like to have more information, which would be the result of additional studies by the WTA. Further information would enable a decision to be made on the most sound ferry location. Although the motion may fail, a lot of Albany residents could support the idea of locating a ferry within Albany or Gilman pending further studies.

Cheasty pulled the question. Discussion on the item was stopped.

Vote: In Favor: Moffat, Jordan. Opposed: Dann, Granholtm, Cheasty. Motion failed.

Cheasty motioned the Committee request that City Council request Albany be excluded from consideration as a ferry location in further studies. The motion was not seconded.

- c. Discuss how to obtain funding from East Bay Regional Park District for improvements at Albany Beach and Vicinity

At the August Committee meeting there was a brief discussion regarding Coastal Conservancy funds that could possibly be used for improvements at the beach. Cheasty offered to contact East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) to learn more about this potentially available funding. If funding could be available for Albany Waterfront, Cheasty will alert Granholtm in regards to the process necessary to request funding for Albany, in the past a letter of request was submitted.

Cheasty mentioned that EBRPD is also working to provide a portable restroom at the waterfront.

- d. Bay Trail around Golden Gate Fields (standing agenda item)

Dann commented that the timing of approximately 12-18 months for establishment of an interim trail as presented by Jim Townsend of EBRPD at the August meeting seems too long. Dann would like to have the time frame shortened.

Cheasty agrees that the time frame is too long. Cheasty motioned the Committee request that City Council send a letter to EBRPD indicating the 12-18 month schedule for development of the interim Bay Trail is too long and steps should be taken to shorten the process.

Moffat seconded the motion.

Vote: In Favor: Dann, Cheasty, Granholm, Moffat. Opposed: Jordan.

Middlebrook commented that Golden Gate Fields (GGF) has not seen any plans from EBRPD for the interim trail. The only timing issue would be that the racing season for GGF runs from October – January.

Almaguer will draft a letter for Granholm's signature.

Jordan raised another concern re. the interim Bay Trail in that the trail alignment will cut off vehicular access to the beach area, and he is not sure what would happen to use at the park.

Moffat stated that in the short term it would be ok because of the existing flooding issue if the trail was aligned any closer to the beach area.

- e. Magna/Caruso development update (standing agenda item)

Dann asked if the letter of intent between Caruso and Magna was extended. Middlebrook stated that it was and that Caruso and Magna met and formalized the agreement.

Additionally, the development project in Santa Anita has a plan in place and is currently in the EIR process with entitlements expected by March of 2006.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Discuss opportunities to increase public access to and participation in the planning process for the waterfront

This item was continued to the October meeting.

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Update regarding Land and Water Conservation Fund grant application

IX. POSSIBLE FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Moffat requested that maintenance at the waterfront be put on the next agenda.

Granholm requested the Committee send an email to him regarding any items that should be placed on the October agenda.

- a. Eastshore State Park funding for Albany: list of funding needs

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10pm.