

St. Petersburg Pier
Pier Advisory Task Force
Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 8, 2009, 3:30pm @ City Hall – Conference Room 100

Task Force Members Present: Johnny Bardine, Brad Bell, Ed Montanari, Paul Hsu, Robby Thompson, Will Michaels, Roy Binger, Tim Bogott, Mark Chmielewski, Leslie Curran, Mark Stroud, Randy Wedding, Russ Bond, Marilyn Olsen, Mike Meidel, Bob Churuti

City Employees Present: Chris Ballestra, Clay Smith, Lynn Gordon, Stephani Esposito, Raul Quintana, Joe Zeoli, Susie Ajoc

Task Force Members Absent: Sid Morgan, DT Minich, Kevin Smith, Richard Gonzmart, Susan Reiter

Other Attendees: Carol Everson, Don Paul, Susan Robertson, Howard Rutherford, Scott Bakos, Steve & Jean Corsetti, Corey Atha

OPENING REMARKS

Meeting was called to order at 3:43pm by Chair Randy Wedding by welcoming Task Force Members, City Staff, and interested citizens.

Acceptance of the agenda for 9/8/09 meeting was motioned by Brad Bell, seconded by Mark Stroud and unanimously approved.

Acceptance of the minutes from 8/11/09 meeting which was motioned for approval by Tim Bogott, seconded by Leslie Curran and unanimously approved.

LEAD CONSULTANT SCOPE REVIEW – SCOTT BAKOS

Mr. Wedding handed the floor over to Chris Ballestra, Director of Downtown Enterprise Facilities. He outlined that the Task Force will give a progress report to City Council on Thursday, September 24. The Chair and Vice Chair along with the consultant present the status of the Task Force and accomplishments to date as well as the direction for future meetings and goals and objectives.

Mr. Ballestra welcomed Scott Bakos of the lead consultant firm Bermello Ajamil & Partners (“BA”). Mr. Bakos has been involved with a variety of Task Forces as well as citizen advisory groups so is familiar with the what is necessary to work together to accomplish the goals and objectives.

Scott Bakos introduced himself and explained that he has been a part of the Bermello Ajamil firm for 15 years. He will bring to the floor a design aspect of this project. He

will help identify areas of opportunity both upland and lowland. Along with data collection, BA will focus on alternatives to report back to the Task Force, working with the entire team for input.

BA plans to interface extensively with key stakeholders like the Task Force, as well as soliciting public input, including collaborative workshops. They want to provide enough information by November. In order to do this they will be monitoring every step of the process.

At this time, Clay Smith distributed the detail of phase 2 and phase 3 of the scope. This itemizes the steps that Bermello Ajamil will go through. Currently phase 1, data collection, is being completed.

City Staff has worked hard to keep the objectives in the fore front as well as the budget. Mr. Ballestra was looking for the Task Forces concurrence that the objectives are being kept in mind throughout the process.

Randy Wedding gave the Task Force some time to review and look over the scope for phase 2 and 3.

At this time Mr. Wedding asked the Task Force if there were questions:

Q: Are these piers that they refer to been worked on by BA?

A: Not necessarily. They felt that the identified piers were the most like our St. Petersburg Pier. They looked at how the piers interacted with the City. Aspects like parking, upland, lowland, waters edge, etc...

Q: Has BA looked into the Economic Development RFPs and how it may or may not relate.

A: BA has the submittals that the City received. They feel that these are important and want to look at existing operations and look at the new alternatives and compare them. They will include the key components of the existing structure. Their goal is to provide this by 9/24/09.

Q: Was phase 2 & 3 prepared by BA? What part will the Task Force take? Are they going to take over and run the project?

A: No. It is the intention of BA to approach this project as a collaborative effort. They are looking for reactions and input. They will provide a schedule and it will be combined and interfaced with the Task Forces objectives and timelines.

Chris Ballestra provided more input and feedback as to the partnership with Bermello Ajamil, City staff and the Task Force.

Q: How will BA quantify the objectives?

A: BA always tries to provide a matrix that helps to identify the key issues. A matrix with a point system has worked well on other BA projects.

Mr. Ballestra explained that we will start off with a lot of alternatives but will then narrow it down. Ultimately, multiple redevelopment alternatives will be provided to Mayor and Council for their review.

Q: How is the selection of the market study to be determined (section 3.1)?

A: BA means that when they work with the City that also means the Task Force. BA doesn't work in a vacuum. They will seek the input of all key personnel ie. City staff and Task Force.

Q: There is a concern that the objectives of the Task Force will not be addressed and they will not be included in the decision making process.

A: That will not happen. City staff and the Task Force will be included in the process all the way.

Q: What about budgetary costs and spending? Did we negotiate with BA on the price?

Raul Quintana, Engineering, provided the answer:

A: If anyone on the Task Force would like to see the detail of the negotiations they are welcome to. It provides details like hourly rates, the number of man hours projected, etc... The City felt that it was acceptable and within fair market value.

Q: From a design perspective is BA looking to go "historical" or "modern"?

A: BA will engage the community with themes. It may ultimately be indicative to the geographic area. ie. Nautical, maritime, etc... They plan to keep it in phase 3 for the conceptual aspect. They will provide 3 or 4 themes or vernaculars to get the input and reaction of the Task Force as well as the community.

Q: Will BA maintain a comprehensive waterfront plan?

A: BA wants to look at how all aspects inter-relate with each other.

Q: Is there any aspect of this plan that the 2 parties (City staff and BA) don't see eye to eye? Will there be any surprises?

A: BA feels that both parties have addressed any areas that could be a trouble spot.

A comment was made by Leslie Curran. She wanted to be sure that BA is going to be utilizing the existing data such as Pier Visioning and public input sessions that we already have as well as add additional ones.

1971 PIER DESIGN REVIEW – BILL HARVARD JR

The existing structure was used to create a sculptural solution as it is today. The unusual building has five levels open to the public. The design keeps the main pier open with the base structural support on 60 x 60 feet square and each successive floor expands in an inverted pyramid for to produce the greatest floor area at the top of the building. This design allowed for the weight of the structure on the center 4 pilings

which were driven down 60 feet into bedrock, surrounded by layers of sheet pilings including poured in place concrete.

The first level was a glassed in lobby area with glass “rain curtain” extending upward to the second floor. The second floor was to be used for exhibitions, art shows, etc... The third floor is 10,000 SF and can be used for a multitude of things though is constrained in terms of open space by two elevator shafts in the center. The fourth level is a restaurant, cocktail lounge and banquet facility which currently houses the Columbia restaurant. It also takes advantage of a greater view because of the higher elevation. The fifth level was a sun deck, promenade and glass enclosed observation deck. It was designed to enclose the area for future expansion. The sixth level was strictly used for mechanical equipment but could support an additional retail area.

Why was the old (“million dollar”) pier torn down? The old pier needed extensive renovation and repairs. The consensus was that the new pier should be designed as an icon – specifically identifiable to the City of St Petersburg.

The retail enhancements came later along with the waterfront park and waterfront design.

The 3,600 SF core’s stability should not be in question but will require a full structural analysis if it is to be retained. It is the approach and the surrounding pier head that is rapidly deteriorating according to City engineering.

The project had identified transportation issues during design, and the challenges with access given the length of the approach. As noted, a gondola was considered in one design exercise to make access easier, even “Disneyesque”, but was dropped due to budget constraints. Bill Harvard Jr. noted that that distance and the transportation to it continues to be a “weak link” as it was in 1971.

COUNCIL WORKSHOP 9/24 PROGRESS REPORT PRESENTATION REVIEW

The Task Force will present a progress report to City Council on Thursday, September 24. Chris Ballestra laid out the format: Chair Randy Wedding and Vice Chair Ed Montanari will present to Council what the status of the Task Force is, what steps have been taken and offer an overall outline of the how the process will proceed. They will then have Scott Bakos and Luis Ajamil from BA present to City Council as well. They will provide an overview of who BA is and what they will be doing with this project.

Randy Wedding reiterated to the Task Force that the schedule of events has been outlined and it is very important that we follow the timeline and should try to avoid requesting changes to deadlines or due dates. He asked the Task Force if there were any questions or concerns and if there were any objections. There were none.

Mr. Ballestra explained that BA is on schedule as it has been laid out and is comfortable with their ability to meet it. Activities will ramp up very quickly following their 10/1 task order approval (pending) from Council.

OTHER TOPICS

A question was asked with regard to reducing or eliminating the \$1.6 million subsidy. Leslie Curran answered that during the budget process the City always looks at ways that can and will eliminate the subsidy.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Chair Randy Wedding asked the Task Force if there were any subcommittee reports.

Design

The Marine Science Community (SRI, NOAA, Pier Aquarium and USF) came to the 8/31 Design subcommittee meeting to present their idea for the re-design and re-development of the Pier to accommodate a Marine Science Center.

Finance

No report at this time.

Economic Impact

The economic impact subcommittee is anxiously awaiting the determination of whether BA will address the economic development study themselves or if they will incorporate the RFPs that the City has received.

Land Use & Environmental

No report at this time.

OPEN FORUM

Citizen Steve and Jean Corsetti feels that the Task Force is doing a great job moving forward with this project. He is especially excited about the aspect of using community input and involvement.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Randy Wedding offered to the Task Force that they review and reflect on the scope to determine if there are any additional comments. Please email City staff.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion for adjournment was made by Tim Bogott and seconded by Leslie Curran. Meeting adjourned at 5:09pm.