

Communications

From: Wu, Grace
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 11:02 AM
Cc: Miller, Roger
Subject: FW: Waterfront Specific Plan - Item 9 - Presentation at the PRW Commission meeting - Wed - May 10 - 7pm - Frances Albrier Ctr - 2800 Park St
Attachments: 09 BWSP_BMASP DRAFT SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT.pdf

Dear Planning Commissioners,

As mentioned at our May 3rd meeting, a reminder that the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission will be receiving a presentation on the latest proposed Waterfront Specific Plan **this evening starting at 7pm at the Frances Albrier Community Center** (2800 Park St.)

See below and attached for more information. We are also anticipating an update from Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront staff at our next Planning Commission meeting on June 7th.

Sincerely,

Grace

From: Miller, Roger
Sent: Tuesday, May 9, 2023 6:16 PM
To: Wu, Grace <GWu@cityofberkeley.info>
Cc: Ferris, Scott <SFerris@cityofberkeley.info>; Erickson, Christina <CErickson@cityofberkeley.info>; Endress, Alexandra <AEndress@berkeleyca.gov>
Subject: Waterfront Specific Plan - Item 9 - Presentation at the PRW Commission meeting - Wed - May 10 - 7pm - Frances Albrier Ctr - 2800 Park St

Internal

Hi Grace,

On Wednesday, May 10, 2023, our Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission will have their regular monthly meeting at the Frances Albrier Community Center, 2800 Park St.

We have an item on the agenda that will present the latest on the proposed new Waterfront Specific Plan, as follows:

Item 9. **Presentation/Action – Waterfront Specific Plan [Webinar 1](#)^[1] and [Webinar 2](#)^[2] and subcommittee report***
(Abshez/Cox/Diehm/Kawczynska).*

The presentation is based on the presentation that we shared with Council on March 20, 2023, and then again at two community workshops on May 1 and May 3 with some small updates to the slides. Attached to this email is the PRW subcommittee draft report on the Waterfront Specific Plan.

Can you share this with the Planning Commissioners in case they would like to see this item at the PRW Commission at the Albrier Center?

The link to the full PRW Commission May 10 agenda is shown below:

To: Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission
From: Roger Miller, Secretary, Parks and Waterfront Commission

The next regular meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission will be on Wednesday, May 10, 2023, 7pm – 9pm.

Please note that this will be a regular in-person meeting at the **Frances Albrier Community Ctr, large auditorium**, 2800 Park St, Berkeley, CA 94702. Masks are not required, but are recommended.

To view the agenda, please visit the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Commission webpage and scroll down to the regular meeting agenda for 05-10-2023 at the following https link:

<https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/boards-commissions/parks-recreation-and-waterfront-commission>
(note: remember to press CONTROL and CLICK to access the commission webpage above).

Roger Miller
Secretary, Parks and Waterfront Commission
2180 Milvia St, third floor
Berkeley, CA 94704
(510) 981-6704
rmiller@cityofberkeley.info

[1] <https://berkeleyca.gov/community-recreation/events/waterfront-specific-plan-webinar-1>

[2] <https://berkeleyca.gov/community-recreation/events/waterfront-specific-plan-webinar-2>

**PARKS, RECREATION & WATERFRONT COMMISSION
REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL
REGARDING
BERKELEY WATERFRONT AREA SPECIFIC PLAN**

I. Fiscal Recommendations

- A. The Commission is concerned that the Marina Fund concept is unsustainable as it presently exists. The Marina Fund should not be burdened by non-Marina expenses including street maintenance, trash collection, the maintenance of Cesar Chavez Park, special events and recreational programs. Non-Marina costs should be reassigned to Parks Department and Public Works Department budgets.
- B. A life-cycle Asset Management Program for the Marina assets should be created. Net revenue from Marina commercial uses, slip rentals, and Marina hotel operations (including Transient Occupancy Tax) should be dedicated to the Marina Fund and the Asset Management Program.
- C. Existing infrastructure needs of the Marina discussed in Section VII should be addressed by the City Council through the Marina Fund.

II. Specific Plan Vision

- A. The Berkeley Waterfront Area is a municipal treasure and regional asset reflecting years of public investment, community initiative, creativity and activism.
- B. The contributions and interests of existing Waterfront Area organizations and users to the vitality and existing experience of the Waterfront Area should be recognized and supported.
- C. The Specific Plan should preserve, protect and enhance the best aspects of the existing waterfront experience, but can support additional responsibly planned uses and activities that will invite new and diverse users. Carefully planned uses, investments, and activities can make the Berkeley Waterfront Area a still greater and broader resource to the Berkeley community and the Bay Area.
- D. The Berkeley Waterfront Area lies within a global diversity hotspot, and certain areas of the Berkeley Waterfront Area have significant ecological value that should be protected and enhanced.
- E. The Berkeley Kite Festival is recognized as one of the greatest kite festivals in the United States and should be strongly supported by the City.
- F. The Berkeley Waterfront Area has lacked a comprehensive vision and plan that maximizes its recreational, environmental, tourism, and economic development potential, which the Specific Plan should address.
- G. The Berkeley Waterfront Area is in need of additional public and private investment to maintain its utility, attractiveness and environmental value, as well as to invite new and diverse users.

**PARKS, RECREATION & WATERFRONT COMMISSION
REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL
REGARDING
BERKELEY WATERFRONT AREA SPECIFIC PLAN**

III. Planning Principles

- A. Adopt a Specific Plan that will be flexible and adaptable to community interests over time without having to be frequently reopened.
- B. Adopt a Specific Plan that will be administratively easy to implement and that will thereby attract public and private investment.
- C. Recognize that the Berkeley Waterfront Area requires key infrastructure investments that must be prioritized.
 - 1. The Marina must be dredged to be functional
 - 2. The South Basin must be dredged to be functional
- D. Identify key areas of ecological value throughout the Waterfront Area and ensure their protection and enhancement.
- E. Encourage a broader variety of recreational activities, visitor-serving and hospitality uses that complement the natural environment.
- F. Require that new development be consistent with the highest design and environmental standards, including actively protecting and complementing the nearby natural environment.
- G. The Specific Plan should maximize access to the shoreline area with a continuous shoreline corridor activated with amenities, appropriate uses and opportunities to engage the water.
- H. Link all areas of the Waterfront for accessibility, including the perimeter trail at CCP with the pedestrian bridge and beyond to facilities east of I-80, including Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program (BORP) and Aquatic Park.
- I. Adopt generalized planning guidelines and design standards that address potential development sites, preserve the Berkeley Waterfront Area's scenic and ecological values, but that are subject to future site-specific evaluation when development proposals emerge.
- J. Refrain from terminating existing leases before replacement uses and projects are identified. Do not extend long extend long term leases for areas that are designated for potential redevelopment.
- K. Improve the dirt pathway along Marina Blvd, making the connection to the park safer and more inviting. Make sure it is ADA accessible.
- L. Consider the implications of Climate Change and Sea Level Rise.

**PARKS, RECREATION & WATERFRONT COMMISSION
REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL
REGARDING
BERKELEY WATERFRONT AREA SPECIFIC PLAN**

M. Consider opportunities to add wind and solar power features to the Waterfront Area.

IV. Cesar Chavez Park

A. Cesar Chavez Park is the City's largest park and is an important resource and opportunity. Cesar Chavez Park is also the most utilized public attraction within the Waterfront Area. As part of the Specific Plan, a comprehensive master plan for the Park should be developed, including a master landscape plan that will increase the Park's biodiversity, scenic attraction, and the number of sheltered areas. A list of permitted and prohibited activities should be included.

B. The 17-acre Off-Leash Area of Cesar Chavez Park is an important City-wide amenity. The Off-Leash Area is also a core use of the Park.

1. The boundaries of the Off-Leash Area (OLA) should be appropriately fenced to protect sensitive ecological areas and marked to deter off-leash activity in Park areas not intended for that purpose.

2. A mowing plan should be adopted for the entirety of Cesar Chavez Park that contains a schedule, and a viable and sustainable foxtail management program and native grass seeding plan, as well as shrubs and other native vegetation.

3. The Off-Leash Area should be dedicated to the memory of Cesar Chavez's dogs, Boycott and Huelga (Strike), with a public artwork memorial.

4. Add bulletin board improvements, including Park maps depicting the boundaries of the Off-Leash Area.

5. The Off-Leash Area hills provide visitors with panoramic views and could be vastly improved by complementary amenities, including boulders, features that people can sit on, strawbales, and appropriately located seating walls and artwork.

6. City of Berkeley should not use the Off-Leash Area to dump wood chips, in not only makes many areas unusable for dogs and people but also covers native burrowing bee habitats.

C. The landscaping biodiversity of the Park should be increased to improve its ecological value, scenic diversity, and attractiveness.

1. Background

a) The Waterfront Area is biologically rich, with more than 946 unique species documented to date, including 215 species of birds and 151

**PARKS, RECREATION & WATERFRONT COMMISSION
REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL
REGARDING
BERKELEY WATERFRONT AREA SPECIFIC PLAN**

species of insects, and that cities are increasingly recognized as important places for biodiversity conservation.

b) North America bird populations have declined 29% since the 1970s, that 2/3rds of the remaining birds are at risk of extinction, and that several threatened avian species are documented at the Waterfront, including 2 Federally listed Species (Brown Pelican, Least Tern) and 3 Species of Special Concern (White-tail Kites, Northern Harriers, Burrowing Owls)

c) There has been a 33% decline of butterflies and moth populations since 1999, with an ongoing decline of 2% per year, and global declines of insects up to 75% or more (known as the "Insect Apocalypse")

d) The Waterfront is ecologically connected with nearby Aquatic Park, Eastshore State Park, the Albany Bulb and beyond, and connections between patches are a critical element in urban biodiversity. Promote landscape and aquatic connectivity as a key design principle.

e) Access to nature is an equity issue.

f) More biodiverse green spaces are a public health benefit, and deliver greater benefits for children's cognitive development.

2. Create unstructured natural spaces filled with native vegetation that reflect California's 30x30 and Biodiversity Initiative guidelines and goals.

3. Add wayfaring and interpretative signage such as bird and wildlife identification as well as panoramic landmark signage along perimeter trail and elsewhere.

4. Improve the westernmost dirt pathways and provide more seating opportunities.

5. Working with the Shorebird Nature Center, identify a list of species - abundant and declining/disappeared - to support, including the vegetation/structures needed. Utilize Citizen Science platforms like iNaturalist and eBird to identify a core set of insects, birds, and amphibians to support.

D. Great design should be a hallmark of all future Park improvements, while maintaining the "wildness" of its character.

1. Create a "go-to" experiences not unlike the public's attraction to California Super Blooms and "Pollinator Mega-Gardens."

2. Provide more and better picnicking amenities, integrated with landscaping and topography to provide shade and shelter from windy conditions.

**PARKS, RECREATION & WATERFRONT COMMISSION
REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL
REGARDING
BERKELEY WATERFRONT AREA SPECIFIC PLAN**

3. Provide more seating areas and benches along walkways for people to rest and enjoy the views.
4. Enliven the Park with public art.
5. Enhance ADA access to Cesar Chavez Park. ADA trails should be added.
6. Soften the land/water edge in areas where it is deemed appropriate.
7. Additional public uses and amenities (including temporary uses and pop-up amenities) should be introduced in or proximate to Cesar Chavez Park that complement and support existing uses, and that invite broader use of the Park by the public, including parents and children.
 - a) A public café.
 - b) A nature interpretive center.
 - c) Public bike rental and support facilities
 - d) A kayak rental facility and launch ramp
 - e) An outdoor activity and adventure center for children and teens; perhaps including outdoor camping facilities.
 - f) Areas for outdoor weddings and private events.
8. As the Park is the City's largest public open space, well-planned festivals and events should be considered on a case-by-case basis.
9. Allow (by reconsidering the new higher fees) public safety groups, such as the ham radio operators, that provide such a valuable safety service to the COB, to use certain areas of the park for their annual practice sessions (as they used to do.)

V. Waterfront Area Development

A. Commercial/Retail Uses

1. Existing Inventory [quantifications to be confirmed]
 - a) Privately operated buildings in the Waterfront Area contain more than 20,000 square feet of indoor space and over 10,000 square feet of outdoor space available for meetings, events, and private dining.
2. Additional Commercial/Retail Uses

**PARKS, RECREATION & WATERFRONT COMMISSION
REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL
REGARDING
BERKELEY WATERFRONT AREA SPECIFIC PLAN**

- a) Authorize an additional total of 12,000 square feet of commercial/retail uses for a total of 32,000 square feet of commercial/retail uses in new, redeveloped and reconfigured spaces.
- b) Encourage commercial and retail uses that feature local businesses, products and art.
- c) Encourage pop-up rentals.
- d) Encourage food trucks where built-service is less available or less adequate.

B. Hotels

1. Existing Inventory [quantifications to be confirmed]

- a) The 378-room DoubleTree Hotel provides visitor-serving accommodations, and includes 24 meeting rooms and 14,000 square feet of event space, with capacity for 850 guests. The Berkeley Yacht Club and OCSC both rent their facilities for smaller events (less than 150 guests).

2. Additional Hotel facilities

- a) Authorize up to 200 new hotel rooms (and ancillary facilities/amenities) in addition to the 378 rooms of the Doubletree Hotel in existing new and redeveloped space for a total of 578 hotel rooms within the Berkeley Waterfront Area Specific Plan in new, redeveloped and/or reconfigured space in areas identified for commercial/retail development.

C. Commercial/Retail/Hospitality Site Planning

- 1. Identify generalized areas where commercial/retail/hotel development is permitted subject to future site-specific proposals and environmental review.
- 2. To encourage the highest quality and creativity in commercial/retail/hotel proposals in areas where commercial/retail/hotel development is permitted, allow use proposers to provide their own siting and design proposals consistent with the Specific Plan's generalized guidelines.
- 3. Encourage synergies with major Waterfront Area attractions, such as the Pier, Cesar Chavez Park, the Marina, and the water's edge.
- 4. Establish appropriate height limit zones to guide future site-specific proposals.

D. Public Facilities

**PARKS, RECREATION & WATERFRONT COMMISSION
REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL
REGARDING
BERKELEY WATERFRONT AREA SPECIFIC PLAN**

1. Existing Inventory [to be confirmed]
 - a) The City of Berkeley occupies nearly 13,000 square feet of floor area in several Waterfront Area buildings for administrative offices and equipment storage. Public facilities in the planning area include the waterfront office, corporation yard, and the ground floor of 125-127 University Avenue, which will soon be occupied by the Berkeley Police Department's Traffic Bureau.
 - b) [Shorebird Park and Nature Center, Adventure Playground, and children's playground]
 - c) The Berkeley Yacht Club, OCSC Sailing, Cal Adventures, and Cal Sailing—occupy landside facilities that total nearly 10,000 square feet of building area.
 - d) The Berkeley Marine Center operates a boatyard, chandlery, and fuel dock, while the Berkeley Marina Sportsmans Center operates a bait and tackle shop. Together, these marina-related commercial uses occupy close to 10,000 square feet of building area and lease over five acres of land area.
2. Additional Public Facilities to be Authorized
 - a) Provide a dedicated windsurfing launch facility
 - b) Consider creating a sandy beach accessible to children and swimmers

E. Private Facilities

1. Existing Inventory [quantities to be confirmed]
 - a) The second floor of the two-story, City-owned building at 125-127 University Avenue contains 6,000 square feet of rentable floor area leased to several office tenants, including two small financial services firms and a nonprofit advocacy organization.

VI. The Pier

- A. A new Berkeley pier should be a centerpiece of the Specific Plan and associated recreational and visitor-serving uses.

VII. Seawall Drive

- A. Revetment-fronting parking along Seawall Drive should be eliminated.

**PARKS, RECREATION & WATERFRONT COMMISSION
REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL
REGARDING
BERKELEY WATERFRONT AREA SPECIFIC PLAN**

B. A landscaped pedestrian promenade and bikeway should extend along Seawall Drive with appropriate visitor-serving uses located close to the Pier.

VIII. Marina Docks and Berthing Slips

A. Berkeley Marina has 15 publicly owned docks with more than 1000 slips. But the Berkeley Marine Center leases A Dock, with its 44 slips, from the city.

B. Recreational vessels in California and Alameda have decreased by 20%. Berkeley's marina has smaller slips, 48% are less than 30 ft in length. The market trend is towards larger vessels.

C. We recommend that as docks reach the end of their useful life, that the slips be reconfigured to address this market demand for boats greater than 35 ft in length.

D. We also recommend that an asset management plan, as well as a Marina Area 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan be created.

VIII. South Sailing Basin

The existing infrastructure needs of the sailing South Basin should be addressed as part of Marina infrastructure, in fiscal planning, prioritize the maintenance of operational facilities.

IX. Parking & Circulation

A. Cesar Chavez Park-serving parking should be free at all times.

B. Trailer parking should be limited along Spinnaker Way

C. Consider expanding the amount of publicly-available parking in the lots that are currently reserved for slipholders during appropriate periods.

D. A continuous bikeway should be improved around the perimeter of the Waterfront Area, supported by family-friendly bike rental facilities.

E. Consider a water taxi/ferry to create a pedestrian and bike ferry across the Marina channel.

X. Process for implementing the Plan

A. Uses authorized by the Specific Plan should be subject to site-specific review and approval by the Planning Commission with lease review by the City Council.

B. New public recreation uses and amenities should be subject to review and approval by the Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission.

**PARKS, RECREATION & WATERFRONT COMMISSION
REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL
REGARDING
BERKELEY WATERFRONT AREA SPECIFIC PLAN**

C. Temporary activities, events and concerts in public recreation areas should be subject to review and approval by the Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Commission.

DRAFT