

Harbourfront Commission
Task Force on Harbourfront Developments
on Hong Kong Island

Minutes of Forty-Second Meeting

Date : 26 July 2022
Time : 3:00 pm
Venue : Room 1303, 13/F, Wing On Kowloon Centre, 345 Nathan
Road, Kowloon

Present (attending in person)

Mr Vincent NG	Chairman, Harbourfront Commission
Mr Ivan HO	Chairman, Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island
Dr Vivian WONG	Representing Friends of the Earth (HK) Charity Limited
Mr Paul ZIMMERMAN	Representing Society for Protection of the Harbour
Mr LEUNG Kong-yui	Representing the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong
Dr CHUNG Shan-shan	Representing the Conservancy Association
Ir Victor CHEUNG	Representing the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers
Dr Frankie YEUNG	Individual Member

Present (attending online)

Mr Benny CHAN	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design
Mr Jacky CHEUNG	Representing the Hong Kong Institute of Architects
Ms Iris HOI	Representing the Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects
Mr Edward LO	Representing the Hong Kong Institute of Planners
Sr Francis LAM	Representing the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors
Mr Desmond NG	Representing the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong

Mr Mac CHAN	Individual Member
Mr Karl KWOK	Individual Member
Ir Janice LAI	Individual Member
Ms Sunnie LAU	Individual Member
Dr Lawrence LI	Individual Member
Ms Angela SO	Individual Member
HON Tony TSE	Individual Member

Official Members (attending in person)

Ms Leonie LEE	Commissioner for Harbourfront, Development Bureau (DEVB)
Mr Horace HONG	Chief Traffic Engineer/Hong Kong, Transport Department (TD)
Mr Raymond LEE	Chief Engineer/South 3, Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)
Mr Benjamin HUNG	Assistant Director (Leisure Services) 2, Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)
Mr Mann CHOW	District Planning Officer/Hong Kong, Planning Department (PlanD)
Mr William LEUNG	Secretary

Official Members (attending online)

Ms Anny TANG	Senior Manager (Tourism) 21, Tourism Commission (TC)
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Absent with Apologies

Mrs Margaret BROOKE	Representing Business Environment Council
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For Agenda Item 3

Mr Jenny CHAN	Project Manager (Harbour), DEVB
Mr NG Shing-kit	Senior Engineer (Harbour) 2, DEVB

Welcoming Message

The Chairman introduced and welcomed the following new Members to the meeting, including -

- (a) **Dr Lawrence LI** who had been appointed as individual member since 1 July 2021;
- (b) **Ms Sunnie LAU** who had been appointed as individual member since 1 July 2021; and
- (c) **Dr Frankie YEUNG** who had been appointed as individual member since 1 July 2021.

He also informed the meeting that -

- (a) **Ms Leonie LEE** has taken over the post of Commissioner for Harbourfront of Development Bureau from Miss Rosalind CHEUNG, and Ms Leonie LEE attends on behalf of Mr Vic YAU, Deputy Secretary (Planning and Lands) 1; and
- (b) **Ms Anny TANG**, Senior Manager of the Tourism Commission (TC), attends on behalf of Ms Elsa HUNG, Assistant Commissioner for Tourism (2).

Item 1 Confirmation of Minutes of the 41st Meeting

- 1.1 The draft minutes of the 41st meeting were circulated to Members on 22 July 2022. Since no comments were received, the minutes were confirmed at the meeting.

Item 2 Matters Arising

- 2.1 There was no follow-up matter arising from the last meeting.

Item 3 Development of Remaining Works Areas at Wan Chai Harbourfront (Paper No. TFHK/01/2022)

Introduction

- 3.1 **The Chairman** informed Members that the Harbour Office would present the proposed arrangement of remaining works areas at Water Sports and Recreation Precinct (WSP) and Wan Chai Harbourfront Event Space (WCHES) at Pierside Precinct (PP) at Wan Chai North. The WCHES would be implemented through a short-term tenancy (STT).
- 3.2 Upon the Chairman's invitation, **Mr William LEUNG** briefed Members on the background of the project as follows:
- (a) Under the Urban Design Study for the Wan Chai North and North Point Harbourfront Areas (WCUDS), areas outside the Wan Chai Ferry Pier (WCFP) should be developed into the PP, whereas the WSP would facilitate the hosting of local and international water sports events;
 - (b) With the joint efforts of the Harbourfront Commission and various government bureaux and departments, a significant part of the area, including the waterfront promenade running on both sides of the WCFP, the "HarbourChill", the ex-public transport interchange (ex-PTI) and WSP (Phase 1 and 2) had been opened to public progressively since December 2020 under the "incremental" approach; and
 - (c) The remaining areas at the PP and WSP were currently occupied by the Shatin-to-Central Link (SCL) and Central-Wanchai Bypass (CWB) projects as works area. The reinstatement works at WSP (Phase 3) was in full swing while the works area of SCL project at PP and WSP (Phase 4) were expected to be released by end 2022.

Presentation by the Project Proponent

- 3.3 Upon the Chairman's invitation, **Mr NG Shing-kit** and **Ms Jenny CHAN** briefed Members on the proposed arrangement of remaining works areas at WSP and WCHES at PP at Wan Chai North with the aid of PowerPoint.

Discussion

General Comments

- 3.4 **Dr Vivian WONG, Mr Jacky CHEUNG, Mr LEUNG Kong-yui, Mr Vincent NG, Mr Benny CHAN and Mr Edward LO** supported the proposed schematic design and thanked the efforts made by the project team for the project.

Design of Finger Pier of WSP (Phase 4)

- 3.5 **Mr Paul ZIMMERMAN** opined that the finger pier, located next to the Wan Chai Basin and with both deep water and shallow water around, was an ideal place for organising water sports activities and other marine use, such as hosting the Volvo Ocean Race which would boost Hong Kong's role in hosting international events. He worried that the proposed Mid-Life Refurbishment (MLR) train at the finger pier would reduce the flexibility for hosting events. He enquired if the pier was the best location to display the train and suggested exploring alternative location. In addition, he suggested constructing landing steps near the pier to facilitate the organisation of water sports activities.
- 3.6 **Ir Victor CHEUNG** enquired for further elaboration on the proposal of placing MLR train at WSP. He opined that it would be more reasonable to showcase a vessel at the pier rather than a retired Kowloon Carton Railway train.
- 3.7 **Mr LEUNG Kong-yui** pointed out that subject area was a berthing place instead of a pier. He considered it meaningful to display the MLR train at WSP since it could embody the public's collective memory of the first cross-harbour rail link connecting Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon Peninsula over the one hundred years of railway operations. He considered the subject site as an ideal place for accommodating the train.
- 3.8 **Mr Vincent NG** concurred with Mr Leung's view that the value and function of the site went beyond a pier. He remarked that there remained over 10m of space on both sides of the pier after placing the train, which would be sufficient to hold any kinds of activity. Besides, the open space at the tip of the finger pier tip, with a diameter of over 30m, presented numerous possibilities.

He supported the design and considered that it was an innovative idea to display a MLR train that could be multifunctional, such as serving as a kiosk, a stage or a VIP lounge for performing groups. He opined that under the “incremental approach”, the project should be implemented as early as possible and issues could be identified and resolved after commissioning.

- 3.9 **Mr Mac CHAN** noted that train was popular among different age groups. He shared the same view that the MLR train at the site would remind people of the history. Transforming the train to serve other purposes would be interesting and could give unique characteristics to the whole area. He suggested extending the rail track lines for people to take photos and moving seats inside the train compartment to the outside area to serve as outdoor seating.
- 3.10 **Mr Edward LO** concurred and added that the train, as an important mode of transport, could represent the development of the city. He advised the project team to incorporate Members’ views when preparing the long-term planning for the subject area.
- 3.11 **Mr Jacky CHEUNG** enquired about the timeframe for placing the MLR train at the site and how the train would be handled when it was no longer required.
- 3.12 **Dr Lawrence LI** advised the Government to ensure more communication with the public on the rationale of placing the MLR train at the pier as well as design and proposed use of the train, which would also benefit the future management of the venue.
- 3.13 In response, **Mr NG Shing-kit** said that the proposal was at a conceptual design stage. The proposed train would represent an iconic train crossing the harbour and it could be an exhibition, reception or lounge area offering a wide range of opportunities. The finger pier could provide adequate space to host different events. Members’ comments and suggestions would be carefully considered and incorporated into the plan as appropriate during the detail design.

Facilities and Sustainability

- 3.14 **Dr Vivian Wong** suggested building a stage for organising local and international concerts at the finger pier, similar to what was staged at the West Kowloon Cultural District previously. **The Chairman** echoed her view. **Mr Mac CHAN** and **Dr Frankie YEUNG** concurred and added that the tip of the finger pier was considered suitable for performance such as bands and the target audience could also be accommodated on vessels. Fixed facilities and equipment such as permanent PA system should be provided for event organisers and performing groups, especially the young people with limited resources, to save their cost. **Dr Frankie YEUNG** also expressed concern on the rental cost of the venue.
- 3.15 **Mr Paul ZIMMERMAN** enquired about the timeline for the provision of food and beverages (F&B) outlets. **Mr Jacky CHEUNG** added that it would be beneficial if there could be ample F&B kiosks or station for food delivery since the site was not in close proximity to the Wan Chai hinterland.
- 3.16 **Mr Benny CHAN** opined that more facilities for the elderly, such as seats with backrests and shelters, should be provided. Besides, more trees with large canopies should be planted to provide shading.
- 3.17 **Ir Victor CHEUNG** noted that the design with solar panel on the rooftop was environmentally friendly and suggested placing the panel on other areas such as the pavement in addition to the rooftop. He also suggested installing a rainwater harvesting system for irrigation of trees and shrubs.
- 3.18 **Ir Janice LAI** enquired if the train compartment would consume much energy for cooling and ventilation and asked for the measures to lower the temperature inside the train. **Sr Francis LAM** shared her view.
- 3.19 **Mr LEUNG Kong-yui** and **Ms Sunnie LAU** pointed out that the location was very windy and stressed the need to ensure the installation and as-built structure to be able to withstand the wind loads during typhoons and extreme weather. **Mr LEUNG Kong-yui** was concern about the site limitation and advised not to plant tall trees with deep roots. He recommended providing man-made shelters instead.

- 3.20 **Mr NG Shing-kit** responded that the proposed structures and installations would be designed and constructed to resist wind loads. Regarding event management, essential utilities such as electricity and water, etc. had already been included in the design. In the latter phase, supporting equipment and facilities would be further upgraded to meet the needs for organising various events. For instance, floating pontoons were previously loaned to event organisers free of charge for holding a number of water sports activities.
- 3.21 **Ms Iris HOI** noted that only one toilet was shown in the plan and considered it insufficient. **Mr NG Shing-kit** responded that more toilets would be added at Phase 3, and supplemented that there was one existing toilet near the ex-PTI which was managed by the Harbour Office. If there were other needs, more facilities could be provided in future.
- 3.22 **Dr CHUNG Shan-shan** raised concern over the possible waste generated by the exhibitions and events. She suggested formulating a set of green event guidelines for all harbourfront activities and the contractors should be requested to strictly observe the guidelines when holding future events. **Mr Jacky CHEUNG** agreed and remarked that the operators had to observe the green principles such as recycling materials as much as possible.
- 3.23 **The Chairman** shared the same views and supplemented that the guidelines should include two parts, i.e. sustainable design and sustainable operation. He invited the project team to develop a framework for an operation manual, which would include aspects of the recyclable materials and waste management, for organisers to follow.
- 3.24 **Mr NG Shing-kit** responded that the Government attached great importance to the sustainable development. In the prevailing practice, sustainability requirement had been included in the terms and conditions of the agreement of STT. For instance, art installations using recycled materials were displayed at the East Coast Park Precinct. The Harbour Office would closely liaise with the event organisers on waste management.

Tendering for Event Space

- 3.25 **Ir Janice LAI** suggested that in order to allow more members of the public to enjoy the harbourfront areas, the rental cost should not be a significant factor in assessing the tenderers' submissions.
- 3.26 **Mr Benny CHAN** opined that given the large size of the site, the event organisers might need to invest substantially for paving the ground and installing the necessary facilities, hence, he recommended extending the two-year tenancy term for a more viable business case.
- 3.27 **Mr Paul ZIMMERMAN** suggested that the event space should be fenceless and penetrable so that people could walk through it. The public should not be charged at the entrance gate while fees could be collected at each stall.
- 3.28 **Mr Benny CHAN** concurred and suggested that the public should be able to access the site free-of-charge when there were no events, which could be a clause in the tenancy agreement for protection of the public rights.
- 3.29 **Mr NG Shing-kit** responded that Members' views on rental assessment were noted and would be incorporated as appropriate in the tendering exercise. Regarding the tenancy period, he replied that the WCHES was intended for small to medium-scale events. It was expected that WCHES would attract small-scale performance like those staged by young performers in WSP (Phase 1). Based on feedback from previous experiences and previous events held in nearby HarbourChill site, the subject site was considered attractive given its prime location with good accessibility and supporting facilities. In view of the above, it was considered appropriate to have a two-year STT, which would not constrain the longer-term development of the site as well. The Government would collect public opinion on the design of the promenade and integrate them into the design of the next phase development, thus facilitating the creation of a space catering the needs of the public.

Greening

- 3.30 **Ir Victor CHEUNG** suggested more greenery area should be provided. **Mr Jacky CHEUNG** agreed and added that more portable plant area and sun shading devices including removable pavilions should be provided. **Mr NG Shing-kit** responded that consideration would be given to allocate more space for greening.

Connectivity

- 3.31 **Mr Paul ZIMMERMAN** enquired if there would be a feature footbridge at Percival Street connecting the Causeway Bay hinterland to the harbourfront areas. He suggested the pavement to be widened while the road be narrowed in order to better cater for the needs of pedestrians.
- 3.32 **Mr Frances LAM** observed that currently the HarbourChill could not be easily seen from Exhibition Centre Station. He supported an at-grade crossing and asked for the details of the design. He also suggested that the works area adjacent to HarbourChill which was currently occupied by SCL project, should be handed over to the Government at the earliest possible time.
- 3.33 **Mr Benny CHAN** agreed that the connectivity between the hinterland and the harbourfront should be improved. He enquired how people would enter and leave the venue when there was a large-scale concert with a large audience.
- 3.34 **The Chairman** considered that while the feature footbridge would be an important feature to connect to Causeway Bay hinterland, it was beyond the scope of today's discussion. As regards the concern on the roadside parking at Hung Hing Road, this had been discussed at previous meeting.
- 3.35 **Mr NG Shing-kit** responded that the office would continue to work closely with relevant Bureaux/Departments to enhance the connectivity from the hinterland to the site, while the open space would be open for public enjoyment first under the "incremental approach".

Way forward

- 3.36 **The Chairman** concluded that the majority of the Members were generally supportive to the proposed design and thanked the efforts made by the project team. He invited the team to take into account Members' comments and suggestions when preparing the detailed design of the project. In particular, the design should adopt the Modular Integrated Construction method, be more elderly-friendly, be able to accommodate events such as performing arts, and address practical issues such as hot weather with shading and greenery, as well as sustainability in terms of design and operations. He hoped that the project could be implemented in an expedited manner in order to allow early public enjoyment.

Item 4 Any Other Business

- 4.1 **The Chairman** said that the Secretariat would inform Members of the date of the next meeting in due course.
- 4.2 There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Secretariat

Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island

Harbourfront Commission

December 2022