

First Briefing of the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee
held at 2:30 pm on 5 January 2005
at Conference Room, 15/F, North Point Government Offices,
333 Java Road, Hong Kong

Minutes of Briefing

Present

Professor Lee Chack-fan	Chairman
Mr Paul Zimmerman	Representing Business Environment Council
Mr Leung Kong-yui	Representing Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong
Dr Ng Mee-kam	Representing Citizen Envisioning@Harbour
Dr Kwok Ngai-kuen, Alvin	Representing Conservancy Association
Mrs Mei Ng	Representing Friends of the Earth
Mr Vincent Ng	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Architects
Mr Chan Kwok-fai, Bernard	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors
Mr Mason Hung	Representing Hong Kong Tourism Board
Mr Louis H B Loong	Representing Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong
Mr Hardy Lok	Representing Society for Protection of the Harbour Limited
Mr Charles Nicholas Brooke	
Dr Chan Wai-kwan	
Mrs Rita Lau	Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands)
Mr Thomas Chow	Deputy Secretary (Transport) ¹ for the Environment, Transport and Works
Mr Bosco Fung	Director of Planning
Mr Tsao Tak-kiang	Director of Civil Engineering and Development
Mr Thomas Thumb	Acting Deputy Commissioner for Transport/Planning and Technical Services
Miss Christine Chow	Secretary

In Attendance

Mr Andrew Cheung	Assistant Secretary (Planning) ² , Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau (“HPLB”)
Mr P L Kwan	Project Manager/Kowloon, Civil Engineering and Development Department (“CEDD”)
Mr L T Ma	Project Manager/Hong Kong Island and Islands, CEDD
Mr Augustine Ng	Assistant Director/Territorial, Planning

Mr Raymond Lee Mr Raymond Wong	Department (“PlanD”) District Planning Officer/Kowloon, PlanD Chief Town Planner/Sub-Regional Planning Section, PlanD
<u>For item 2</u>	
Mr Augustine Wong Mr Shuki Leung Mr Andrew Chan	Representing World City Culture Park Limited Representing World City Culture Park Limited Representing Dynamic Star International Limited
Dr Raymond Yau	Representing Dynamic Star International Limited
Mr Daryl Ng Mr Stephen Brown Mr Danny Lau	Representing Sunny Development Limited Representing Sunny Development Limited Principal Assistant Secretary (Planning and Lands)5, HPLB
Mr H K Li Mr Vincent Fung	Chief Assistant Secretary (Planning)5, HPLB Principal Assistant Secretary (Culture)1, Home Affairs Bureau
Mr L H Chung	Acting Deputy Director (Culture), Leisure and Cultural Services Department
<u>For item 4</u>	
Mr Philip Tung	Representing New World First Ferry Services Limited (“First Ferry”)
Mr W H Tsang Ms Gloria To	Representing First Ferry Representing First Ferry
<u>For item 6</u>	
Mr Fred Lam	Representing Hong Kong Trade Development Council (“TDC”)
Mr K F Chan Mr W H Lam	Representing TDC Representing Wong & Ouyang (Hong Kong) Limited
Miss Clara Tang	Principal Assistant Secretary (Commerce & Industry)1, Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau

Action

Welcoming Message

The Chairman welcomed Members to the first briefing

of the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee (“HEC”). He said that the HEC adopted an open and transparent mode of operation and welcomed private submissions and requests for presentation on projects affecting the harbour-front. The purpose of organizing the briefings was for HEC Members to be briefed of such projects and there was no need for the HEC to form a consensus view on the presentations. The proceedings and deliberations of the briefings would be recorded and uploaded to the HEC website and the relevant sections of the minutes would be passed to the proponents for reference.

1.2 **Mr Louis Loong** declared interest on the association between the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong he represented and the three proponents of the West Kowloon Cultural District (“WKCD”) project and First Ferry.

Items 2 and 3: Presentation by the WKCD proponents

2.1 In response to Mr Paul Zimmerman’s query concerning his suggestion to invite the two rejected proponents of the WKCD project to the HEC briefing, **Mr Raymond Wong** said that the Sub-committee on Harbour Plan Review noted the suggestion at its meeting on 24 November 2004, and agreed that the project proponents of the short-listed schemes would be invited to present their respective schemes to the HEC.

(a) World City Cultural Park

2.2 Upon invitation by the Chairman, **Mr Augustine Wong** and **Mr Shuki Leung** of World City Culture Park Limited presented their proposal.

(b) Sunny Development

2.3 Upon invitation by the Chairman, **Mr Daryl Ng** and **Mr Stephen Brown** of Sunny Development Limited presented their proposal.

(c) Dynamic Star International

2.4 Upon invitation by the Chairman, **Mr Andrew Chan** and **Dr Raymond Yau** of Dynamic Star International Limited

presented their proposal.

2.5 After presentation by the three proponents, a short video showing the Government's presentation of the WKCD project was played.

2.6 While acknowledging the efforts paid by all three proponents in enhancing the harbour-front vibrancy under their designs, **Mr Vincent Ng** questioned whether it was necessary to include the canopy in the designs and asked for the cost to construct and maintain the canopy. He also queried if the canopy might block people's view to the sky. In response, **Mr Shuki Leung** of World City Culture Park said that the canopy created shaded open space areas that enabled cultural and other activities to take place under different weather conditions. **Dr Raymond Yau** of Dynamic Star International explained that the canopy under their design could help to improve air circulation beneath it by 20% and thus would enhance the utilization rate of the shaded areas under unfriendly weather conditions. **Mr Daryl Ng** of Sunny Development said that the canopy designed by Sunny Development was transparent and light and so it would not block people's view to the sky.

2.7 On the construction and maintenance costs for the canopy, **Mr Danny Lau** said that the Government was evaluating the three proposals and so information on cost would not be disclosed at this stage.

2.8 **Dr Chan Wai-kwan** queried if people's view of the ridgelines from the WKCD waterfront would be compromised by the canopy and asked if the proposals had considered how the water areas outside the WKCD would be used. In response, **Mr Shuki Leung** of World City Culture Park said that their design had taken into consideration the visual impact. On the usage of the water areas, he said that World City Culture Park had designed a water fountain barge to be located near the WKCD shoreline and that public landing steps and a leisure island were also included in the design. The barge could be placed at different locations and it would not amount to reclamation. **Mr Andrew Chan** and **Dr Raymond Yau** of Dynamic Star International said that their canopy design had met the ridgeline-related requirements of the Urban Design Guidelines and it would not block people's views of the ridgelines on Hong

Kong Island from the WKCD waterfront. In addition, only 19 columns in the entertainment and retail spine would be built under the design of Dynamic Star International to minimize obstruction of people's view at the Harbour. **Mr Daryl Ng** and **Mr Stephen Brown** of Sunny Development said that their canopy was light and transparent and that it would not block people's view on the ridgelines.

2.9 In response to **Mr Nicholas Brooke's** question as to whether the designs were optimum from the land use and harbour-front enhancement perspectives, **Mr Daryl Ng** of Sunny Development said that all arts and cultural facilities under their design were planned along the waterfront and even the automatic people mover ("APM") was designed to be put in place near the shoreline so that users of the APM could enjoy the seaview as well. **Mr Shuki Leung** of World City Culture Park said that their design attempted to achieve a balanced land use, with more commercial than residential uses as the former would help to create vibrancy along the harbour-front. **Mr Andrew Chan** of Dynamic Star International said that some 30 hectares of open space would be created under their design and that the waterfront would be barrier-free to facilitate accessibility.

2.10 On **Mr Paul Zimmerman's** question as to whether the waterfront would allow a diversity of activities and free 24-hours access to all members of the public, **Mr Shuki Leung** of World City Culture Park said that all open space under their design including the waterfront promenade would be open 24-hours to the public. **Mr Andrew Chan** of Dynamic Star International said that diversity of land use was emphasized under their design, including arts, cultural and retail uses. He added that 95% of the land would be open to the public 24-hours a day. **Mr Daryl Ng** of Sunny Development said that the open space including the waterfront promenade would be open 24-hours to the public. **Mr Stephen Brown** added that different activities at the community's choice would be allowed in the open space under their design.

2.11 **Dr Ng Mee-kam** was concerned that the open space in the future WKCD would be heavily regulated and guarded against free public access. **Mrs Mei Ng** asked for the amount of water consumption to maintain the canopy and the consumption of construction materials to build the canopy. She also queried

if the canopy would adversely affect biodiversity and the growth of plants underneath it and whether the indoor exhibition and performing environment would adversely affect people's health. **Dr Alvin Kwok** questioned if the proposals would be sustainable, how they could enhance their acceptability by the community, and whether the proponents would seek compensation from the Government if the Government decided not to pursue the "single-package" approach.

2.12 In response to the above, **Mr Shuki Leung** of World City Culture Park reiterated that the open space would be open to the public 24-hours a day. The canopy under their design would collect rain water and generate electricity and was easy to clean. The proposal by World City Culture Park had taken into consideration such issues as greenery and sustainability. Mr Leung believed that their proposal could enhance the economic, cultural, social, environmental and financial sustainability. After 30 years, all facilities in the WKCD including the collections of artifacts would be returned to the Government for continued operation. **Mr Andrew Chan** of Dynamic Star International also reiterated that the open space would be open to all members of the public 24-hours a day. As far as sustainability was concerned, Mr Chan said that a children's museum would be built in their design to ensure cultural sustainability into future generations. On the canopy's ability to generate energy, **Dr Raymond Yau** said that the solar energy collected would be re-used within the WKCD. The canopy could substantially reduce the consumption of electricity for the purpose of providing air-conditioning. He also highlighted that the canopy could enhance air circulation underneath it by at least 20%. **Mr Daryl Ng** of Sunny Development said that self-cleaning ETFE materials would be used to construct their canopy that could collect rain water for re-use within the WKCD. Cultural sustainability would be achieved by the cultural facilities to be set up along the waterfront under their design. An example from Osaka, Japan was quoted to justify Sunny Development's concept of having parks on the rooftop of the buildings.

2.13 **The Chairman** thanked the three proponents for their presentation and invited Members to pass their further comments on the proposals, if any, to the Secretary for onward transmission to the WKCD Development Team. He also recommended that

Members could visit the exhibition at the Science Museum themselves for more details on the three proposals.

Items 4 and 5: Presentation by the New World First Ferry Services Limited

4.1 Upon invitation by the Chairman, **Mr Philip Tung** of First Ferry presented their proposal to enhance the accessibility and attractiveness of the harbour-front at Central Piers.

4.2 **Mr Thomas Chow** said that the HEC should examine if the proposal would achieve the objective of enhancing the harbour-front. From the presentation materials, the proposal would involve decking over the existing bus terminal and other areas that were open at present with shops. It might have a negative visual impact. He could not see how people would be able to see fireworks display in the harbour better with the presence of more structures or from indoors as compared to now. From the transport need point of view, he could not see the justification for providing more pedestrian links from the International Finance Centre (“IFC”) to the piers, as there was a new pedestrian bridge directly linking the IFC to the piers and it had a huge spare capacity. Walking from the Star Ferry in Central to the piers was also easy. Even if it were decided that the proposal was a good one for enhancing the harbour-front, the suggestion to grant the right to operate the shopping arcades to the ferry operators and to give them the rental income, with the Government fitting the bill for all the works, would need to be seriously and most carefully considered.

4.3 **Mr W H Tsang** of First Ferry explained that the two existing footbridges connecting IFC to the piers were far apart and inconvenient to users. In addition, the ferry operators wished to benefit from the commercial facilities planned on the podium.

4.4 **Mr Nicholas Brooke** said that the Central Piers area was an important waterfront area. Given such importance, the area needed to be handled with care and a detailed plan on the facilities to be built on the podium would be required to convince the HEC Members and the public of the benefits of the proposal.

4.5 **Mr Paul Zimmerman** expressed concern over the current situation of the Central Piers area. He suggested that the First Ferry's proposal should be looked at from an integrated perspective under which the Government should work closely with ferry operators and other parties for the benefits of the community. On the proposed podium, Mr Zimmerman said that the proposal would expand the surface-level "dead zone" at the area in question.

4.6 **Dr Alvin Kwok** said that a Task Group had already been set up under the Sub-committee on Harbour Plan Review with a view to enhancing the waterfront of the Central Piers area and that a public participation programme would soon be launched to engage the public on how the area should be designed. The proposal from First Ferry could be submitted in the course of the participation process and would be carefully studied by the Task Group.

4.7 **Dr Chan Wai Kwan** said that the proposed podium could only serve to enlarge the gross floor area without making fundamental changes in the land use aspect and doubted if the proposal could become a tourist attraction.

4.8 In response, **Mr W H Tsang** said that the main objective of the First Ferry proposal was to better the accessibility to the waterfront. It would be a "win-win" situation for the Government to support and implement the proposal as the project would benefit the public and help to ease the financial difficulties faced by the ferry operators.

4.9 While agreeing that steps should be taken to improve the open space between IFC and the piers, **Mr Bosco Fung** reminded the meeting that it took time to carry out the participation programme to collate public views on how the area in question could best be developed.

4.10 **The Chairman** thanked Mr Philip Tung and Mr W H Tsang for the presentation and suggested that Members could further discuss the First Ferry proposal in Dr Alvin Kwok's Task Group if they so wished.

Items 6 and 7: Presentation by the Hong Kong Trade

Development Council

6.1 Upon invitation by the Chairman, **Mr Fred Lam** presented the TDC's proposal to expand the Atrium Link of the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre ("HKCEC").

6.2 Before opening the floor for discussion, **the Chairman** invited Miss Clara Tang of the Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau ("CITB") to present the Government's position on the proposal. **Miss Clara Tang** said that the Government was committed to ensuring that adequate exhibition facilities were provided in Hong Kong to strengthen its position as a world business centre and trade fair capital. CITB was studying the TDC proposal and would take into account all factors that would affect the desirability and feasibility of the proposal including the overall supply of and demand for exhibition facilities, possible benefits to the exhibition and tourism industries, technical aspects of the proposal, and the implications the proposal might have on the planning, traffic and environment around the HKCEC. A new convention and exhibition centre, the AsiaWorld Expo, was under construction at the International Airport that was expected to be fully operational in 2006. Phase One of the AsiaWorld Expo would provide 66 000 m² of exhibition space and the whole centre would be capable of expansion to 100 000 m². The Government would consider the question of support only if it was satisfied that there would be unmet demand taking into account, *inter alia*, the additional 100 000 m² exhibition space to be provided by AsiaWorld Expo and the timing of its availability, and that Government support was fully justified for the good of the economy. Due regard would also be given to the Government's interest as a shareholder of AsiaWorld Expo and to the private sector's investment.

6.3 **Mr Paul Zimmerman** expressed concern over the TDC's proposal as there could be a conflict of interest between the TDC and the HKCEC as he believed that the former did not only promote trade but was also the operator and owner of the venue. Even if Hong Kong needed more exhibition space, he questioned if the HKCEC site was the right location. Mr Zimmermann believed that expansion of the HKCEC would require more roads in the nearby areas and that the expanded Atrium Link would enlarge the dark area underneath it, creating

an even more unpleasant experience for pedestrians than at present. Instead of pushing forward the Atrium Link proposal, he suggested the TDC to provide the HEC with alternative proposals it had studied as well as their pros and cons when compared to the current proposal. At this stage, Mr Zimmerman said that he would not support the proposal from the harbour-front enhancement point of view.

6.4 **Dr Chan Wai-kwan** enquired whether the TDC would increase the open space area under the proposal and how the proposal could help to enhance the harbour-front.

6.5 In response, **Mr Fred Lam** said that the Government owned the HKCEC Extension and the TDC was only managing the Extension on behalf of the Government. The management revenue formed a very small portion of the TDC's total revenue. Considering that the exhibition space to be provided by HKCEC and AsiaWorld Expo would not be able to meet the future demand and that there was a risk for fairs to go to surrounding cities such as Guangzhou or Shenzhen, TDC proposed to expand the Atrium Link to increase the exhibition area. In order to solve the traffic problems, the TDC had been adopting a central forwarder system to streamline the movement of exhibition materials. On the issue of accessibility, Mr Lam believed that the footbridges proposed by TDC would improve accessibility to the waterfront. **Mr W H Lam** supplemented that due regard would be given to the lighting and ventilation of the area underneath the Atrium Link when designing the project.

6.6 **Mr Leung Kong-yui** said that as a professional in the logistics and transport field, he supported the central forwarder system being used by the TDC, believing that it helped to relieve the traffic problems related to the movement of exhibition materials.

6.7 **Mr Nicholas Brooke** said that it would be difficult for the HEC to make a judgment on the TDC proposal without being able to look at it from a holistic perspective. He suggested that the proposal could be further studied by the relevant Sub-committee.

6.8 **Mr Fred Lam** said that the TDC had already considered various proposals of expanding the HKCEC before submitting

the existing one which he believed was having the least impact on the harbour-front. Mr Lam added that the HKCEC site attracted thousands of people each day to the venue for exhibitions and fairs. He believed that the TDC proposal would attract even more commercial activities and members of the public to the harbour-front after the expansion.

6.9 On the TDC proposal, **Mrs Mei Ng** urged the meeting to consider the proposal from the following angles –

- ◆ Centralized planning versus de-centralization planning;
- ◆ Economic versus logistics planning; and
- ◆ Economic benefits versus public benefits in terms of public enjoyment at the harbour-front and accessibility.

She commented that apart from those who attended trade fairs, the general public should also be able to enjoy the waterfront at the HKCEC area.

6.10 In response, **Mr Fred Lam** said that the TDC did not stop people from going to the Wan Chai harbour-front and he believed that more local people would be attracted to the waterfront if additional pedestrian access was provided. Furthermore, the addition of commercial activities, such as cafes and retail shops, would enhance the attractiveness of the waterfront.

6.11 **Dr Chan Wai-kwan** asked whether the TDC had any intention to reclaim the area beneath the proposed expanded Atrium Link and whether the TDC would participate in the public participation programme under the Harbour-front Enhancement Review – Wan Chai and Adjoining Areas. In response, **Mr W H Lam** said the TDC proposal would not involve reclamation and that the TDC was willing to work closely with local residents, the Government and concerned boards and committees in carrying forward the proposal.

6.12 **The Chairman** thanked the TDC for the presentation and suggested that the matter could be followed up by the Sub-committee on WDII Review.

Sub-committee
on WDII
Review

Item 8: AOB and closing remarks

8.1 **Mrs Mei Ng** suggested that invitation should be

extended to the planning and architectural faculties of the tertiary institutions to attend the HEC meetings/briefings. She also suggested that the briefing could be arranged to take place at districts to better collate community views. **The Chairman** noted and thanked her for the suggestions.

8.2 There being no other business, the briefing was adjourned at 6:35 p.m. The next HEC regular meeting would be held on 13 January 2005 (Thursday).

Harbour-front Enhancement Committee
March 2005