SAN FRANCISCO BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
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TO: All Design Review Board Members

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SUBJECT: Seaplane Lagoon Ferry Terminal; First Pre-Application Review
(For Board consideration on June 7, 2016)

Project Summary

Project Proponents. City of Alameda and Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA)

Project Representatives. Jennifer Ott, City of Alameda; Kevin Connolly, WETA; April Philips, April Philips Design Works (Landscape Designer); Dilip Trivedi, Moffatt & Nichol (Marine Engineer)

Project Site. The proposed ferry terminal would be located along Ferry Point Road on the eastern end of the Seaplane Lagoon, in the City of Alameda, Alameda County (Exhibit 2). The project site is within the area of the former Alameda Naval Air Station, most of which is proposed for redevelopment into a mixed-use neighborhood and nature preserve known as Alameda Point (Exhibit 3). The proposed project is located directly south of the site proposed for the first of the redevelopment projects ("Site A," see Exhibit 5). The Board conducted its first pre-application review of the waterfront park at the Site A development on April 11, 2016. The existing industrial area directly to the east of the proposed terminal is also planned for redevelopment into a commercial center (Exhibits 4 and 13).

Project Description. The proposed project involves the removal of a 3,800-square-foot dilapidated pier, and the construction of a 8,806-square-foot ferry terminal, consisting of a covered pier structure, gangway, and passenger ferry float. The entry to the terminal would be located adjacent to a newly created 26-foot-wide, 970-foot-long pedestrian promenade adjacent to the water. A separated bike trail and a redesigned road would be constructed inland of this pedestrian promenade. Outside of BCDC's 100-foot shoreline band jurisdiction would be a 400-stall parking lot to serve the proposed ferry terminal. A bus shelter and a bus turnaround would also be constructed directly south of the proposed terminal (Exhibits 6 and 11).

The site east of the proposed ferry terminal, including the area with associated temporary landside improvements, is expected to be redeveloped in approximately 10 years as a commercial district. As it is envisioned in the City's master plan for Alameda Point, in the future, a permanent pedestrian promenade would be constructed in place of the one proposed, and Ferry Point Road would be rebuilt inland to allow for the construction of structures for commercial and retail uses as close as 20 feet to the edge of the shoreline (Exhibit 14). The parking lot would also be relocated from the location proposed, either to an area directly along the waterfront to the south or within the proposed commercial district to the east (Exhibit 4).

Because the project proponents anticipate that the area inland of the proposed ferry terminal will be entirely redeveloped in approximately 10 years, the proposed design contains a mix of permanent and temporary components. The terminal itself is a permanent structure with an anticipated life of 50 years. The entrance to the ferry pier would be built higher (at +13 NAVD88) than the existing grade (+10.91 NAVD88) with steps and ADA-accessible ramps on each side of the structure (Exhibit 9). The intent of the elevated entrance is to allow for the structure to be level with the future grade when future work is undertaken to armor the shoreline and possibly raise the grade of the site. The ferry terminal would contain benches along the pier to be kept open to the public at all times (a security gate would be installed at the top of the gangway and closed when the terminal is not in use).

The proposed landside facilities and public access improvements have been designed with the intent that they will be removed in 10 years or so to allow for site redevelopment and, thus, they are designed as temporary improvements. The pedestrian promenade, bike path, and crosswalks would be delineated by decorative pavement paint and planter boxes. Movable planter boxes with trees would also be used to enhance the parking lot. The project proponent proposes to install clusters of benches at five points along the promenade, and at a bus drop-off adjacent to the terminal entrance. The 12-foot-wide bike trail would connect to the Site A development to the north, and terminate at the ferry terminal. It would have a 3-foot-wide painted buffer separating it from the roadway (Exhibit 10).

San Francisco Bay Plan Policies. The Bay Plan **Public Access** policies state, in part:

> (1) "maximum feasible access to and along the waterfront…should be provided in and through every new development in the Bay or on the shoreline;" (2) "[p]ublic access improvements…should be consistent with the project and the physical environment, including protection of Bay natural resources….[and] should be designed and built to encourage diverse Bay-related activities and movement to and along the shoreline, should permit barrier free access for persons with disabilities to the maximum feasible extent, should include an ongoing maintenance program, and should be identified with appropriate signs;" (3) "[a]ccess to and along the waterfront should be provided by walkways, trails, or other appropriate means and connect to the nearest public thoroughfare where convenient parking or public transportation may be available. Diverse and interesting public access experiences should be provided which would encourage users to remain in the designated access areas to avoid or minimize potential adverse effects on wildlife and their habitat;" (4) "[p]ublic access should be sited, designed, managed and maintained to avoid significant adverse impacts from sea level rise and shoreline flooding;" and (5) "[t]he Public Access Design Guidelines ["Guidelines"] should be used as a guide to siting and designing public access consistent with a proposed project."

The Public Access Guidelines provide, in part, that access should feel public, be designed so as not to intimidate visitors, and include visual cues to the public that make the area appear welcoming by incorporating seating, trash containers, and lighting.

The Bay Plan **Appearance, Design and Scenic Views** policies state, in part:

> (1) "[a]ll bayfront development should be designed to enhance the pleasure of the user or viewer of the Bay;" (2) "maximum efforts should be made to provide, enhance, or preserve views of the Bay and shoreline, especially from public areas, from the Bay itself, and from the opposite shore;" (3) [s]horeline developments should be built in clusters, leaving open area around them to permit more frequent views of the Bay;" and (4) "structures near…the Bay should be designed as landmarks that suggest the location of the waterfront when it is not visible, especially in flat areas."

The Bay Plan **Transportation** policies state, in part:

> (4) "Transportation projects on the Bay shoreline and bridges over the Bay or certain waterways should include pedestrian and bicycle paths that will either be a part of the Bay trail or connect the Bay Trail with other regional and community trails. Transportation projects should be designed to maintain and enhance visual and physical access to the Bay and along the Bay Shoreline;" and (5) "Wherever possible terminals should be located near higher density, mixed-use development served by public transit. Terminal parking facilities should be set back from the shoreline to allow for public access and enjoyment of the Bay."

Design Review Issues. The Commission staff seeks the Design Review Board's advice on the following issues:

1. **Public Access Areas.** The proposed project includes public access improvements that are primarily intended to be temporary in nature, as the entire area is expected to be redeveloped in approximately 10 years. These improvements include a shoreline promenade, with seating areas and planter boxes; a ferry plaza, with a covered transit shelter; and a bike path. Most all of the proposed public access improvements, with the exception of the covered pier area with benches, would be interim.

   Would the proposed project provide adequate, usable, and attractive public access areas appropriate to the development of the site? Is the proposed public access sufficient to accommodate the expected level of use? Are appropriate site amenities provided? Would the proposed design facilitate maximum public use during both commute and non-commute hours? Are there opportunities to provide additional public access to and/or over the water? Would the temporary improvements be adequate and attractive over the course of the anticipated 10-year life of the project, and possibly beyond?

2. **Circulation.** As proposed, a 26-foot-wide pedestrian promenade would be located along the shoreline, and a 12-foot-wide bicycle path would run between the promenade and Ferry Point Road. Both paths terminate at the ferry plaza (Exhibit 7).

   Are the pedestrian and bicycle connections to and along the shoreline adequate and appropriately sited? Are the facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists sufficient? Would the facilities provide adequate connections to both the future development at Alameda Point and to other areas in the City?

3. **Views.** The proposed ferry terminal is designed with a covered pier, gangway, and floating dock in order to protect passengers from the weather.

   How does the proposed project affect public views of the Seaplane Lagoon and the Bay beyond? Is the ferry terminal design compatible with protecting public views from the shoreline? Are there alternative designs that would minimize potential view impacts while still providing weather protection for ferry riders?

4. **Future Permanent Public Access Areas.** As described above, the majority of public access improvements that would be provided as part of the proposed project are temporary in nature, as the shoreline area inland of the proposed ferry terminal is anticipated to be redeveloped in approximately 10 years' time. The City's master plan for Alameda Point envisions a minimum 20-foot-wide pedestrian promenade, just inland of which would be buildings with retail and cafes, flexible plaza spaces, and pocket parks.

   Given the anticipated development and associated level of use in the future, is adequate space allotted to serve the likely demand from ferry riders, residents, workers, shoppers, and other members of the public? What would be an appropriate configuration for the public access areas after the area is redeveloped? What elements or public access improvements should be provided along this stretch of redeveloped shoreline?