

# San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

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June 29, 2023

**TO:** Design Review Board Members

**FROM:** Lawrence J. Goldzband, Executive Director (415/352-3653; larry.goldzband@bcdc.ca.gov)  
Ashley Tomerlin, Senior Bay Dev. Design Analyst (415/352-3657; ashley.tomerlin@bcdc.ca.gov)

**SUBJECT: Draft Summary of the April 10, 2023 Joint BCDC Design Review Board Meeting with the Port of San Francisco Waterfront Design Advisory Board**

1. **Call to Order and Meeting Procedure Review.** Design Review Board (DRB) Chair Jacinta McCann called the hybrid meeting to order on Zoom, at approximately 5:00 p.m.

BCDC Board Members in attendance included Board Chair Jacinta McCann, Board Vice Chair Gary Strang and Board Members Kristen Hall, Tom Leader, Stephan Pellegrini and Bob Battalio. SF Port Waterfront Advisory Committee in attendance included Kathrin Moore; Laura Crescimano; Rich Sucre.

BCDC staff in attendance included Ashley Tomerlin, Yuriko Jewett, and Katharine Pan. Port of San Francisco staff in attendance included Dan Hodapp, Ryan Wasserman, and Mark Paez.

## **San Francisco Ferry Plaza Project Proponents**

Carl Cade – Hudson Pacific Properties

Jane Connors – Hudson Pacific Properties

Lada Kocherovsky – Page & Turnbull, Project Architect

Sarah Kuehl – EinwillerKuehl, Landscape Architect

DRB Chair McCann briefly reviewed the meeting protocols.

2. **Staff Update.** Ashley Tomerlin introduced Yuriko Jewett, the new Bay Development Design Analyst who will be working with her on the technical team. Ms. Jewett previously held roles at BCDC with the long-range planning and shoreline development teams.

3. **Ferry Building and Ferry Plaza Alterations in the City of San Francisco, San Francisco County (First Pre-Application review).** The first pre-application review of the proposal involves alterations to the San Francisco Ferry Building and adjoining Ferry Plaza that would affect existing public access areas along the building's exterior and in the plaza.

a. **Staff Presentation.** Katharine Pan provided a staff introduction to the project site and context.

b. **Project Presentation.** Lada Kocherovsky and Sarah Kuehl provided an overview, with a slide presentation, of project goals, background, local context, existing site conditions, and a detailed description of the proposed project.

**DRB MEETING SUMMARY**  
**APRIL 10, 2023**

c. **Board Questions.** Following the presentation, the WDAC joined the DRB and asked a series of clarifying questions.

**(1) Ferry Building – clarifications for proposed alterations and programming**

What are the materials of the canopy and structure?

What is meant when the design team is referencing “light touch”?

Will the north and south arcades be consistent in design?

Is the area under the arcade dedicated public access?

How tall is the canopy structure on the west side of the building?

Can you clarify the bump outs on the east side of the building and the heights of the soffits?

Is it intended for there to be two separate café spaces behind the partitions?

In the main east/west breezeway, what separates the bayfront kitchens from the required public access walkway?

Do you have any renderings of the west frontage with the north arcade enclosures closed?

Are there requirements for public space in the building where the existing open interior seating areas are being converted to the bayfront kitchens?

**(2) Ferry Plaza – Clarifications for Proposed Alterations and Programming**

(a) Will the market remain a similar size?

Where is the farmers market located now in relation to the proposed gateway sign.

Does Hudson have design standards for dining area furnishings for tenants to use?

What is the frequency and intent around the proposed light poles and banner posts?

Would the Ferry Plaza retail kiosk be open at night?

What are the challenges of the existing plaza for the neighbors?

How can the plaza relate to the varied architecture and uses of the adjacent buildings in a wholistic manner?

What relationship is envisioned between One Ferry Plaza East and the work included in this proposal?

What is the character of the transition between WETA Plaza and the south promenade and Ferry Plaza?

How does the surface design for the driveway relate to the existing waterfront materials? Does it compete with adjacent design treatments?

Is there any consideration for the continuation of the southern walkway beyond One Ferry Plaza East to the end of the platform?

**(3) Wayfinding and Circulation to the Site**

(a) What is the expected level of traffic for the One Ferry Plaza East building?

(b) What is the anticipated level of vehicular use on the driveway? Can the paving treatment feel more pedestrian and less vehicular?

(c) How are the 9 loading spaces adjacent to the Ferry Plaza used?

**d. Public Comment**

(1) Public comment letter (attached). Foodwise (formally CUESA). Farmer's Market Operator.

(2) Public comment letter (attached). Telegraph Hill Dwellers.

(3) Public comment in the room. Katherine Petrin, San Francisco Architectural Heritage.

(4) The San Francisco Architectural Heritage (SFAH) is citywide organization that advocates for historic resources. The project sponsor presented the project to SFAH, and SFAH issued a letter requesting clarification regarding public access and circulation, the limitation of public space, balance of uses and maintaining the historic significance of the building. A letter of support for the project from SFAH has not been issued, but the commenter noted that this presentation has been informative.

(5) Public comment in the room. Christine Farren, Foodwise (formally CUESA). Farmer's Market Operator. Foodwise has brought food education programming to the Ferry Building for more than 20 years. In general, there is support for the project, but the organization is concerned about the design and placement of the kiosk and other fixed elements that when stacked together will make it difficult for the farmer's market to operate as it does today.

(6) Public comment online. Alec Bash, Gateway Tenants Association. The GTA has been pleased with the Ferry Building operations over the years, specifically with how they respond to the shifting economy brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic. The commenter agreed with the design concept having a "light touch" to the building and emphasized the need for more openness in the public areas, not limited to public access areas, is important in addressing various conditions of the space, including inclement weather.

(7) Public comment online. Bob Harrer, Barbary Coast Neighborhood Association. The commenter noted that the ferry building is a real asset to the city and felt that the improvements proposed will expand the usable spaces. The commenter also noted that the project will broaden its appeal to wide range of customers and be able to compete with other large-scale development being proposed along the waterfront.

e. **Board Discussion.** The Board discussed how the project addresses the seven objectives for public access found in the Public Access Design Guidelines as well as the following specific topics.

(1) How does the project proposal result in public spaces that “feel public,” and does the project proposal allow for the shoreline to be enjoyed by the greatest number of people?

(2) Do the alterations sufficiently maintain or enhance connectivity to and along the shoreline? Are the enhancements and programming compatible with the existing structures and uses in the area? Are there any potential issues or concerns to be mindful of as the concept develops?

(3) Does the enclosure of the private dining areas on the East Promenade for the Bay Front Kitchens enhance activation and support inviting and usable public access areas? Is it necessary to enclose the private dining areas?

(4) Are the alterations on the Ferry Plaza sufficiently flexible to accommodate the variety of proposed programming while maintaining usable public access for existing user groups?

(5) Are the improvements proposed for the Ferry Plaza likely to be successful in attracting additional visitors to use the space during non-market days, afternoons, and evenings?

(6) What additional details about the programming of the perimeter easement activation zone in the South Promenade are needed to understand the potential for use conflicts, circulation issues, and benefits for public access?

(7) Are there additional improvements that could improve the public access experience?

f. **Summary of Key Issues.** The following are the key issues that were raised throughout the joint group discussion and supporting comments:

(1) **Overall.** Key directions and clarifications.

(a) A further level of refinement to understand how all the proposed elements and interventions compliment and work together with existing elements and uses.

(b) Quantify or otherwise specify changes from publicly usable spaces and amenities to privatized spaces (square footage, number of seats, etc.) and where public amenities will be relocated.

(c) Metrics to evaluate the level of use for ferry services and how it relates to the proposal at hand.

(d) Rely on the gravitas of the architecture and permanent materials of building and plaza to set the public tone; rely on the more temporal and private uses to provide playful elements.

(e) Do not let two projects happen on this site. It needs to feel like one public place. Approach holistically and establish a framework that can be continued on the east side of the plaza and along the south promenade. Ensuring that the space transitions seamlessly from interior to exterior and public to private.

(f) The approach to these spaces should be strategic and tactical as well as consistent.

(2) **Equity and Publicness.** Balancing the space for everyone.

(a) Concern that the project is moving away from the publicness of the spaces. If there is a reduction of public space then metrics should be required, so that public space can be reassigned and reused.

(b) Tourists and residents need to be on equal footing for this special space.

(c) How can the project ensure that the market will not be priced out through the revitalization of the building.

(d) Many spaces are liminal spaces, not entirely public or private. It would be a loss if there's less interior public space.

(e) People watching should not be a paid activity. Outdoor dining seems to take over the public space – maintain public access spaces in desirable locations and the publicness of the Embarcadero frontage. Incorporate public seating with the private seating.

(f) Distribution of available public seating should be balanced with tenant areas inside and outside.

(g) Stressing human comfort is important. Microclimates are different throughout the site and the provision of seating types should align with those conditions.

(3) **Activation.** Discussion of programmatic elements.

(a) Provide context for what the existing space is now and that will establish the frame of reference. The existing layout of the farmers market and porticos should be shown. Demonstrating the transformation of use throughout the day would be helpful for next time.

(b) What is retail now? What is retail going to be in the future? Discuss next set of evolutions of retail needs and the implications on spatial needs.

(c) Market Hall concept is not working well right now. There is not a lot of public seating. More clarity around public and private seating areas.

(d) Rely on vendors for playfulness of the space. Have vendors create their own identities within the civic space of the Ferry Building/Plaza with furniture color and identification for example.

(4) **Circulation and Connectivity.** Approaching the space from all directions.

(a) Members noted the importance of the transportation program that the plaza supports, and that the space plays a significant role in making connections to all modes of transit. Members expressed concerns with the transition from public transportation hub to more private uses.

(b) The two-axes proposed could be better connected with other physical elements such as site furnishings. If the project is embracing the second crossroads, that node needs more substance.

(c) Concerns that the axis element over emphasizes the building core, need to celebrate the other smaller spaces/nooks and crannies.

**(5) Orientation and Wayfinding.** New signage, lighting, and ground texture.

(a) With historic landmarks, the building should be the focus, not signage. Highlight of the wayfinding is the building itself and balance with signage is necessary.

(b) New gateway signage. Study what can be done as an alternative. Is that sign necessary or can something else accomplish the same and make more sense.

(c) Define desire lines and what will draw people to the Ferry Plaza and beyond.

(d) Explore other lighting scenarios. A lantern scenario, or lighting that is “lower” and more at the human scale is needed. Some sort of marker needs to be in place to address height of lighting.

(e) New ground surface textures. There is too much reliance on pattern on the ground. Unrelated to context of site.

(f) Gandhi statue location. This could be a significant wayfinding beacon. Members were not in agreement on where it could be placed and requested further study.

**(6) Building/Historic Preservation.** Reinvigoration is the key to historic preservation.

(a) Materiality. All members stressed they need to see more of the materials being proposed. It doesn’t read well from the drawings provided.

(b) Arcade space. General favor toward simplifying/decluttering the space but wary of the enclosure and privatization. Need to understand details of glazing systems. Enclosure of arcades and part of the portico diminishes the permeability of space and the transition zone between public street and market hall.

(c) Agreement that a “light touch” is needed so not to disturb the historic significance of the building.

(d) More detail on the Bay Kitchens enclosures and operations, and impacts to public circulation and public use.

**(7) Plaza and South Promenade.**

(a) New programs/interventions need to relate to the existing context (WETA plaza, Golden Gate Ferry terminal, restaurant and BART structure, Embarcadero) to create a unified site. More detail on how the plaza interfaces with adjacent structures and uses.

(b) What is driving the location of the kiosk? How does it relate physically and programmatically to the existing uses and adjacent structures in the back plaza? Provide more detail on massing, operations, enclosures, etc.

(c) The layout of the farmers and the proposed south promenade needs to be further clarified.

(d) How is the plaza hospitable and inviting when there is no program? Is more green space appropriate?

(e) How does this space work at night. Show more ideas here. Also address human safety.

(f) The plaza space is divided in two due to the vacancy at One Ferry Plaza and limit of work for this project. This should be addressed.

g. **Project Proponent Response.** The project proponent noted that many questions and comments were received, and they varied in opinion. BCDC and Port staff agreed to meet internally to resolve and consolidate design direction for the future Board meeting.

4. **Meeting Adjournment.** Vice Chair Strand made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Commissioner Hall. Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

April 8, 2023

SF Bay Conservation and Development Commission  
BCDC Design Review Board  
SF Port Waterfront Design Advisory Committee  
375 Beale Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
(Via email: [publiccomment@bcdc.ca.gov](mailto:publiccomment@bcdc.ca.gov))



RE: Comments on Ferry Building and Ferry Plaza Proposed Changes

Dear Chair and Members, BCDC Design Review Board, and Chair and Members, SF Port Waterfront Design Advisory Committee,

Since 1994, Foodwise (formerly CUESA) has operated world-class farmers markets and education programs to connect the Bay Area community with fresh, local food and sustainable family farms. Our work is rooted in the belief that farmers markets are educational spaces where family farmers, food makers, and neighbors can share food and knowledge, build community, and nurture food and climate solutions together. Our farmers markets are also vital food access points, where local farmers and food businesses can thrive and thousands of Bay Area residents participate in and grow a thriving food system. We have operated the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market thrice weekly since 1999 and Mission Community Market since 2018.

We wish to convey our overall support in activating the Ferry Building and the waterfront as a lively and robust public amenity serving locals and visitors, seven days a week. We have been in communication with our landlords Hudson Pacific Properties on the proposed changes, which will have negative impacts on our farmers market operations. We are in favor of many of the concepts behind the proposal, but do not yet have enough information to properly assess the how significant the impact will be, both temporary and permanent, which these changes will bring to the health and vitality of the farmers market.

### **Canopied Structure on Front North Side**

Foodwise will need to temporarily relocate at least 10 farms for at least 9 months based on current construction forecasts, possibly facing an even longer disruption to the footprint within our leased areas. We are willing to work with the Landlord to find temporary space for these farms, but we are unable, based on the current plans shared with us, to assess the permanent impact of the canopy. Will we be able to fit as many businesses in that area with the inclusion of permanent poles upholding the canopy? Additionally, we do not have enough information about the materials and construction of the louvered top. Is it wood, metal, fabric? Will it allow for needed

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Shakirah Simley

Dilan Urun

Toyia Wortham

##### **Executive Director**

Christine Farren



ventilation? There is not enough detail shared at this time for us to understand if it will work for our farmers market operations.

**South Driveway Additional Lighting, Archway, and Entry Markers**

Similar to our concerns about the North Front, we are willing to make temporary accommodations during construction of these proposed amendments. However based on current information we are unable to determine how many market sellers can fit back in these areas once the proposed permanent structures of additional lighting poles, archway, and entry markers are in place. The more fixed structures (including seating blocks, light poles, fire hydrants, benches, and statues which currently exist within our leased area) that are built, the less adaptable and flexible our farmers market footprint can be.

**Back Plaza Permanent Kiosk**

The size, scope, placement, and voiced desire to have this retail business be operable during our farmers market hours stands to significantly disrupt our ability to craft a cohesive market that benefits the public with access to fresh local fruits and vegetables, as well as regular, free educational programming. It also makes nearly impossible the ability to clearly delineate what aspects of the market are under Foodwise's jurisdiction and what belongs to Hudson Pacific Properties. Their proposal for beer and wine sales and consumption on site is also in direct violation of the California Department of Food and Agriculture's farmers market regulations. This is the aspect of the project that stands to have the greatest negative impact on the vital work of hosting a year round, rain-or-shine public amenity that is our farmers market. We need more time to discuss the size, placement and type of business proposed to see if it is compatible with our farmers market.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christine Farren", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Christine Farren  
Foodwise Executive Director

**From:** [Christine Farren](#)  
**To:** [Amezcu, Reyna@BCDC](#); [Tomerlin, Ashley@BCDC](#); [Goldzband, Larry@BCDC](#); [BCDC PublicComment](#)  
**Cc:** [Aaron Peskin](#); [Marie Trimble Holvick](#); [Cepkauskas, Marty](#); [Lulu Meyer](#); [Brie Mazurek](#)  
**Subject:** Foodwise Community comments on proposed changes to the Ferry Building  
**Date:** Saturday, April 8, 2023 5:59:47 PM  
**Attachments:** [Foodwise Comments to BCDC Design Review Board April 8 2023.pdf](#)

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Dear Chair and Members, BCDC Design Review Board, & Chair and Members, SF Port Waterfront Design Advisory Committee,

In anticipation of the Design Review Board and the Waterfront Advisory Committee meeting to discuss the proposed changes to the Ferry Building and adjoining Ferry Plaza on Monday, April 10th, I'm submitting our concerns in writing. I will also be attending in person. Of utmost apprehension to our organization, Foodwise, is the inability to continue to successfully operate the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market and its many educational programs, which serves as a critical public amenity, if all of the proposed changes take place. We are so much more than a farmers market. We are an educational and civic space where California family farmers, food makers, and neighbors can share food and knowledge, build community, and nurture food and climate solutions together.

We do not feel we have enough information based on the plans as shared to assess the temporary and permanent impacts these changes will bring to our operations and the health of our organization. Thank you in advance for sharing our perspective with the members.

Sincerely,  
Christine Farren

**Christine Farren** (she/her)  
**Executive Director, Foodwise**  
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San Francisco, CA 94111 | Ramaytush Ohlone Land  
tel: 415.291.3276 x 104 | cell: 415.279.6948

*We have a new website! Check it out at [foodwise.org](http://foodwise.org).*

April 7, 2023

SF Bay Conservation and Development Commission  
BCDC Design Review Board  
SF Port Waterfront Design Advisory Committee  
375 Beale Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
(Via email: [publiccomment@bcdc.ca.gov](mailto:publiccomment@bcdc.ca.gov))



**RE: Comments on Ferry Building and Ferry Plaza Alterations**

Dear Chair and Members, BCDC Design Review Board, and Chair and Members, SF Port Waterfront Design Advisory Committee,

We understand that the BCDC Design Review Board (DRB) is “an advisory board that assists the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (‘Commission’) in evaluating the appearance and design of projects... particularly as the project affects public access to the Bay and shoreline.” In this capacity, we understand that the DRB and the SF Port Waterfront Design Advisory Committee are jointly reviewing alterations to the Ferry Building and adjoining Ferry Plaza, which Commission staff states “*would affect existing public access areas along the building’s exterior and in the plaza.*”

Our major concern is the impairment of public access that we believe would occur from several aspects of the proposed Ferry Building Enhancement Project. While we support the restoration of the Ferry Building clock tower, the re-painting of the tower and Ferry Building in their historic colors, the portico lighting improvements, and proposed improvements to the Ferry Plaza (with the exception of the proposed 500-square foot kiosk, which we are concerned may interfere with Farmers Market operations), we have public access concerns that include the following:

- **Enclosure of Historic Arcades and Addition of Café Zones.** We oppose the proposed alterations to the historic arcades and the addition of new outdoor restaurant space on The Embarcadero frontage. Not only would they impair public access, but they would impact the architectural quality of the Ferry Building. As shown on the attached Exhibit, Hudson Pacific is seeking to enclose the North Arcade to accommodate one or more private restaurants and to expand the restaurant space into a currently publicly accessible area in front of the Ferry Building shown as the “North Café Zone” on the attached Exhibit. As described to us on a recent tour of the proposed project, the North Café Zone would include a canopied vertical structure with heat lamps and lighting, which can be enclosed for times when it is sunny or windy.

These alterations combined (arcade + café zone) would result in a significant loss of publicly accessible open space, which we estimate would be more than 6,000 square feet, as measured using plans in Hudson Pacific’s presentation dated April 10, 2023. Moreover, the proposed addition of the canopied vertical structure will significantly and adversely impair the architecturally prized sweep of the arches along the Ferry Building’s public-facing Embarcadero frontage. Such privatization of currently accessible public open space would roughly double to more than 12,000 square feet if expanded in a proposed later phase – shown on the Exhibit as the “South Arcade (Future Phase)” and the “Market/Café Zone (Future Phase).” We are also concerned about the visual impact of the window screening proposed for enclosing the arcades.

April 7, 2023

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- **Reconfiguration of Entry Portico Bays.** Hudson Pacific is proposing to relocate the glazing to reconfigure several bays on The Embarcadero facade, including Bays 1 and 5 (see Exhibit). Although we support the proposed lighting improvements for the portico, we are concerned that this glazing relocation will result in an additional loss of publicly accessible space if these bay spaces become de facto combined with the proposed new private restaurant spaces in the North and South Arcades (Bay 1 now and Bay 5 in a future phase).

- **Expansion of the Ferry Building East-Facing Wall.** Shown as part of the “Bay Front Kitchens” on the Exhibit, Hudson Pacific is proposing to remove and build out portions of the east-facing walls to provide “Indoor and Outdoor Dining” areas. We are concerned that the newly enclosed areas would obstruct the covered public access and impinge upon the public access area within the Eastern Promenade.

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In reviewing the proposed Ferry Building Enhancement Project, we strongly urge you to carefully consider the potential impacts to public access, including those offered by the Commission staff for your consideration in their DRB Staff Report. Please ensure that public access is maintained.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Stan Hayes

Co-Chair, Planning & Zoning Committee  
Telegraph Hill Dwellers

cc: Lawrence Goldzband, Executive Director ([larry.goldzband@bcdc.ca.gov](mailto:larry.goldzband@bcdc.ca.gov))  
Ashley Tomerlin, DRB Board Secretary ([ashley.tomerlin@bcdc.ca.gov](mailto:ashley.tomerlin@bcdc.ca.gov))  
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Christine Farren, Executive Director, Foodwise ([christine@foodwise.org](mailto:christine@foodwise.org))

## PROJECT AREAS

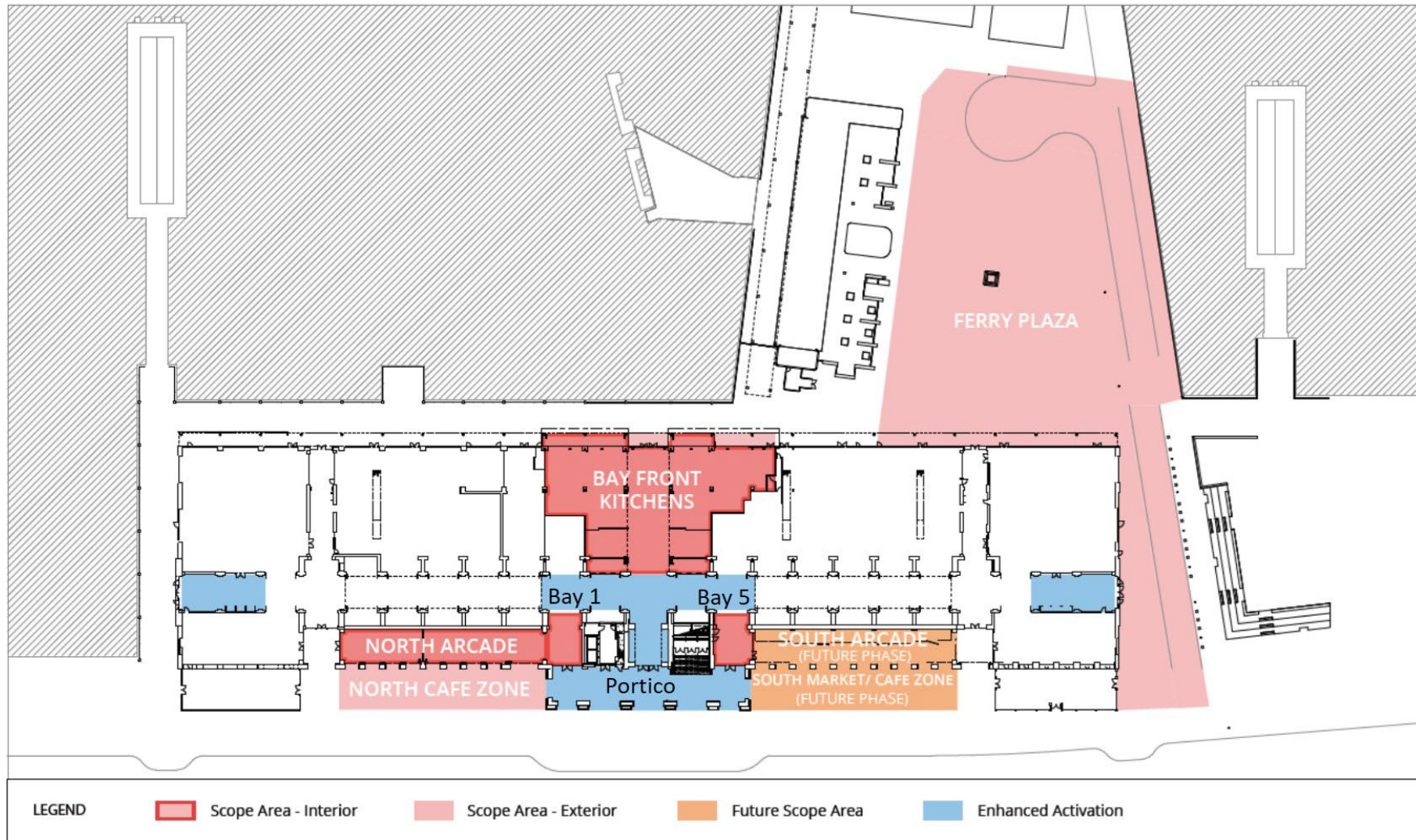


Exhibit. Project areas in proposed Ferry Building enhancement

(source: Hudson Pacific and Page & Turnbull, Ferry Building Enhancement, Port Staff Presentation, dated October 21, 2022), annotated with labels for Portico Bays 1 and Bay 5, and the Portico (source: BCDC Staff Report)

**From:** [Stan Hayes](#)  
**To:** [BCDC PublicComment](#)  
**Cc:** [Goldzband, Larry@BCDC](#); [Tomerlin, Ashley@BCDC](#); [Gomez, Grace@BCDC](#); [Pan, Katharine@BCDC](#); [ryan.wassum](#); [dan.hodapp](#) [Aaron Peskin](#); [jconnors](#); [Forbes, Elaine \(PRT\)](#); [ccade](#); [christine](#)  
**Subject:** THD COMMENT LETTER - Ferry Building Alterations  
Friday, April 7, 2023 2:20:45 PM  
**Date:** [THD COMMENT LTR\\_Ferry Bldg Alterations\\_FINAL 4-7-23.pdf](#)  
**Attachments:**

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Dear Chair and Members, BCDC Design Review Board & Chair and Members, SF Port Waterfront Design Advisory Committee,

We understand that the Design Review Board and the Waterfront Advisory Committee are jointly reviewing proposed alterations to the San Francisco Ferry Building and adjoining Ferry Plaza at a meeting on Monday, April 10th.

On behalf of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers, please accept this letter offering THD's comments on those proposed alterations for your consideration at that meeting.

As you will see, our major concern is the impairment of public access that we believe would occur from several aspects of the proposed Ferry Building alterations.

Sincerely,

Stan Hayes

Co-Chair, Planning & Zoning Committee  
Telegraph Hill Dwellers