

SAN FRANCISCO BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

50 California Street • Suite 2600 • San Francisco, California 94111 • (415) 352-3600 • Fax: (415) 352-3606 • www.bcdc.ca.gov

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TO: All Design Review Board Members

FROM: Will Travis, Executive Director [415/352-3653 travis@bcdc.ca.gov]
Ming Yeung, Coastal Planning Analyst [415/352-3616 mingy@bcdc.ca.gov]
Brad McCrea, Bay Design Analyst [415/352-3615 bradm@bcdc.ca.gov]

SUBJECT: **Pier 5 Outdoor Dining Canopy Enclosure, Lafitte Restaurant and Port of San Francisco, City and County of San Francisco (First Review)**
(For Board consideration on November 9, 2009)

Project Summary

Applicants. San Francisco Waterfront Partners, LLC and the Port of San Francisco.

Project Representatives. Simon Snellgrove, San Francisco Waterfront Partners, LLC.

Site. The project site consists of the northern end of the Pier 5 bulkhead building, located northwest of the Ferry Building along the Embarcadero, within the City and County of San Francisco. The project site is bounded by Herb Caen Way to the west, the Pier 7 Public Fishing Pier entrance plaza to the north, Pier 5 to the south, and the "PortWalk" waterfront promenade to the east.

Project Background. The Pier 5 bulkhead building was renovated as part of the Piers 1½, 3 and 5 Preservation Project, which the Commission approved on August 12, 2003 and which consisted of the conversion of the pier buildings to a mixture of office, restaurant/café, and retail uses. As part of that permit, the Commission approved the use of an approximately 1,318-square-foot area of dedicated public access along Herb Caen Way and north of the Pier 5 bulkhead building for outdoor dining associated with the restaurant at Pier 5. The permit requires that the outdoor dining be made open to the general public as well as restaurant patrons, subject to appropriate Alcohol Beverage Control segregation measures. BCDC Permit No. 8-90, which designates the area as public access, further limits the outdoor dining area to a 23.5-foot by 46.5-foot area north of the bulkhead building, 6.5 feet from the face of the building along Herb Caen Way. At the end of five years, all outdoor dining in this area is required to terminate, to accommodate the likely increase in public access users along the Embarcadero.

Proposed Project. The applicants are proposing outdoor dining within the entire 1,318-square-foot public access space authorized in the BCDC permits described above. However, the applicants seek to enclose approximately 752 square feet of the space north of the Pier 5 bulkhead building with a fabric tent weather enclosure that would not be available for public access use. This area would be enclosed with articulated metal privacy panels to a height of approximately two feet from the ground that



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would screen the area below tabletops and provide integrated heating. Light weight metal posts would extend upward from the panels to support a shallow sloped fabric canopy cover that would be located approximately nine feet from the ground and slope to a height of 12 feet adjacent to the pier building. Perimeter transparent roll-down vinyl screens are proposed at the uppermost portion of the canopy at a height of approximately eight feet from the ground that would be drawn down during inclement weather. Immediately west of the enclosed canopy area and along the façade of Pier 5 on Herb Caen Way, outdoor public dining is proposed. This area would be demarcated with planters and consist of tables, chairs, and umbrellas similar to the outdoor seating improvements found at the existing Plant Café at Pier 3. Public signage would be installed to indicate that the tables and chairs are available for public use and could be placed either on the planters, on the tables, or both.

Additional Public Access Improvements. To offset for the loss of the approximately 752-square-foot public access area that would be enclosed with a canopy cover, the applicants are proposing improvements within the Pier 7 wharf area. The improvements are intended to further enliven the Pier 7 area for public access use and to draw a diversity of users to the site. The improvements include: (1) installing Ipe bench slats on top of the four existing concrete plinths in front of Pier 7 to slightly raise the level of the concrete plinths and to provide more attractive and comfortable seating; (2) installing three fixed tables and chairs north of Pier 7 and the JcDecaux public toilet that would consist of chess/checker tabletops to attract a diversity of users; (3) installing two new U-shaped steel bike racks in front of the Pier 5 building along Herb Caen Way; (4) installing signage adjacent to the Pier 7 access to the PortWalk (the public access walkway along the Bay behind Pier 5 and Pier 3); and (5) relocating the black and white pylon sign along Herb Caen Way to be in line with the lightpoles, consistent with the Port of San Francisco's proposed Embarcadero Design Standards.

Design Review Board Issues. The staff believes that in reviewing the proposed project the Board should consider the following issues:

1. Proposed Embarcadero Promenade Standards. On October 5, 2009, the Design Review Board (DRB) and the Port of San Francisco's Waterfront Design Advisory Committee (WDAC) reviewed draft design standards for the Embarcadero Promenade, prepared by the Port of San Francisco. The standards are intended to provide guidance on the types and conditions under which tenant improvements of public space should be allowed, and to adopt standards for other publicly supplied street furnishings along the Embarcadero promenade. The "Outdoor Dining Weather Protection" section suggests that weather protection for restaurant and café tenants may be acceptable in certain locations along the Embarcadero, including the north edge of the Pier 5 bulkhead building, subject to standards that include:

- A maximum 14-foot height from ground to peak of canopy roof;
- Improvements shall not extend greater than 25 feet horizontally from the side of the bulkhead;
- Fixed vertical panels shall not exceed 30 inches in height;
- Panels above 30 inches including the roof shall be of fabric or similar material;
- The area between 30 inches and eight feet high shall be transparent;
- Improvements shall be set in from the edge of the bulkhead building so as to create a lesser horizontal dimension than the adjacent bulkhead building; and
- Improvements shall not detract from the historic industrial character of the waterfront.

Although the proposed Embarcadero Promenade Standards have not yet been officially adopted, the Board may consider these standards in reviewing whether the applicant's proposed canopy enclosure is consistent with the waterfront and the Embarcadero Promenade Standards' project

goal. The proposed canopy enclosure would be consistent with the height limits proposed in the Promenade Standards. At the October 5 design review meeting, the reviewers were supportive of the enclosures as a tool to activate adjacent spaces, stated the necessity of the panels being transparent, and noted the desire to have the fabric and other canopy elements be white or off-white in color.

The Board's advice is sought on whether the proposed canopy enclosure would be consistent with the standards requiring transparency and whether or not the improvements would detract from the historic industrial character of the waterfront.

2. **BCDC Public Access Design Guidelines.** The Commission's *Public Access Design Guidelines* state that public access should "feel public", be designed "...so that the user is not intimidated nor is the user's appreciation diminished by...structures, or incompatible uses" and that there should be visual cues that public access is available for the public's use by "...using site furnishings, such as benches, trash containers and lighting..." The *Public Access Design Guidelines* further state that public access areas "should be designed for a wide range of users...", should "maximiz[e] user comfort by designing for weather and day and night use..." and that "...each site's historical, cultural and natural attributes provide opportunities for creating projects with a 'sense of place' and a unique identity."

The Board's advice is sought on whether the design of the proposed canopy enclosure still makes the Pier 7 wharf area "feel public" and provides adequate visual access to the Bay. For example, do the proposed public access improvements (Ipe wood decking, new tables and chairs and bike racks) help to enliven the area and attract a diversity of users? Are there enough visual cues, such as the planters, tables, chairs, signs, and other design treatments that make the public seating area adjacent to the enclosed private dining area feel inviting to the public?