

**NOTE: DUE TO LACK OF QUORUM OFFICAL MINUTES ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR THIS MEETING. THE FOLLOWING REPRESENTS A MEETING SUMMARY ONLY.**

**WATERFRONT COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING – MEETING SUMMARY  
Thursday, April 20, 2006  
Council Chambers  
Albany City Hall-1000 San Pablo Avenue  
7:30 p.m.**

Members Present: Preston Jordan  
Steve Granholm  
Jerri Holan

Members Absent: Susan Moffat  
Billy Blattner  
Robert Cheasty  
Bill Dann

Staff Present: Nicole Almaguer, Ann Chaney

Others Present: Water Transit Authority, URS Consultants

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jordan at 7:40 PM.

**II. STATUS REPORT/DISCUSSION**

- a. Albany/Berkeley Ferry – Presentation by Water Transit Authority and URS Consultants

John Sindzinski, Water Transit Authority (WTA) Manager of Planning and Development provided an introduction regarding the planning process for an Albany/Berkeley ferry. URS Consultants have been retained by WTA to develop the EIR process for locating ferry service. The EIR process was initiated in January 2006. The potential sites include the foot of Buchanan Street in Albany, Gilman Street in Berkeley, and University Avenue. WTA and URS would like to obtain comments and input from the Committee regarding the various potential ferry locations.

WTA staff will be requesting the WTA Board approve retaining a design firm to draft conceptual designs for the various Albany/Berkeley potential terminal locations as lot of issues are dependent upon design, and design constraints for each location will assist in providing further detail to be included in the EIR.

The South San Francisco ferry terminal is in the final EIR stage. Additionally, Richmond and Hercules ferry terminals are being researched.

URS Consultants presented the land issues and water issues for each of the potential Albany/Berkeley ferry sites. Ultimately, all data will be provided to the WTA Board for review and selection of one or more sites to continue pursuing as potential ferry terminal locations.

#### Land Issues

Issues include traffic input and parking availability. The

Buchanan site: has good traffic input from the freeway onramps, and availability of parking, however parking and use of the area is uncertain due to potential development at Golden Gate Fields (GGF).

Gilman site: has traffic congestion, and congested onramps. Additionally, the sports fields being developed will increase traffic and parking demand within the area. The area is confined with the park, sports fields, and GGF. City of Berkeley indicated the sports fields would be active in the mid/late afternoon, and that parking would be at a premium.

University sites: (Berkeley Marina, HS Lordships, and the Nature Center) also have traffic congestion and incomplete ramps/freeway interchange. There is a high parking quantity available at the Marina, which would be enough parking to accommodate ferry patronage numbers until 2025. Approximately 400 weekday, and 200 weekend parking spots are needed. HS Lordships has limited parking, and the Nature Center, also has limited parking and concern of boat wake due to students and Cal Sailing.

WTA finds inter-modal transit as a key component of citing a ferry terminal. Additionally, they aim to have an un-staffed terminal that can be used as an observation area by public, with minimal landside facilities by utilizing nearby facilities at existing buildings.

Holan noted the Berkeley Marina Master Plan has been adopted, and that the Plan does not allow for new buildings, only renovation and maintenance of existing facilities. Holan also noted that the Gilman Street terminal location could be north of the sports fields where there is more room for parking adjacent to GGF. Additionally the south side of GGF has developable area.

#### Water Issues

The key water issues include dredging, impacts to eelgrass, sensitive shorelines and bay fill. The volume of dredging would be minimal at the University sites, and approximately 140,000 yards at either the Gilman or Buchanan sites. Eastshore State Park is not favorable of dredging.

Eelgrass: NOAA fisheries are very protective of eelgrass. Caltrans has an eelgrass mitigation site near Gilman Street, and eelgrass is also found south of Albany beach. Disturbing eelgrass (by creating turbidity) would be determined a significant issue that they would want avoid.

Sensitive shorelines exist along Albany beach and also at the Nature Center/Shoreline Park in Berkeley. Additionally, Cal sailing students pose a safety concern. There are also rafting birds southwest of HS Lordships and southwest of the Gilman site.

Bay fill is considered by BCDC as any shadow over the water. The amount of fill at the Marina site would be minimal since there is an existing dock. Other locations would potentially be subject to some fill.

WTA and URS will soon be meeting with BCDC, Army Corps of Engineers, Fish and Game, NOAA, and other interested agencies to discuss eelgrass and other potential significant issues.

Matt Middlebrook, Caruso Affiliated commented that GGF is interested in ferry service, and if the proposed development at GGF moves forward it would be a significant destination point for riders versus Berkeley terminal locations. Middlebrook encourages WTA to study the sites closer to GGF to ensure the potential is available should development at GGF occur.

Holan stated that the Buchanan Gilman and University – Marina sites be further studied.

Jordan stated the ferry location should not be based purely on environmental constraints, and that a parallel economic study should be conducted.

URS expects to provide a comprehensive report to the WTA Board for decision within the next few months. The Board will determine which sites will be further studied, and whether more than one site will be further studied.

The Notice of Intent is slated for this summer, and will be a joint NEPA/CEQA document. The certifying agency will be the WTA and the FTA.

### III. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30pm.