

Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island

Minutes of Second Meeting

Date : 6 October 2010
Time : 10:00 a.m.
Venue : Conference Room, 15/F, North Point Government Offices
333 Java Road, North Point

Present

Mr Nicholas Brooke	Chairman
Dr Andrew Thomson	Representing Business Environment Council
Prof Becky Loo	Representing Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong
Mr Lam Kin-lai	Representing Conservancy Association
Dr Frederick Lee	Representing Friends of the Earth
Mr Andy Leung	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Architects
Mr Tam Po-yiu	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Planners
Dr Paul Ho	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors
Dr Peter Cookson Smith	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design
Mr Shuki Leung	Representing Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong
Mr Paul Zimmerman	Representing Society for Protection of the Harbour
Mr Chan Hok-fung	
Mr Eric Fok	
Mr Vincent Ng	
Ms Gracie Foo	Deputy Secretary (Planning and Lands)1, Development Bureau (DEVB)
Ms Stephanie Lai	Senior Manager (Tourism) 2, Tourism Commission
Mr H L Cheng	Chief Traffic Engineer/Hong Kong, Transport Department
Mr Eric Fung	Chief Engineer/Hong Kong 1, Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)
Mr Richard Wong	Assistant Director (Leisure Services) 2 (Acting), Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)
Mr David Lam	District Planning Officer/Hong Kong (Acting), Planning Department (PlanD)
Mr Chris Fung	Secretary

Absent with Apologies

Mr Leslie Chen	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects
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Mr Benjamin Cha

For Agenda Item 3

Mr Roy Li	Senior Town Planner/Special Duties 2, PlanD
Mr Harry Tsang	Chief Executive Officer (Planning)1, LCSD
Mrs Sylvia Lam	Chief Project Manager 103, Architectural Services Department (ArchSD)
Mr Tommy Ng	Director, Atkins China Ltd
Mr Randy Mok	Executive Director, A. Lead Architects Ltd
Mr Boris Lo	Associate, Rocco Design Architects Limited

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The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

Item 1 Confirmation of Minutes of the 1st Meeting

- 1.1 The draft minutes of the 1st meeting held on 16 September 2010 were circulated to Members on 30 September 2010. A revised draft, incorporating proposed amendments received from Mr Tam Po-yiu, International Finance Centre Development Limited, Designing Hong Kong, Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong and PURE Group, was circulated to the Members on 5 October 2010.
- 1.2 While **Dr Peter Cookson Smith** had no comments on the revised minutes, he said that the Highways Department had appeared to work on its own model of the exterior design of the Western Ventilation Building of the Central-Wan Chai Bypass after the 1st meeting, which had gone against the Chairman's suggestion set out in paragraph 3.28 of the revised minutes. In response, **the Chairman** confirmed that he had subsequent discussion with the concerned bureau and they clearly understood what was required of them. **Dr Peter Cookson Smith** reiterated that both parties should work together to look at the existing and revised proposals and bring them back to the Task Force later.
- 1.3 In response to Mr Paul Zimmerman and Prof Becky Loo's enquiries, the **Chairman** said that both parties had been asked to elaborate their respective models in light of the comments made by Task Force Members and to examine the statements and claims made by the other side.

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- 1.4 As no further amendment was proposed, the **meeting** confirmed the revised draft minutes.

Item 2 Matters Arising

Uploading PowerPoint presentations to the website of Harbourfront Commission (HC)

- 2.1 **Mr Paul Zimmerman** proposed that all PowerPoints presented to the Task Forces and the HC should be uploaded to the HC website for public information.
- 2.2 **Ms Maisie Chan** replied that the HC Secretariat would seek the presenters' views and subject to their consent, upload their PowerPoints to the HC website. Secretariat
- 2.3 **Mr Paul Zimmerman** further requested that, if any party refused to give their consent for uploading the PowerPoint to the HC website, an explanation should be given because the information should be made available to the public. **The Chairman** concurred with Mr Zimmerman's suggestion.

Item 3 Scope of Works for Site 7 Development in the New Central Harbourfront (Paper No. TFHK/04/2010)

- 3.1 **The Chairman** remarked that the project team was seeking Members' comment and endorsement on the proposed scope of works for the development of Site 7 in the new Central harbourfront so that they could take forward the funding procedures.
- 3.2 On the Chairman's invitation, **Mr Richard Wong** of LCSD, **Mr Eric Fung** of CEDD, **Mrs Sylvia Lam** of ArchSD and **Mr Boris Lo** of Rocco Design Architects Limited, presented Paper No. TFHK/04/2010, the background and the proposed scope of works for the development of Site 7 and design concept and features for the advance promenade, with the aid of PowerPoints.
- 3.3 **Mr Lam Kin-lai** considered that part of the advance promenade was quite narrow and that the accessibility to the harbourfront should be enhanced. He also enquired on the following points:-
- (a) how the advance promenade could be accessed from the

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neighbouring commercial buildings and whether there would be loading and unloading areas close to the advance promenade;

- (b) whether there would be a cycling track along the advance promenade;
- (c) whether dogs and other pets would be allowed in the advance promenade;
- (d) whether the advance promenade would be open to the public round the clock;
- (e) whether the grass on the "Green Carpet" could withstand busy pedestrian traffic, as there might be frequent demonstrations there when the new Central Government Complex at Tamar was in use; and
- (f) whether there would be sufficient facilities, such as toilets, along the advance promenade to cater for visitors' needs.

3.4 **Mr Chan Hok-fung** supported the Administration's initiative to open the advance promenade at Site 7 for public use as soon as possible. He had the following enquiries:-

- (a) why the proportion of greenery along the advance promenade remained low when compared with the overall greenery in Site 7, given that at least 9 hectare (ha) in Site 7 had been reserved for greenery;
- (b) whether the area of the proposed advance promenade could be expanded;
- (c) whether more facilities (such as Tai-Chi platform, cycling track, open sports playground, etc.) could be integrated into the advance promenade at a later stage;
- (d) in view of possible frequent demonstrations on the "Green Carpet", how the condition of grass planted on the "Green Carpet" could be properly monitored and maintained so as to minimise the closure of grass area for repair and maintenance;
- (e) whether it had been confirmed that the Hong Kong

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Maritime Museum, together with its proposed memorial anchor, would be relocated to Central Pier No. 8; and

- (f) whether facilities for other ball games, in addition to gate-ball as mentioned by LCSD in the proposal, could be introduced at Site 7.

3.5 **Dr Peter Cookson Smith** appreciated departments' efforts in the preparation of advance promenade works. Nonetheless, for a more holistic plan in the urban design, he opined that the development of Site 7 should not be examined in isolation of other sites in the new Central harbourfront. He also commented that more leisure facilities, e.g. children's play area, should be included in Site 7 to add vibrancy to the development. He was also of the view that the proposed viewing platform would block the harbour view, and that the access on the east end of Site 7 was inferior to that of the west end.

3.6 **Dr Andrew Thomson** shared Dr Smith's views that it was important to adopt a holistic approach in urban design to ensure success in the development of Site 7. He considered that the Tamar Development did not seem to be coherent with the proposed harbourfront development, and that more vibrant elements or features should be added to the proposal.

3.7 In response to the comments made by Members, **Mr Richard Wong** explained that:-

- (a) currently, LCSD had no plan to designate a pet garden within the advance promenade. Should there be great demand, consideration would be given to designating other venues in Central and Western District as pet garden(s);
- (b) both the advance promenade and the "Green Carpet" at Tamar would be open to the public round the clock every day;
- (c) the Hong Kong Maritime Museum would be relocated to Central Pier No. 8 and an area in front of the Pier would be reserved for display of a huge commemorative anchor which was the Museum's collection. The proposed location for the display fell within Site 7;

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- (d) some potential species of grass were at the moment under testing so that a suitable one could be identified for the "Green Carpet"; and
- (e) while other suitable active facilities could be considered in the waterfront promenade at Site 7, site constraints and compatibility with the environment had to be taken into account. For instance, large pitches for some ball games might not be suitable due to the limited width of the promenade.

3.8 **Mr Eric Fung** reiterated that the Central Reclamation Phase III (CRIII) works would be completed by end 2011 while the development of the permanent promenade could only start in mid 2014 the earliest, to enable the public and tourists to enjoy the waterfront as soon as possible, the Government had commenced the advance promenade works. For the advance promenade, small-scale works were recommended so that the promenade could be opened to the public as early as the beginning of 2012. He went on explaining the advantages of adopting a relatively simple design for the advance promenade as follows:-

- (a) a relatively simple design would allow greater flexibility for future design for the permanent promenade;
- (b) a simple greenery design would not impose irreversible constraints to the future development of the harbourfront; and
- (c) any future alteration to the promenade could be achieved in an easier manner.

3.9 In response to the queries raised by some Members, **Mr Eric Fung** replied that:-

- (a) the narrowest part of the advance promenade was 10 metres in width; and
- (b) there was no plan to provide toilet facilities along the advance promenade as there was already sufficient provision of public toilets in Central Ferry Piers, City Hall, and the new Central Government Complex at Tamar.

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- 3.10 In response to the query regarding connectivity of the advance promenade with other parts of the commercial district, **Mrs Sylvia Lam** said that, in addition to the existing connection between the Admiralty Transport Interchange and the Tamar Development Project, there would be an extended bridge connecting the new Tamar Development to the existing bridge facilities at CITIC Tower, which adjoined other neighbouring commercial complex and the Harcourt Garden in Admiralty. The extended bridge would also be connected to the “Green Carpet”, which would further lead users to the new advance promenade.
- 3.11 In responding to the Chairman’s enquiry, **Mr Boris Lo** said that the viewing platform was about 3 meters high, and its size was small, relative to the overall area of the advance promenade north to the Tamar Development, and hence would not block the harbour view. Understanding that harbour view was a primary concern in the design of the advance promenade, he assured Members that the volume of the viewing platform would be minimised with suitable design.
- 3.12 **Mr Andy Leung** had reservation on the design of the viewing platforms along the advance promenade for the following reasons:-
- (a) it would limit the accessibility to the harbourfront; and
 - (b) it would block the harbour view from the hinterland.
- 3.13 **Mr Andy Leung** also stressed that coherence with surrounding sites should be taken into account in developing Site 7, and that the success of Site 7 development would hinge upon its accessibility and connectivity with other sites.
- 3.14 **Mr Tam Po-yiu** said that it would assist Members in visualising the three-dimensional design of the advance promenade and the “Green Carpet” at Tamar if cross-sectional plans would be made available in future presentation. While appreciating the provision of greenery in Site 7, he took the view that there remained a long distance between the “Green Carpet” and the harbourfront. He also requested more details about the buildings and structures within the People Liberation Army (PLA) Military Berth, in particular, whether there would be any gates inside the little buildings and/or kiosks at the Pier.

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3.15 **Mr Paul Zimmermann** had the following views/enquiries:-

- (a) Site 4 and Site 7 should be considered in one single development project;
- (b) there remained a massive uncovered open space in the site, without any planned provision of facilities. The reassembly of Queen's Pier should also be considered;
- (c) it was unacceptable that there was no food and beverage (F&B) facilities to be provided along the 900-metre long advance promenade ;
- (d) the Administration should adopt a more active approach in managing the space occupied by the PLA Military Berth when it was not used by PLA. He also questioned the storage of steel gates when the Berth was not in use;
- (e) an officer with vision should be dedicated to oversee the whole project, as in the case of the Kai Tak Development;
- (f) no exclusion areas for emergency exits and access for technical services to the pumping house had been identified and marked on the plan; and
- (g) the area should be planned for Hong Kong's many formal ceremonies, and the Golden Bauhinia and the flag poles should be relocated to the area north to Tamar development as the new Central Government Complex at Tamar symbolized the governance of the city, providing the best photo opportunities in all directions, and was far superior to area next to the HKCEC and the heliport.

3.16 **Mr Shuki Leung** acknowledged the importance of the advance promenade, and agreed that the new Central harbourfront should be open to the public as soon as possible. He questioned whether the viewing platform should be constructed in such a strategic location, which might block the harbour view from Tamar. He also recommended the government to consider the land/marine interface when planning the harbourfront.

3.17 **Mr Eric Fok** suggested that the public use of the harbourfront promenade should be enhanced to showcase Hong Kong as a fashionable city. He made the following recommendations:-

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- (a) to organise themed walks along the promenade for promoting sports and commemorating the legacy of hosting the East Asian Games 2009;
- (b) to install more seating facilities at the promenade to make it a prime site for viewing National Day's fireworks;
- (c) to set up more F&B facilities along the promenade. He also suggested to improve the public and private transport to the promenade, for example, by increasing the number of parking spaces in Site 7;
- (d) to host more international sporting events in the promenade, such as cycling competitions and marathon;
- (e) to connect the promenade with other parts of Hong Kong Island; and
- (f) to liaise with the management of Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre to organise events in the promenade.

3.18 **Mr Vincent Ng** was concerned about the coherence of design of the advance promenade with the Tamar Development Project. He recommended that:-

- (a) the project team should come back with tools such as three-dimensional physical models and/or cross-sectional diagrams to assist Members' discussions; and
- (b) the Task Force might consider setting up a design panel to review the detailed design of these prime sites.

3.19 **Prof Becky Loo** opined that the advance promenade should be designed as a place for people to stay and take a break and hence shelters and furniture should be provided. She also shared Dr Smith's views that there should be plenty of space reserved for children and visitors from other parts of Hong Kong.

3.20 While appreciating Members' comments, **Ms Maisie Chan** reminded Members that the focus of discussion should be on

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the scope of works for the permanent development of the site, rather than the design of the advance promenade. She further explained that the advance promenade was a quick-win intended to release part of the Central harbourfront for early public enjoyment, and that the Administration would not rule out any possibility in upgrading the works of advance promenade. She would work with LCSD to revisit measures to enhance vibrancy at the harbourfront (e.g. F&B facilities). **Mr Richard Wong** agreed with the direction proposed by Ms Chan, and would closely follow up the case.

- 3.21 As regards the scope of works for the permanent promenade, **Dr Peter Cookson Smith** thought that the Task Force should agree on certain design parameters for the designer to work out and come back with viable proposals.
- 3.22 In response to the Chairman's enquiry, **Mr Harry Tsang** of LCSD replied that once the design consultant for the permanent promenade was appointed, LCSD would engage stakeholders including the Task Force's views and comments on the design of the permanent promenade.
- 3.23 **Dr Andrew Thomson** thought that the proposed scope of works was merely a schedule of accommodation and the proposed items were too generic.
- 3.24 **Mr Lam Kin-lai** opined that there should not be a large level difference between the "Green Carpet" and the harbourfront or the views would be blocked by the viewing platform. He suggested the Administration to review the height of the viewing platform.
- 3.25 **Mr Chan Hok-fung** said that the proposed scope of works for Site 7 and the "Green Carpet" in front of Tamar Development Project were two different matters, which should be dealt with separately to avoid confusion. **Mr Paul Zimmerman** said that the Administration should brief the Task Force further on the advance promenade and the green carpet in the future meeting as the current design ideas could only be considered as temporary.
- 3.26 In response to Mr Andy Leung's enquiry on whether any preliminary engineering works had been completed in Site 7 which would pose constraints to the design of the promenade, **Mr Eric Fung** reported that the reclamation and major civil

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engineering works for CRIII, including the pumping station, had already been completed.

- 3.27 **Ms Maisie Chan** added that the Central and Western District Council had been consulted on the advance promenade works at its meeting on 13 May 2010 and the Meeting supported in principle the advance promenade works.
- 3.28 In response to Ms Chan's remark, **Mr Chan Hok-fung** said that the Central and Western District Council requested the concerned departments to go back to the Council again for further deliberation.
- 3.29 **Mr Richard Wong** remarked that LCSD would consult the Central and Western District Council on the proposed scope of works later this year before their taking forward the funding procedures.
- 3.30 In conclusion, the Meeting agreed to note the proposed scope of works for the permanent promenade. The Task Force also requested LCSD to submit a draft design and planning brief to the Task Force for endorsement before the department issued it to the design consultant. The Task Force should also be kept consulted during the whole design process. On the advance promenade works, the Task Force requested CEDD and ArchSD to revert in the next meeting with tools such as three-dimensional physical models or cross-sectional diagrams to assist Members' discussions on the advance promenade works in Site 7.

Item 4 Any Other Business

Date of Next Meeting

- 4.1 The Secretariat would announce the date of the next meeting in due course.
- 4.2 There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Secretariat

Secretariat

**Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island
December 2010**