



**Paper No.6/2005**  
**For discussion**  
**on 13 January 2005**

## **Living Harbour Review**

### **From searching for a cruise terminal site to a Living Harbour Review**

1. On November 4, 2004, the Tourism Commission of the Economic Development and Labour Bureau invited members of the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee to note the Government's plan to invite proposals for a cruise terminal with the only mandatory requirement the capacity to berth a mega cruise ship.
2. On November 18, 2004, Citizen Envisioning @ Harbour (CE@H) responded to the Chief Executive, advising against a property led creation of an intermediate single berth mega cruise terminal – and recommended to first commence a 'Living Harbour Review' (letter attached) as part of the harbour planning process.
3. On December 14, 2004, CE@H organized an informal and invitation only working lunch for direct stakeholders to build consensus on the way forward for Hong Kong's leisure harbour, as well as to establish a partnership and process for a 'Living Harbour Review'. The meeting was attended by thirty eight representatives from community and academic groups, professional associations, marine users, and Government departments.

### **Each marine use requires harbour- and land- based infrastructure**

4. While we do have land use plans for the districts surrounding the Victoria Harbour, we do not have a 'water use' plan for the harbour itself. Harbour planning to date has focused primarily on tourism facilities.
5. Every 'marine use' requires land-based facilities and infrastructure. Given the competing requirements for the very limited land available along our harbour-fronts, a sustainable process is required to secure community support and to shorten the planning, decision making and implementation cycles for the development of vibrant harbour-fronts with world-class facilities for leisure, tourism and commerce.
6. The 'Living Harbour Review' aims to identify future marine uses for Victoria Harbour based on sustainable development principles.

7. These uses will each require supporting marine facilities and land-based infrastructure. The review can identify possible locations, specify any need for piling (reclamation) and recommend appropriate development and implementation models.
8. With the coast line now final and material reclamation excluded, the 'Living Harbour Review' is considered urgent as the output will have an impact on the ongoing studies for the various districts around the harbour.
9. A lead agent such as the Tourism Commission, Marine Department or Planning Department is required to implement and fund the 'Living Harbour Review' in coordination with the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee. Citizen Envisioning @ Harbour offers its full support for a speedy implementation.
10. CE@H will continue to gather views from the participants. Following are some of the views expressed during the luncheon meeting. They are included to highlight competing interests and to illustrate the complexity of views. They are not necessarily the views of CE@H or endorsed by all participants.
  - a. The harbour is living not because it can be seen, but because people can use it.
  - b. The harbour 'east' of the Star Ferry is most suitable for leisure activities, with the area between the Central Ferries and Macau Ferry Terminal and West Kowloon suitable for ferries and cruises, and the harbour further west suitable for port activities.
  - c. Previous studies considered the harbour unsuitable for recreational marine activities, and recommended these to be located in the New Territories and on water reservoirs.
  - d. An active leisure harbour is an asset for Hong Kong, visually attractive, and provides a higher quality of life, and more memorable and vibrant image of Hong Kong for residents, tourists and marine users.
  - e. Ocean Terminal or at the west end of the proposed West Kowloon Cultural District are preferred locations for a cruise terminal.
  - f. The need for barge filling stations is an ongoing requirement, as is typhoon shelter space for marine traffic, and break waters to provide shelter for rowing, dragon boating, and marinas.
  - g. Finger piers and old style (Blake's Pier) structures where spaces are available for waterfront activities are more interesting than flat quay type berths.

- h. A great number of different marine uses were identified and the recommended locations did overlap: sailing, wind surfing, rowing, dragon boat training and racing, on-shore fishing, swimming, yachting, power boating, floating restaurants and hotels, water fountains, beaches, aquarium, international cruises, harbour cruises, circular ferries, water taxi, sea planes, supply boats, lighters, passing river trade, marine police, marine fire services, and the display of visiting military vessels, tall boats and super yachts.
- i. Each marine use requires specific harbour and land based facilities, land and supporting infrastructure.
- j. Harbour events were identified, including an annual Hong Kong Harbour Day and an International Boat Show, as well as various marine related competitions.
- k. Current and potential marine users were eager to contribute to further studies and planning of the harbour and harbour-front areas. A plan to establish a 'Harbour User Group' as a potential coordinating interface for such exercise was discussed.

### **Recommended Action**

11. CE@H recommends the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee to advise the Government to commence as soon as possible a 'Living Harbour Review' based on sustainable development principles (see attached CE@H submission to HEC in May 2004) to identify all future marine uses for Victoria Harbour and the supporting marine facilities, land-based infrastructure and land required.

Citizen Envisioning @ Harbour  
January 7, 2005



18 November, 2004

Open Letter by Mail and by Fax

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**Re: Cruise Terminals or a Living Harbour – or can we have both?**

Further to presentations made by the Tourism Commissioner on November 4, 2004 to the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee, we understand that there is a need for Hong Kong to welcome cruise liners in an appropriate manner. We also appreciate that becoming a home port for cruise liners can create new job opportunities and may visually enhance our harbour.

However, we believe that it is wrong to address the need for a home port by first inviting (property development) proposals for an intermediate one-berth mega cruise terminal. We call on the Government to halt the tender procedures and to FIRST commence a 'Living Harbour Review'.

Given the competing requirements for the very limited land available along our harbour-fronts, a sustainable process is required to secure community support and to shorten the planning, decision making and implementation cycles for the development of vibrant harbour-fronts with world-class facilities for leisure, tourism and commerce.

Within the harbour planning process, the 'Living Harbour Review' identifies all future marine uses for Victoria Harbour based on Hong Kong's four economic pillars and the aspirations of its people. Possible uses include dinghy sailing, wind surfing, yachting, fishing, rowing, swimming, water taxis, harbour cruises, circular ferries, international cruises, China coast cruises, floating restaurants, dragon boat races, power boat racing and sea planes.



Each use will require marine facilities and land-based infrastructure. The review can identify possible locations, specify any need for piling and recommend appropriate development and implementation models. Following the review, tenders can be called for the building and management of the necessary infrastructure, including the first phase (first berth) of a multi-berth home port for cruise liners.

Further, with the 'Living Harbour Review' based on the principles of sustainable development and open to public participation, the necessary overriding public needs tests can be passed.

Following legal advice, Government departments have now classified piling for marine facilities as reclamation under the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance. It is questionable that it was the intention of the Judge to place reclamation for marine facilities under the same strict requirements as reclamation for the creation of land. This interpretation must be challenged to ensure Hong Kong achieves a world class living harbour and an exciting and interactive water-edge.

On May 1 2004 the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee started its work, which includes advising the Government through the Secretary of Housing, Planning and Lands on harbour planning.

We urge the administration and all Government departments to fully engage with the work of this committee. The 'Living Harbour Review' can be coordinated by the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee, in cooperation with the Tourism Commission, Marine Department and Planning Department. Citizen Envisioning @ Harbour offers its full support for a speedy implementation.

Yours sincerely,

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**Proposed Guiding Principles for  
Sustainable Harbour Planning, Design and Development**

***Sustainable Development Principle:*** HEC adopts the principle of sustainable development in facilitating the future planning and development of the Victoria Harbour. As stipulated in ***Principle 10, Rio Declaration.***

*'Environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided.'*

*(<http://www.unep.org/Documents/Default.asp?DocumentID=78&ArticleID=1163>)*

Based on this fundamental principle, the following principles are adopted:

- ◆ **An inclusive and participatory consensus building process:** only this can allow a comprehensive understanding of the issues, problems, evaluations and solutions surrounding Harbour planning and development:
  - The process has to be fair, open and inclusive; and
  - The process should be supported by quality information, good science and skilful mediation.
- ◆ **Integrated planning and design for better quality of life:** integrated transport, land uses, environmental and socio-economic Harbour planning and design should be adopted to enhance quality of life for the community.
- ◆ **Fair gain for all:** the planning gains achieved through planning and designing of the Harbour should be fairly distributed to the entire spectrum of the community.
- ◆ **Accountability principle:** a single or an integrated authority should be in place to ensure reasonable collaborative work, and smooth and comprehensive implementation.
- ◆ **Precautionary principle:** scientific projections and foresight, risk analysis, sustainability assessment and broad consensus should be utilized so that the costs and benefits of different proposals can be appreciated by different stakeholders.
- ◆ **Subsidiarity principle:** ensuring that decisions are taken as close as possible to those who are likely to be most affected by the results of those decisions.

Citizen Envisioning@Harbour  
May 6, 2004

# **NOTE ON PLANNING FOR MARINE-RELATED ACTIVITIES IN THE WATERBODIES IN HONG KONG**

## **A Shared Vision**

- ☞ we share the need for a world class living harbour and an exciting and interactive water-front
- ☞ our vision is “to make Victoria Harbour attractive, vibrant, accessible and symbolic of Hong Kong - a harbour for the people and a harbour of life”

## **Functions/Activities of the Harbour**

- ☞ Victoria Harbour is one of the busiest in the world, with heavy marine-traffic. The inner harbour fairway is congested
- ☞ the Harbour serves multi-functions:
  - economic uses such as container terminals, cargo handling, ferry terminals
  - fairway for marine traffic
  - marine-based uses such as marine fire services, police, Immigration and Customs and Excise marine facilities, ferry piers, berthing areas
  - tourism/recreational uses such as cruise terminals and marinas
  - each marine facility has its locational requirements and demand. Relocation opportunities are limited
- ☞ the Government is open and positive to marine-related recreational activities so long as the safety and functional integrity of the Harbour are not compromised
- ☞ there are already a lot of marine-related recreational activities in the Harbour, such as sailing, circular harbour cruise/tours with dining facilities, yachting. But, users may not choose the Harbour as the final destination
- ☞ special events e.g. Dragon Boat racing, firework displays, laser shows are also organized
- ☞ changing functions over time, due to changes in technology and economy

e.g. from boatyards, warehouses, oil depots, etc. to other uses

### Siting of Marine-Related Recreational Activities

- ☞ we have examined marine-related recreational uses/activities in the context of various planning studies e.g. HK2030 Study, Planning Study on the Harbour and its Waterfront Areas (Harbour Plan Study), the South East and the South West Development Strategy Reviews
- ☞ the general findings on the siting consideration of these activities are:
  - functional compatibility with adjoining marine users
  - marine safety for different marine users
  - enjoyment of users, which may be affected by water quality, calmness of the waterbody, tranquility etc
  - land availability for developing supporting facilities
  - accessibility
- ☞ spatial distribution of marine-related recreational activities as recommended in various planning studies:
  - **Victoria Harbour:** cruise terminal, circular hopping harbour cruise service and dedicated piers for harbour cruises etc. are more suitable while some other activities may not e.g. rowing, wind surfing, dinghy sailing, boat racing, mainly on safety ground, sea conditions and physical setting. A range of potential events and activities for waterfront open space and harbour area have also been proposed in the Harbour Plan Study
  - **SENT:** water sports centres such as windsurfing, rowing, canoeing, kayaking and sailing, provision of sea plane facilities and landing area at High Island Reservoir; island hopping trips with dining facilities around the Inner Port Shelter; inshore water recreation at coastal area of Port Shelter, around Kau Sai Chau, Sharp Island and Tai Tau Chau and between Jin Island and Bluff Island such as non-motorized boating, canoeing, kayaking, recreational fishing etc; promotion of scuba diving in Kwo Chau Island; strengthening of Hebe Haven for waterfront recreation, extended marina and club-med type guesthouses



- **SWNT:** water-based recreation and low-intensity recreational uses in South Lantau. Watersport centres at Pui O Beach (non-motorised watersports) and Cheung Sha Beach (motorised watersports). Boardwalks from Lower Cheung Sha to Tong Fuk Beach to enhance the attraction and connectivity along the South Lantau coast.
- **NENT:** inshore water recreation at Three Fathoms Cove, Plover Clove, etc.
- **NWNT:** industries that require sea frontage, river trade, etc.
- **Reservoirs:** could be a resource for modest scale, water-based recreational activities such as rowing, sailing and fishing

### Our Work Ahead: Harbour Plan Review

- ☞ a world class living harbour can only be achieved with both vibrant shore-based and water-based activities
- ☞ any proposed marine activities have to be considered together with the on-going activities in the Harbour and other facilities in the water-front
- ☞ the Harbour Plan Review will address the marine-related recreational uses and activities as a main issue in harbour-front planning, taking into account previous studies findings and other existing/planned shore-based activities
- ☞ emphasis should be placed to developing a vibrant harbour for public enjoyment, yet a safe use as well as the functional integrity of the Harbour and its role as the international port should not be compromised
- ☞ we shall engage the community in enhancing our waterfront and making it a vibrant living harbour

Planning Department  
January 2005