

Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island

Minutes of Eighth Meeting

Date : 12 January 2012
Time : 9:30 a.m.
Venue : Conference Room, 15/F, North Point Government Offices
333 Java Road, North Point

Present

Mr Nicholas Brooke	Chair
Mrs Margaret Brooke	Representing Business Environment Council
Mr Leung Kong-yui	Representing Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong
Mr Lam Kin-lai	Representing Conservancy Association
Mr Andy Leung	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Architects
Mr Leslie Chen	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects
Mr Tam Po-yiu	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Planners
Dr Peter Cookson Smith	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design
Ir Dr Chan Fuk-cheung	Representing Hong Kong Institution of Engineers
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	
Ms Lily Chow	
Ms Joanne Chan	
Mr Lam Cheuk-yum	
Ms Gracie Foo	Deputy Secretary (Planning and Lands)1, Development Bureau (DEVB)
Ms Stephanie Lai	Senior Manager (Tourism)2, Tourism Commission (TC)
Mr Peter Wong	Chief Traffic Engineer/Hong Kong, Transport Department (TD)
Mr Mak Chi-biu	Chief Engineer/Hong Kong 1, Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)
Ms Olivia Chan	Assistant Director (Leisure Services)2, Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)
Ms Brenda Au	District Planning Officer/Hong Kong, Planning Department (PlanD)
Mr Chris Fung	Secretary

In Attendance

Mrs Winnie Kang	Principal Assistant Secretary (Harbour), DEVB
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Mr Ronald Leung
Mr Peter Mok

Assistant Secretary (Harbour)2, DEVB
Project Manager (Harbour), DEVB

Absent with Apologies

Dr Frederick Lee
Dr Paul Ho
Mr Benjamin Cha
Mr Eric Fok
Mr Vincent Ng
Mr David Chan
Ms Patricia Or

Representing Friends of the Earth
Representing Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors

For Agenda Item 3

Ms Agnes Ng
Ms LK Chan
Ms Fedora Wong

Vice-Chairman, Hong Kong Architecture Centre
(HKAC)
Vice-Chairman, HKAC
Centre Manger, HKAC

For Agenda Item 4

Ms Elaine Mak
Ms Venus Yiu
Dr Herbert Huey
Ms Winnie Sin
Mr Ray Ng
Mr Sam Tsen
Mr Bernard Lim
Mr Patrick Tam

Principal Assistant Secretary (Culture)1, Home Affairs
Bureau (HAB)
Chief Executive Officer (Culture)1, HAB
Associate Director (Administration) and Registrar, The
Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA)
Bursar, HKAPA
Director of Estates, HKAPA
Assistant Estates Manager (Projects), HKAPA
Principal, Architecture Design and Research Group
(AD+RG)
Assistant Principal, AD+RG

For Agenda Item 5

Mr Martin Turner
Mr Nick Andrew
Mr Chan Ka-leung

Chairman, Hong Kong Cycling Alliance (HKCAI)
Member, HKCAI
Member, HKCAI

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The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting. He advised Members that Mr Peter Wong had taken over the post of TD's Chief Traffic Engineer/Hong Kong from Ms Ying Fun-fong. He welcomed Mr Wong to the meeting and put on record the Task Force's appreciation for Ms Ying's service.

Item 1 Confirmation of Minutes of the 7th Meeting

- 1.1 The draft minutes of the 7th meeting were sent to Members on 1 December 2011. The revised draft minutes incorporating Members' comments were circulated to Members on 22 December 2011. No further proposed comments have been received from Members.
- 1.2 There being no further amendment, the meeting confirmed the revised draft minutes.

Item 2 Matters Arising

Proposed Improvement at Western Fire Services Street (paragraphs 2.8 and 2.9 of the confirmed minutes of the 7th meeting)

- 2.1 **The Chair** advised Members that TD had issued the Works Requests for removing the amenity railings in October 2011 for completion in January 2012 and widening the northern footpath fronting the Harbour in November 2011 for completion in December 2013.
- 2.2 **Mr Paul Zimmerman** requested TD to circulate the detailed drawings on its plan to improve the footpath adjacent to the water pumping station at Western Fire Services Street after the meeting for Members' comments.

(Post-meeting note: The detailed drawings prepared by TD were circulated to Members on 3 April 2012.)

Overall Provision of Barging Points along the Waterfront (paragraph 3.7(f) of the confirmed minutes of the 7th meeting)

- 2.3 **The Chair** informed Members that the Secretariat of the Task Force on Water-land Interface was conducting an audit exercise to identify water-dependent activities and land uses within Victoria Harbour, including the provision of barging points.

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The subject would be discussed at the next meeting of the Task Force on Water-land Interface.

(Post-meeting note: The issue was discussed at the 2nd Meeting of the Task Force on Water-land Interface held on 21 February 2012.)

Construction of Additional Floors above Central Piers Nos. 4 to 6 (paragraph 4.14 of the confirmed minutes of the 7th meeting)

- 2.4 **The Chair** advised Members that CEDD's consultant had commissioned a business study in September 2011 to ascertain the marketing positioning and retail trade mix of the additional commercial areas; review the proposed layouts with a view to maximising the commercial potential; and provide an analysis of the opportunities for the newly added commercial area of the piers together with a review of the retail development scheme. The Study was expected to be completed in the 1st quarter of 2012. Its findings and recommendations would be presented to the Task Force at an appropriate juncture.

Connectivity at Central and Wanchai Harbourfront (paragraph 7.5 of the confirmed minutes of the 7th meeting)

- 2.5 **The Chair** informed Members that TD planned to make another presentation on the subject at a later Task Force meeting.

Development of Sites 4 and 7 at the New Central Harbourfront (paragraph 8.21 of the confirmed minutes of the 7th meeting)

- 2.6 **The Chair** reported that two closed-door special meetings were held on 3 October and 14 November 2011 respectively. The consultant, GHK (Hong Kong) Limited, presented the Study findings at the 8th Commission Meeting held on 13 December 2011. The consultant was currently consolidating recommendations and finalising the report.

Connectivity between the boardwalk under Island Eastern Corridor (IEC) and the hinterland (paragraph 3.5(e) of the confirmed minutes of the 7th meeting)

- 2.7 **Mr Zimmerman** suggested that more access points should be provided between the boardwalk and the hinterland in order to maximise the public use of boardwalk and enhance the connectivity. He requested further discussion on the issue.

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- 2.8 **The Chair** said that the boardwalk design was being refined and it would be reverted to the Task Force at an appropriate juncture.
- 2.9 **Mr Zimmerman** suggested a closer examination to identify whether piers and landing points were sufficient along the shoreline under the IEC before any commitment to the detailed design of the boardwalk. Ample connecting points should be made available to vessel for landing within this waterfront. The issue should be diligently followed up by this Task Force or the Task Force on Water-land Interface.
- 2.10 In response, **the Chair** said that the issue of piers and landing points was within the purview of the Task Force on Water-land Interface and would thus be included on the agenda of that Task Force.

**Item 3 Proposal to Build a New Centre by Hong Kong Architecture Centre
(Paper No. TFHK/01/2012)**

- 3.1 Before discussion, **Mr Andy Leung** declared that he was a Director of Ronald Lu & Partners (Hong Kong) Ltd., the consultant providing *pro bono* service to the project. **The Chair** proposed and **Members** agreed that Mr Leung could continue to stay in the meeting but should refrain from participating in the discussion on the item.
- 3.2 **The Chair** welcomed representatives of HKAC to the meeting. **Ms LK Chan** of HKAC presented the proposal with the aid of a PowerPoint.
- 3.3 **The Chair** enquired about the long-term financial viability of the proposal, particularly the financial sources involved in supporting the operations of the new centre.
- 3.4 **Mr Lam Kin-lai** appreciated HKAC's creativity in the site selection for the new centre. He asked about the actual useable floor area of the centre and its intended use.
- 3.5 **Dr Peter Cookson Smith** was of the view that the proposal had only limited interface with the harbourfront. Although architectural ingenuity was demonstrated in the design of the new centre, it was not prominent due to site constraints. While

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supporting the proposal, he opined that an alternative site in better conditions should be allocated to HKAC to build its new centre.

- 3.6 **Mr Paul Zimmerman** lent full support as the proposal would rectify the unpleasant state in the vicinity. He suggested colouring up the building in bright red or bright green to enlighten the grey and dusty environment. Noting that the junction next to the site was always choked with traffic, he enquired whether TD had considered deploying the site for traffic improvement.
- 3.7 **Mr Chan Hok-fung** had reservation about the proposal. While agreeing that vacant sites under flyovers should be better utilised, he doubted if this was the most suitable site for building this new centre. It would be difficult to organise activities at the elevated plaza due to low headroom and traffic noise problem. He also recalled that the Central and Western District Council (C&WDC) had suggested to TD on using the site for lorry parking and he was disappointed that TD had not followed through the case with C&WDC.
- 3.8 **Mr Lam Cheuk-yum** was supportive of the proposal. He said that good planning would be required for construction at this constrained site. He requested HKAC to review the site accessibility, including the provision of barrier-free access.
- 3.9 **Mr Shuki Leung** appreciated the creative use of under-utilised urban land as entailed in the proposal. With the completion of the new centre, more activities would be brought to the waterfront. Since the site was zoned as "Road" rather than "Government, Institution or Community", he questioned whether the application should be submitted under section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance (TPO) or section 12A of TPO. He also raised the following enquiries to the proponent:-
- (a) how the proponent would feature barrier-free developments in the design of the new centre;
 - (b) why the new centre could not be integrated with the nearby elevated walkway so that people with disabilities could access the centre right from the footbridge level;
 - (c) whether shared-use of the centre facilities with other organisations for public, recreational, cultural and leisure

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purposes would be allowed; and

- (d) whether the requests from any external organisations for conducting events at the centre would be entertained.

3.10 **Mr Tam Po-yiu** supported this proposal and appreciated the idea put forth by the proponent's architects.

3.11 In response to Members' comments and queries, **Ms Chan** said that:-

- (a) a platform adjoining the bridge and the new centre would be incorporated to facilitate access of people with disabilities;
- (b) as advised by the Highways Department, neither parking at, nor vehicular access to, the new centre would be allowed. However, access of the fire and emergency services was not restricted in case of emergency;
- (c) the relevant government bureau had granted policy support after vetting the operational proposal and financial projection;
- (d) HKAC had the relevant management capabilities given its track record of operating the centre for several years;
- (e) building costs were estimated within the range of \$10 million to \$20 million. HKAC would collaborate with contractors to save construction costs by using building wastes and recycled materials. Fund raising would also be launched for the project;
- (f) a team of *pro bono* consultant had been engaged to handle technical issues arising from the complexity of public utilities and power supply on site. Sufficient area would be carved out from the site to maintain the necessary access to the public utilities;
- (g) while the use of spotlights was not optimum at this site, only a few colours would be profiled on the building facade; and
- (h) it was hoped that the proposal could demonstrate how architectural professionals in Hong Kong were capable

for using a constrained site creatively.

- 3.12 In response to Mr Leung's remarks, **Ms Brenda Au** clarified that an application under section 16 of TPO would be applicable to the present case, as there were provisions in the Covering Notes of the Outline Zoning Plan for application for use and development within the "Road" area.
- 3.13 **Mr Peter Wong** advised that TD had no objection to the proposal. In response to Mr Zimmerman's enquiry, Mr Wong explained the site was surrounded by columns and it would be difficult to make use of the site for traffic improvement and lane expansion. In addressing Mr Chan's remarks, TD would follow up C&WDC's request for providing more lorry parking spaces in the district.
- 3.14 In closing the discussion, **the Chair** concluded that the meeting supported the proposal.

**Item 4 Expansion of the Wanchai Campus of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts
(Paper No. TFHK/02/2012)**

- 4.1 **The Chair** welcomed the presentation team. After **Ms Elaine Mak** of HAB and **Dr Herbert Huey** of HKAPA made some introductory remarks, **Mr Bernard Lim** of AD+RG presented the proposal for Wanchai Campus expansion with the aid of a PowerPoint.
- 4.2 **The Chair** enquired why the new Central and Wan Chai harbourfront area had not been reflected in the master layout plan (MLP) of the campus expansion proposal. In response, **Mr Lim** explained that the MLP was intended to capture the existing conditions and the short-term planning for Members' information.
- 4.3 **The Chair** suggested that the proponent should take forward the project in the context of the developments at the new harbourfront rather than just the present landscape. **Mr Lim** welcomed the Chair's suggestion.
- 4.4 **Mr Paul Zimmerman** supported the proposal as it would improve the facilities for education and cultural software of Hong Kong. He found that the current levelling inside and

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outside the campus were undesirable for pedestrian circulation. As most visitors and students approached the campus on foot, the proponent should consider improving the pedestrian circulation.

- 4.5 **Mr Andy Leung** commented that the campus expansion would reinforce HKAPA's development as well as its services to the community and therefore he supported the proposal. He was of the view that HKAPA should have a holistic planning including the current expansion and its further extension in the future (i.e. the earmarked site for the proposed Northern Annex).
- 4.6 **Dr Peter Cookson Smith** supported the proposal, which could maximise event space and offer new facilities to campus users. He had no objection to the design as it involved no major spatial impact.
- 4.7 **Mr Leung Kong-yui** supported the proposal. In view of the pressing need to accommodate the double cohorts of undergraduate students enrolled in 2012/13, the proposal for expanding the existing campus should be supported.
- 4.8 **Mr Tam Po-yiu** declared interests that he was an incumbent Council Member of the Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design (HKIUD) while Mr Lim was the President of HKIUD. Mr Tam supported the proposal as the expansion would strengthen the cluster of HKAPA and Hong Kong Arts Centre and put in more synergy.
- 4.9 **Ms Joanne Chan** also supported the expansion plan. She concurred with the Chair's and Mr Zimmerman's views that the campus expansion should be viewed holistically in the context of the whole area. Pedestrian accessibility to the campus should be further examined.
- 4.10 **Mr Shuki Leung** was in full support of the proposal. Pedestrian accessibility was a medium- to long-term issue which could be reviewed later.
- 4.11 In response to Members' comments, **Mr Lim** said that the proposal would only involve interim alteration, addition and extension in building development terms. Further integration with the waterfront promenade and other developments in the area might be explored in the future. The expansion being

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proposed would be minimal in order to cater for the imminent needs for HKAPA to implement the new “3-3-4” curriculum.

- 4.12 **Dr Huey** remarked that HKAPA was fully aware of the site earmarked as the northern annex in the future campus development. However, it was not expected to be available before 2020. Given the mounting pressure on space shortage of the campus, the present proposal was a necessary stop-gap measure.
- 4.13 **Mr Zimmerman** opined that the issue of pedestrian circulation inside and outside HKAPA should be resolved shortly. He requested the project proponent to revert with a proposal and some plans, under TD’s necessary assistance, explaining how to improve the current situation. In response, **Mr Lim** said that Members’ concerns were noted and explained that the project focused on the internal arrangement and responded to the practical teaching needs of the Academy. External pedestrian circulation was generally beyond the scope of the project. The project proponent would revert to the Task Force any supplementary information regarding pedestrian circulation by means of circulation.

(Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the project proponent was circulated to Members on 3 April 2012.)

- 4.14 **Ms Mak** thanked Members for the valuable comments. She supplemented that stakeholders including the Task Force would be consulted on any future expansion plan for the HKAPA campus.
- 4.15 In conclusion, **the Chair** said that the meeting appreciated the urgent need of the campus expansion and supported the proposal.

Item 5 The Island Eastern Corridor Boardwalk Cycleway Feasibility Study by The Hong Kong Cycling Alliance (Paper No. TFHK/03/2012)

- 5.1 **The Chair** welcomed representatives of HKCAll to the meeting. **Messrs Martin Turner** and **Nick Andrew** presented the paper with the aid of a PowerPoint and a video.
- 5.2 **Dr Peter Cookson Smith** advised that he was the director of

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Urbis Limited, a consultant commissioned by PlanD to conduct the Hong Kong Island East Harbour-front Study (HKIEHS), in which the incorporation of cycle tracks was examined. **The Chair** considered that Dr Smith had a conflict of interest and should be refrained from participating in the discussion on the item.

- 5.3 Regarding paragraph 8 of the meeting paper, **Ms Brenda Au** clarified that in Stage 2 Public Engagement Programme of HKIEHS, the views on the provision of cycling facilities alongside the waterfront promenade were diverse. Some people supported the provision of a continuous cycle track along the waterfront whereas some others expressed concern about pedestrian safety and suggested that cycling activities should be restricted.
- 5.4 **Ms Au** said that PlanD had already proposed under HKIEHS the incorporation of cycle tracks on some feasible sites, namely, the ex-North Point Estates site and the Hoi Yu Street waterfront promenade. Noting that CEDD would conduct a topical study to examine the feasibility of the boardwalk proposal, PlanD had requested CEDD to also examine the feasibility of incorporating cycle track alongside the boardwalk and the implications on the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance (PHO).
- 5.5 **Mr Paul Zimmerman** welcomed CEDD to incorporate cycle track in the scope of consideration in the topical study. The Task Force should wait for the study findings. He suggested that CEDD should also examine the cost effectiveness of providing a cycle track alongside the proposed boardwalk.
- 5.6 **Mr Mak Chi-biu** said that the topical study embarked by CEDD was to mainly focus on the technical feasibility of constructing a boardwalk under IEC. Before commencement of the topical study, it was uncertain whether a cycle track could be proposed alongside the boardwalk. If technical constraints could be overcome, CEDD would then explore the implications of the boardwalk and cycleway proposals and the impact under PHO. The topical study was anticipated for completion in the second half of 2012. By then, it would become clearer whether the proposal was feasible or not. CEDD would remain in contact with HKCAI while the topical study was conducted.
- 5.7 **Mr Leslie Chen** welcomed the idea of creating a combined pathway for pedestrians and cycles on the waterfront. He

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agreed that technical feasibility of the boardwalk and cycleway should be explored. He asked whether there would be integrated planning for the provision of access nodes, interface, resting place and scenic spots on the boardwalk. The desirable length of pathway in between two access nodes should be studied.

5.8 **Mr Lam Cheuk-yum** enquired how vehicles of the emergency services would gain access to the part of the harbourfront if the cycleway was to be incorporated with the proposed boardwalk.

5.9 **The Chair** enquired how to rationalise safety of pedestrians and cyclists on the boardwalk.

5.10 In response to Members comments and enquiries, **Mr Turner** said that:-

- (a) the mixed traffic system for pedestrians and cyclists was functioning well in other parts of Hong Kong. Cyclists and pedestrians should not be unduly distinguished as different road users;
- (b) common sense and reasonableness should be exercised when considering the circulation of pedestrians and cyclists on the boardwalk;
- (c) proper structures should be put in place to guide the movement of cyclists and pedestrians. For instance, planters and benches could be installed, as appropriate, to separate the cycling zone from pedestrian zone;
- (d) the cycleway along the harbourfront should primarily be a leisure facility; and
- (e) safety issues should be addressed by setting up proper guidelines rather than by designing on rigidity.

5.11 **Mr Zimmerman** recalled the presentation made by HKCAI at the 7th Meeting of the full Commission held on 7 September 2011. He asked when HKCAI would respond to the issues raised by Commission Members. In response, **Mr Turner** assured that HKCAI would respond to the questions by replying to the Task Force in the coming months.

HKCAI

5.12 **Ms Joanne Chan** supported the idea of setting up a cycle track

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along the waterfront. She suggested examining the rules and regulations for cyclists in Hong Kong if technical and safety issues were to be explored.

- 5.13 In response, **Mr Turner** said that the Government had recently confirmed its position that helmet-wearing was not mandatory for cyclists. He was of the view that the choice for cyclists to wear helmets should be voluntary but not mandatory.
- 5.14 In closing the discussion, **the Chair** concluded that CEDD was invited to revert to the Task Force after the completion of the topical study.

Item 6 Any Other Business

Site Visit to the Central Harbourfront

- 6.1 **The Chair** announced that the site visit to the new Central harbourfront would be held after the meeting.

Wan Chai Development Phase II

- 6.2 **Mr Paul Zimmerman** suggested reviewing the plan for the Wan Chai Development Phase II (WDII). **The Chair** asked the Secretariat to follow up.

**The
Secretariat**

Date of Next Meeting

- 6.3 **The Chair** announced that the next meeting had been tentatively scheduled in April 2012.

(Post-meeting note: The next meeting had been scheduled for 10 May 2012.)

- 6.4 There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Secretariat

**Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island
May 2012**