

BERKELEY PIER/FERRY FEASIBILITY STUDY

Community Meeting #1 | January 21, 2021

Breakout Room 1 | Community Comments Received

Summary of Key Ideas

- Heard people express concerns about winter storm directions from directions other than the west and southwest
- Need to make sure all the different uses harmonize;
 - Concern about impacts to recreational activities southwest quadrant
 - Bike and other traffic passing through boat launch area
- Concerns about environmental impacts from ferry itself, other activities
- Questions about the viability of ferry service as a major commuting option

Chat Comments Received via Direct Message

“The green dotted line for bike on your pkg and mobility slide is ill-placed. along that water front is a ton of foot traffic and people crossing this path to put boats and windsurf boards in water Bikers should NOT be encouraged to ride through there.”

“I like Example C. I don't think existing traffic in the federal navigation channel is all that significant. In the many years I've been kayaking and sailing in that area the main boats using the channel are the existing ferries. It also seems this example offers the best protection from southern storm swells. Question: what were the swells like during this recent wind storm which was directly out of the north?”

Discussion Notes

- Comment
 - Here to observe and find out more
 - The example that conflicts with boat traffic might be complicated, and something on the other side might be better
 - Hoping to talk more about funding at future meetings
- Comment
 - Fishhook design looks really interesting
 - Reminds me of the fishing pier in San Francisco near Fisherman's Wharf at Aquatic Park
 - See a lot of nice things about all designs
 - I'm a bicyclist as well, and am interested in ideas about bicycle access
- Comment

- Sailboat owner and member of Berkeley Yacht club
- Miss the pier, love the idea of creating a new project
- Curious about the viability of ferry service going into the city (how many people are likely to use it?)
- From other locations, it really cuts down on commute time; curious if the same is true here
- Is this tested/modeled to look at the effects of each of the configurations?
- What kinds of vessels are we looking at? High-speed hydrofoils to compete with BART?
- Comment
 - Was on the bay windsurfing earlier this week
 - Resident of Berkeley for 40 years
 - Sailing in that area for 30 years
 - Example D: Anything that impacts the southwest quadrant is of concern to me
 - Appreciate that plans have been modified/changed/enahcned after focus groups
 - Like C – like the flexibility, like that it has minimal impacts to southwest quadrant
 - Concerned that the winter storms also come in straight broadside to the pier; breakwater might not adequately mitigate
 - Concerned about the threat of dredging; closer to the channel, the better
 - Want to make sure the current users of the park are not displaced
- Comment
 - Love the idea of a ferry
 - Very excited to see another way to transport and commute across the day
 - Like C and E – perhaps pointing the fishhook the other way might be good too; would better deal with winter storms
 - Agree that minimizing dredging is key
 - Excited to have a ferry come to Berkeley
- Comment
 - Family is extremely heavy users of the marina; saw signs in Cesar Chavez for this event
 - Really miss the pier as a place to walk and take visitors to the area
 - Thrilled about the idea to redevelop
 - Idea of a straight-shot to San Francisco is really exciting
 - Not a big water user, as others are; anything that protects the adventure playground is key

- If there's a way for the project to bring more users to the parks around the adventure playground, that would be great
 - Any design that helps get people from UC Berkeley and downtown straight onto the ferry
 - Seamless, stable, reliable, convenient transportation connections are important
- Comment
 - Active member of Cal sailing club
 - Really like the fishhook design; very interesting, given that we're going to have increased intensity of storms in the future, deflecting waves (and therefore prolonging the life of the project) would be great
 - Curious about winter storm patterns; seems that they also come up from the south, but also the north and the east as well
 - Echo the comment that the southern swell needs to be anticipated
 - Also like the fishhook because it curves away from Skates; want to preserve the view, so that Skates can remain a reliable revenue source for the Marina
 - Anything that encourages more bikes to come along the south side of the waterfront
 - Sailing clubs in that area are very heavily used, and are unique in offering sailing instruction that is accessible for low-income residents
 - Want to make sure plans are respectful of those uses
 - People bring boats and windsurf boards with boards on top of their head; having a bike whizzing by is dangerous
 - Parking – if you want to have people down there engaging in water sports, it takes time to load gear, etc.
 - Limited space; will there be free parking? Low cost parking?
- Comment
 - Have some experience matching commercial ferries with recreational activities
 - Northside configuration is the best; keeps segregation between the recreation users on the south side and ferry traffic
 - Would suggest coupling the fishhook idea with the anchor idea, and angle the dock more southwards
 - The fishhook design: lots of recreational users might also want to be in the calm harbor area
 - Echo that parking is always a challenge in the marina; with ferry added, it's going to be a nightmare

- How do you deal with the homeland security aspect of it? At other locations, the gangway is restricted until the ferry shows up; how does that work with a mixed use dock?
 - Comment
 - Some concerns about wildlife, and the impact this is going to have on wildlife, and the cumulative impact that the WETA ferry service is going to have on wildlife
 - Noise and acoustic energy stresses out marine life
 - Also concerned about the impact on bird life
 - Could incorporate space for cormorants in an improved pier design
 - Worried that we're too focused on human needs
 - In the face of climate change, it's unethical not to think about and prioritize that
 - One of the things contributing to the decline of birds and insects is light at night, which disrupts migration and reproduction
 - Worried about the impact on the natural world
 - Can't have any additional permeable surfaces added; have to work with what is already in place
 - This is a park; careful not to turn this into a transportation sub
 - A fully-loaded BART train car carries 5 ferries worth of people; have to question spending so much on something that is not really public transport
 - Comment
 - I use that park every single day; don't know that much about the water currents, but am concerned about impacts to wildlife (including people)
 - Fresh air is limited
 - Need to consider impacts to animals
 - I hear the need for money, but there are other potential sources of funding
 - If the project does happen, there needs to be protection built in that addresses threat to wildlife
 - Pollution is also a potential issue
 - Comment
 - Very very exciting project
 - No comments on any particular designs at this point
 - Safety is of paramount concern
 - Compelled by concerns about keeping space available for other users on the water
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- Comment
 - Has the Audubon society been consulted about this?
 - Financial needs at the marina – are there any other options for meeting those needs?
- Comment
 - Having a ferry as part of the pier restoration is a “sexy” idea, but that doesn’t mean that it’s a good idea. Would love to see some options that don’t involve ferry service
 - Although it brings lots of money to an area of the city that needs it.
 - There’s been a huge increase in the usage of the waterfront by people from throughout the region
 - City should consider providing direct resources to support the waterfront, since it’s so valuable and attracts people from all over
 - Want to see example F that shows the development of the waterfront without the ferry service – could work as a “control” for the study
- Comment
 - Struck by the comment “shouldn’t be turning a park into a transit hub”
 - Already went through this process years ago; only difference is the city’s need to replace the pier
 - Used to be a sight-seeing amenity; expect that’s what it would be
 - Why would you take a ferry instead of BART?
 - Other ferries have shut down; not an economic option for commuters
 - This is a recreational amenity, and I question the viability of the ferry
- Comment
 - Counterpoint – ferry ridership has grown over the years; as BART is more and more crowded and the roads are more crowded, it has shown there can be real demand
 - Plus, dense new housing nearby has been struggling for access to BART; this could provide a closer alternative to get to San Francisco
 - It is partly “if you build it, they will come”
 - Other ferry terminals have shown that they get ridership
- Comment
 - Echo that comment – only aware of one publicly accessible ferry that currently operates out of the marina
 - Ridership fees of that service are out of reach for most people, and it’s a small boat that is exposed
 - I’m a commuter; I would much rather be on a ferry than crushed on BART

- A ferry gives you a chance to relax, read a book, and do things that aren't possible on BART
- Plus, this is another way to take cars off the road
- Comment
 - Financial thoughts: WETA is being funded through regional measure 3 (increased bridge tolls), which generates \$4.5b
 - BART is getting \$500m, and ferry is getting \$450m
 - Really concerned about climate change, and forest fires
 - One of the things we want to do is get people out of their cars
 - Should have an excellent shuttle service; would rather see the money be spent on other transportation improvements
 - We need to get people out of their cars; at the end of the day, this isn't a good allocation of money if it only serves 1,600 people per day
- Comment
 - Observation: for the very first time about 2 weeks ago, we saw a huge sealion come in to the area near Cal Sailing Club
 - Used to getting harbor seals, but this was the first time seeing a sealion
 - It's a shallow area; there's also an eelgrass bed at the end of Ashby Ave; that's a key part of the ecosystem of the bay
 - Plus lots of fish and birds
- Comment
 - Following up on whether there are options that don't include the ferry
 - Excited about the placemaking aspect of the pier/ferry project; could that still be achieved without the ferry service?
- Comment
 - I know you don't want any economic surprises
 - WETA has cheaper rates because they are subsidized by the public
 - Would again argue that A, B, and D are all lacking breakwaters protecting from southerly storms; that's a real problem for me
 - I'm pretty comfortable with C, in many ways – minimal dredging, minimal breakwater issues; no impact on southwest quadrant
 - But then, you get into the economics
 - Really a sightseeing amenity, not a true commuter service
- Comment
 - Agree that I like C; concentrates all of the activity and noise in an area that is already being used by boats; allows the southwest section to remain free for other uses
 - Mostly will be a sightseeing amenity

- Ultimately, talking about a small percentage of ridership even at max capacity
- Urban planning is always a matter of trade-offs; what are we trading off to put this in, and what will the long-term impacts be?
- Why no T1 money used on this? The city should look at other alternative ways of making funding happen
 - Can say that we can't do it without WETA, but that's not true; if there is public will, we can create a new source of revenue
- Comment
 - Concerned that option B will have too many uses in close contact with each other
 - Should shift into bay

Quick show of hands: which example do you prefer?

- No new pier: 2 (one of these two voted for twice, for no pier, or option B or C)
- Example A: 0
- Example B: 2-3
- Example C: 7-8
- Example D: 0