Berkeley Waterfront Community Coalition Meeting 1

Meeting Minutes

Feb 15, 3:30 pm
Sports Basement

Present: Carol Walk, Carla Woodworth, Erin Diehm, Zora Whitfield, Frank Hoenack, Steve Sylvester, Paul Kamen, Prester Wilson, David Fielder, Kelly Hammergren, Ed Schlesinger, Gary Casterline, Kweli Kitwana, Camille Antinori, David Fraser

Agenda

Introductions

- Welcome and purpose of BWCC, goals of the meeting
- Participant Introductions

Discussion

A. Participants were asked to consider what parts of the marina are most important to you, for example, facilities like parking or aspects of the marina like tranquility. What parts of the marina are the most critical to preserve? What parts of the marina are the most critical to advocate for?
    a. **Community members stated that the following were important to them and worth preserving:**
    b. Access & Affordability: Easy and affordable access to marina amenities, including parking, recreational activities, and programs, while maintaining a low-cost, nonprofit-oriented culture.
    c. Cultural and Historical Preservation: Maintaining the marina's unique culture of nonprofits, community-oriented environment, and landmarks.
    d. Environmental Stewardship: Protecting the natural landscape, tranquility, and environmentally friendly practices.
    e. Participants want to preserve the marinas, landscape, resources, programs, environment, accessibility, and affordability.
    f. Community members advocate for:
    g. Maintaining and expanding access to the marina's recreation and amenities for all users.
    h. Transparency about Marina plans and funding.
    i. Plans & developments improve access and quality of life, benefit the broader community's needs, and outweigh environmental and recreational impacts.
    j. Maintaining the non-commercial and nonprofit culture of the marina.

B. Participants are asked, "Do you support the Ferry?" What would change your view?

a. Some participants support expanding transportation access, especially regional connections, and increasing access to the waterfront. Additionally, some participants support innovative ideas and developments at the marina.
b. Some community members who support the Ferry Plan oppose plans that lack community participation, transparency, ethical implementation, thorough research, minimal impact on marina users and the environment, and clear evidence that access to resources and recreation is preserved while providing benefits to marina users.

C. Participants are asked: Do you oppose the Ferry? What would change your view?

a. Some community members are hesitant to oppose the Ferry Plan due to limited information. The Ferry could benefit the community, and broader engagement is needed to assess its impacts and benefits fully.
b. Some participants oppose the Ferry Plan because of insufficient research into environmental, transportation, financial, recreational, and cultural impacts, as well as limited information, community engagement, and transparency. This raises concerns about equity and inclusion, and about whether the plan reflects local needs, leading to distrust of decision-makers.
c. Some community members oppose the plan to preserve the marina's nonprofit and affordable character and prevent commercialization. Additionally, participants oppose developments that reduce access to amenities, such as fishing areas and parking.
d. Some community members who oppose the plan would support a Ferry Plan that
    i. Includes a full assessment of dredging, turbidity, shallow water, and ecological impacts; protects water quality and the South Basin experience; provides clear mitigation plans; and ensures environmentally responsible ferry operations
    ii. Ensures transparency and meaningful engagement of marina users. Demonstrates how the plan benefits the entire marina community (not just commuters).
    iii. Provides a thorough financial analysis and addresses non-financial impacts.
    iv. Addresses other marina issues, including replacing the pier and considering a smaller-scale ferry.

D. Participants were asked: What are your visions for the future of the waterfront?

a. Participants envision a waterfront that is planned and communicated openly and neutrally, addressing key community priorities, including financial transparency, equity, environmental impacts, costs, and noise. They want personal experiences and the marina's role in sustenance, recreation, and shared interests to be recognized, while also engaging local businesses and ensuring the needs of all users, including families, nonprofits, live-aboard residents, and those who rely on the marina for work, are considered.

E. **FAQ: Reactions? What surprised you? What do you want to know more about?**

a. Many participants expressed concerns about equity and want clarification on how decisions are made within both the coalition and the Ferry Plan. They emphasized the need to include more people, noting that focusing only on the ferry will not engage a broad range of community members. General access issues, such as parking, motivated

attendance, and there is concern about potential charges for recreational features like the Adventure Playground. Participants want clarity on how equity shapes planning, including how amenities like the pier and recreational areas are considered.

b. Cost and financial transparency were also concerns. Participants questioned who will pay for the plan, where the money will go, and how it will affect the city budget, emphasizing the need for clear financial details. There is also uncertainty about whether 2015enough people will use the space or services, like the ferry, to justify the expense.
c. Parking concerns were raised because most ferry users are commuters, which may limit access for recreational visitors. Time limits or fees could make participation in activities difficult and lead to congestion in recreation lots.
d. Finally, participants emphasized the need for transparency and a centralized information source so the community can understand the marina plans and their impacts. They stressed engaging more people, especially recreational visitors, and recognized the importance of hearing diverse voices while not getting ahead of the environmental review (EIR) process.

F. Next Steps: next BWCC meeting March 8 to discuss EIR, to be released Feb 27 with 45 days to comment publicly.

At the end, points that people seemed to rally around:

- We see the waterfront as a place of access to the water, along a coastline where there are very few places to access the shoreline fully. The space is important in its support for nonprofits and its social atmosphere in a low-cost environment. And undeveloped nature of the marina. People are inspired by a sense of equitable access where it exists at the marina, places like Adventure Playground and the pier when it was open. These things are getting edged out by the ferry plan. We are concerned and want to know more about how they will be impacted by the pier.
- Environmental issues: there is the massive amounts of dredging, a problem in its own right but also the churning of ferry traffic (8 departures in am, 6 in pm) will affect all watersports, fishing, and habitat. Not only that, people go there for sustenance and are concerned about the disturbance of the peaceful nature of the area.
- Not avoid the numbers: a lot of costs are involved. Let's talk about those and who pays what.
- Let's be open to how others are thinking about the plan and the marina. How do we engage more diversity in the marina? Let's think about transportation disadvantages that some people have, a lack of access to the water. What can non-watersports people do? What's missing right now is the pier. This was of paramount importance as a fishing pier. What about the kite festival? A ferry is a beautiful experience on the Bay - can we create access to this recreationally? On a reasonable scale, without losing everything else?

Sticky Note Comments

i. In 2015, the pier shut down to push for the program's replacement. We will pay for it, i.e., the wall.

ii. Why ruin a million-dollar view that is available to everyone? Once gone, it is gone.
iii. Why commit to a million-dollar view when, for the same price, you can just build a new pier that can be paid off?
iv. Ideas
    1. Small ferries inside the harbor
    2. MOU*
    3. Free parking
    4. Free shuttle
v. Berkeley is considering a $ 300 million bond measure for November 2026 to repair existing infrastructure for Parks and recreation and the waterfront.
vi. We need to hear more voices from community members
vii. Community outreach and planning strategy are needed
viii. Clarify which council members are making decisions and name them
ix. Make it clear what people can take
x. Infographic to simplify info on FAQ
xi. I want to see the vision for the waterfront include a focus on nature - to make it a world-class destination that celebrates nature,to bring in children, to educate, and create nature/based destinations that educate and support nature, especially birds.
xii. Budget by department line item
xiii. Holding the government accountable and establishing lines of accountability for people making decisions