



**MEETING NOTES  
CENTRAL WATERFRONT  
FINANCE & PARTNERSHIPS SUBCOMMITTEE**

**MEETING #5 July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011  
3:30 — 5:00 PM Room #1650, Seattle Municipal Tower**

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**Meeting Attendees**

*Subcommittee Members & Advisors*

- John Nesholm, Co-Chair
- Carol Binder
- Robert Klein
- Kate Joncas
- Maiko Winkler-Chin
- David Moseley
- Catherine Stanford
- Ron Turner
- William Justen
- Thatcher Bailey
- John Finke

*Other Central Waterfront Committee Members*

- Maggie Walker
- Charley Royer

*City Staff & Consultants*

- Hannah McIntosh
  - Marshall Foster
  - Steve Pearce
  - Ken Johnsen
  - Jennifer Wieland
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**Waterfront Programming Input**

\*Subcommittee reviewed & referenced documents including: *Early Concepts Plan for the Waterfront DRAFT & Waterfront Seattle Program—Opportunities & Challenges*

**SCHEDULE FOR PROVIDING INITIAL INPUT ON PROGRAMMING**

- **City Staff:**
  - Today is the first in a round of discussions about programming; The Long Term Stewardship Subcommittee and Design Oversight Subcommittee are having parallel conversations this week.

- We'll provide the Subcommittee's collective comments to the Executive Committee in their meeting on Thursday, July 21<sup>st</sup>; they'll then provide a clear body of feedback.

#### EARLY DESIGN IDEAS/PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES MATRIX

- **City Staff:**
  - Today we've printed out a large copy of the end-to-end early concepts plan draft; the projects group naturally into 15 bundles:
    - Alaskan Way Waterfront, Railroad Way & Stadium Plaza, Pier 48 Fold, Pioneer Square Beach, Colman Dock Fold, East-West Connectors, Colman Dock Landing; Commercial Pier Porch Wrap; Aquarium Plaza; Aquarium Beach; Overlook Fold; Pier 62/63; Bluff Bowtie; Belltown Balcony; The North End.
  - These represent a combination of design team ideas, feedback from community organizations and City staff discussions; our Subcommittee's review is important in providing local input to jcfo.
  - For each category, we've included project elements, sub-projects, program opportunities and program challenges.

#### MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS AND LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES

##### Scale, Activities & Uses

- **City Staff:**
  - Some audiences have highlighted the lack of children's play areas; the Long Term Stewardship Subcommittee also noted the need for interpretational and educational elements.
- **Finance & Partnerships Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Members & Advisors:**
  - If we're thinking of this as a regional or international location, it needs more dimensions. The programming opportunities in this list feel like a local, downtown park.
  - Having a children's play area doesn't seem in quite in line with this as a worldwide destination; at Millennium Park in Chicago, there is no children's play area but a spitting fountain where kids go.
  - Part of our language in talking about the Waterfront is that it has to be created for the locals and used seven days a week; tourists will come because it's uniquely Seattle that way.
  - This area has a long pre-Western past; we should build that history into the Waterfront and our best resource would be a tribe.
- **Consultants:**
  - We are hearing Subcommittees say they want the Waterfront to express something about this place in terms of history, the natural environment and a story.
  - At the same time, they want to create a destination where events and formal ceremonies can happen; Millennium Park is an example that sees both huge events and daily local usage.

##### Retail & Restaurant Uses

- **Finance & Partnerships Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Members & Advisors:**
  - It seems like it makes sense to include larger retail with smaller shops; however, these won't generate an extensive amount of revenue.
  - There are a lot of complex questions around who builds the shell for the retail space and how much rent you can get; the restaurant business is also fickle.

- It would be interesting to talk to the existing restaurants and see what their usage expectations are; it's different with lunch and dinner as a destination.
  - The Waterfront feels like it's a long way from shoppers and destination businesses; the most usage will probably take place in the summertime.
  - When you we have things that are institutional in magnitude, visitors will anticipate that there is retail around them, as well.
  - The biggest access to retail is around Pike Place Market; to get to the Waterfront you've got three blocks of steep slopes to hike down to shop.
  - We could add a view restaurant around Stienbrueck Park; that area does well and the rest of the retail is subsidized by that.
  - Attracting a lot of activity in Pioneer Square is part of a great economic strategy here; this transformation will happen with or without the beach itself.
- **City Staff:**
    - We could have mobile food vending coming and going and be flexible; they can respond to that—rather than having an expensive permanent structure.
    - We have a group that has proposed a farm boat and they'd love to partner with the market; a nursery could also be an incubator, seasonal retail idea.
- **Finance & Partnerships Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Members & Advisors:**
    - We could consider having a lot of infrastructure there that can be used when someone comes up with a great idea.
    - Uses often evolve after the site has been developed, rather than being designed as part of the program.
    - For retail to be successful there would need to be seven days of customers for twelve months a year—whereas, we get the most volume when we have sunshine or special events.
    - These things are minor contributions to help build the case; retail can help defer the ongoing costs, but not pay entirely for them.
    - The guiding principal needs to be that, for those types of uses, they are public uses—they are not revenue generating, but rather an activation strategy.
- **Consultant:**
    - There is a concession in Madison Square Park known as the Shack; it started out being temporary, but it's now open year round—a lot of cool things can be done in temporary spaces.

### Development & Revenue-Generating Opportunities

- **City Staff:**
  - Are there thoughts on revenue generating components that we ought to be taking advantage of? There are some built spaces that grow into design, such as Belltown Balcony.
  - Pier 48 is a major development site on publicly owned property, but we'd have to purchase it for market value from the Washington State Department of Transportation.
  - As we go up the hill, there are some sites closer to the Battery Street Tunnel that could be potentially developed; we have at least one site for affordable housing.
  - We talked about how it could be viable on the Overlook Fold, or we could potentially have housing or front doors on portions of that.
  - We may want to concentrate on developing places where we think retail is the most important; in the matrix with comparable parks, the retail isn't typically revenue generating.

- Phase two of the Highline is an address that people want to be near; there are many well-known architects designing buildings within a stone's throw.
  - The park has galvanized investments in the area, even though it's not very big; there are also a couple of retail uses like a small café and a bar.
  - In our conversations with historic pier owners, we've asked what they would like to see; the next series of conversations needs to be about how they might take on areas of operations and maintenance.
  - Piers are mostly dependent upon tourists; if we make this project blow out of the water, their investment will skyrocket.
- **Finance & Partnerships Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Members & Advisors:**
    - Are there any other major redevelopment opportunities, besides Colman Dock, that could be captured for revenue? How about hotels or motels?
    - Investments like this tend to be long term and transformative; to some extent this is also a phasing issue; the capitol investment will set the groundwork for the transformation later on.
    - Think about money we have to look at each unit—as Pier 48 develops, for example, there are ways to support it.
    - If revenue generation is possible, it seems like it needs to be some variety of the Tax Increment Financing district, but we don't appear to have the great ability to do that.

#### Market Research

- **Finance & Partnerships Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Members & Advisors:**
  - It seems we're lacking a sense of scale, income or feasibility—a pragmatic notion for the first phasing is having marketing person sitting with us who can vet the ideas we throw around.
  - There's a lot of future here but we're not quite sure how to frame it and what the market is; at some place we need a measure of feasibility and market needs.

#### Overlook Fold

- **City Staff:**
  - Many ideas have been bounced around for the Overlook Fold—it's pretty linear but there are viable opportunities for retail.
  - We've also heard suggestions for housing, parking, greenhouses or even a demonstration venue where chefs do hands-on local food demonstrations.
  - The fold goes over the street and 600 feet is covered, which can be a building space underneath; it provides frontage on the street leading to the Aquarium Plaza.
  - The under-area is a large, open volume and we could also have a few floors of parking or office space under the fold; we also have a property west of the roadway that could be parking.
- **Finance & Partnerships Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Members & Advisors:**
  - Considering the number of people we're bringing in to activate this park, we definitely need to look at parking.
  - The elevated quality changes the noise, acoustics, appearance, light and dark; it seems like there is tension compared to earlier concepts.
  - Given the effort to make linear parks for cycles and walking, it seems strange that we're roofing now; what about the experience from north to south?

- **City Staff:**
  - We're organizing north to south so it's a harmonious experience; it complements the fundamental idea that jcfo brought to us for east-west connections into downtown.
  - The idea is also that it's a glass wall, so it's 100 percent façade; we're trying to orient the views to the Olympics.

### Colman Dock

- **City Staff:**
  - One of the components here is the retail edge along Alaskan Way with a covered gallery; the idea is to capture the qualities of great train stations in Europe.
  - We've got shops and restaurants appealing to the people using the terminal; the green space is on top of the structure; we have two pedestrian bridges, possibly integrated into the terminal.
  - We're also considering additional uses that are higher-up, essentially on a second or third level, that could be incorporated.
  - However, it's important to remember, the more that we add on top, the stronger the new pilings will have to be and the more costly they are; the cost range is currently \$15-19 million.
  - We've had ideas for grander things here, such as a community center or an institutional space like a museum; the challenge is it's expensive to develop.
  - This could be a phenomenal place that interprets marine activity; we could have a very interactive experience here.
- **Finance & Partnerships Subcommittee Co-Chairs:**
  - People beeline onto ferry, and then beeline off of it; if we could capture people for a period of time, it could be a decent place to get a drink or linger.
  - From the public we heard that they would like an open space, view corridor—a space to go and have a picnic; it seems like open space here is the best use.
  - If the open space is behind the retail, however, you won't see it easily and people might be hesitant to climb upwards; it doesn't seem like people would go there as a destination.
- **Other Subcommittee Members:**
  - The beach is also right next to it and grass might be very difficult to maintain; but it could be a great place for a lookout.
- **Consultant:**
  - We haven't specified grass here yet; we are developing an entire strategy for materials and plantings and there won't be lawns everywhere.
  - Colman Dock is one of the best opportunities for Waterfront transformation in the world; a lot of airports and train stations are changing their approach to travel to become a destination.
  - The history of Colman Dock is that it was established with that in mind; a big clock and beacon on the Waterfront visible from afar—a destination spot.
  - There is a ramp to the park; entering at the level of the existing pedestrian bridge; instead of being flat, it would be angled as well—we'll do detailed studies in the next phase.

## Pier 48

- **City Staff:**
  - This is where we would have concerts, a rocky beach, and an opportunity for large-scale public restaurants and gatherings.
  - We talked about moving moorage down to Jackson; it's free, short term or maybe on a parking meter-type basis.
  - Historically there was a landing here; we're also considering possibly community or terraced gardens—one question is how far should we go.
- **Finance & Partnerships Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Members & Advisors:**
  - The idea of a beach is very likable; that element needs to be in this project and if that's the logical space, it's terrific.
  - How do we define the size of the amphitheater? And what's underneath it—a restaurant? If there is an amphitheater, does it require infrastructure to support dressing rooms and bathrooms, or is it just temporary items brought in for four to five weeks of concerts?
- **Consultant:**
  - We've heard the public say that they loved the concerts on Pier 62 & 63 but those living nearby found it noisy at night, so we thought Pier 48 might be a better spot.
  - It has excellent access to public transit and the ferry, and it's not far from the parking at the stadiums or Pioneer Square.
  - If the theatre is well programmed it could have a space for bathrooms, showers, storage of chairs; we're also thinking it would be a place for other things like restaurants.
  - Yesterday there was also an interesting conversation about creating a location for boats, kayaks and a short stay marina.
  - You might also consider having stationary historic boats that feature concerts or chamber music, museums or hotels.

## Partnerships

- **Other Subcommittee Members:**
  - For each programming opportunity, we should make a list of five to ten potential partners that can help us do this work.
  - There is also a lot of expertise in this community and people who are doing things successfully; for the people in town who do this, we need to figure out how they do it.
  - Seattle is not used to selling itself to the world; Chicago thinks this way but we have a natural bounty and a feeling that we don't have to promote it.
  - We need to make the case for the public benefit; this project can't fully carry the cost of its own operations and maintenance.
  - Potential partners might include the stadiums, the Seahawks, the Sounders; they also do concerts in their buildings.
  - We could talk to folks at a concert hall and learn more about their parking issues; we could learn more about walkways and transportation.
  - In terms of funding, maybe we could just say we know what this phase will be used for; we just need a partner to come in and invest—maybe that's the way to go.

- However, getting people to invest in property and give us money for that opportunity is not going to happen; we have to come up with some sort of associated tax to accompany it, since almost every idea is an idea that needs to be subsidized.
- **City Staff:**
  - We will add another column to the matrix with a space for possible partnerships.
- **Consultant:**
  - Partnerships are key with a project like this; it's the only way to make it work.

#### Parking

- **Finance & Partnerships Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Members & Advisors:**
  - We also talked about parking and whether we have enough use to generate money to pay for it; in the summertime many people come and park for events and the aquarium.

#### Hot Tubs

- **Finance & Partnerships Subcommittee Co-Chairs:**
  - It doesn't seem like hot tubs are part of our culture; perhaps we could have a fountain? It seems the public would show more support for a continuous beach.

#### Next Steps

- **City Staff:**
  - The key next step will be to marry up partner identification with some of these project elements.