

6th Meeting of Harbourfront Commission
held at 2:30 pm on 18 July 2011 at the Conference Room
on 15/F, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, Hong Kong

Minutes of Meeting

Present

Mr Nicholas Brooke	Chair
Mrs Margaret Brooke	Representing Business Environment Council
Mr Lam Kin-lai	Representing Conservancy Association
Mr Franklin Yu	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
Ir Peter Wong	Representing Hong Kong Institution of Engineers
Mr Shuki Leung	Representing Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong
Mr Winston Chu	Representing Society for Protection of the Harbour
Mr Chan Hok-fung	
Ms Lily Chow	
Mr Vincent Ng	
Mr Philip Yung	Commissioner for Tourism
Mr Albert Lee	Chief Traffic Engineer/Kowloon, Transport Department
Mr Stephen Tang	Head/Kai Tak Office, Civil Engineering and Development Department
Miss Olivia Chan	Assistant Director (Leisure Services)2, Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mr Roger Tupper	Director of Marine
Mr Raymond Wong	Assistant Director/Territorial, Planning Department
Mr Chris Fung	Secretary

In Attendance

Mr Thomas Chow	Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands)
Ms Gracie Foo	Deputy Secretary (Planning and Lands)1, Development Bureau (DEVB)
Mr Ronald Leung	Assistant Secretary (Harbour)2, DEVB
Mr Peter Mok	Project Manager (Harbour), DEVB

Ms Ida Lam
Co-opted Member of Task Force on Harbourfront Developments in Kowloon, Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing

For Agenda Item 6

Dr Liu Kwei-kin
Assistant Director (Agriculture), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)

Ms Wendy Ko
Senior Agricultural Officer (Planning & Livestock Farm Licensing), AFCD

Absent with Apologies

Mrs Carrie Lam
Vice-Chair

Prof Becky Loo
Representing Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong

Prof Carlos Lo
Representing Friends of the Earth

Mr Leslie Chen
Representing Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects

Mr Benjamin Cha

Ms Dilys Chau

Mr Eric Fok

Mr Clement Kwok

Ms Ann So

Action

Item 1 Confirmation of Minutes of the 5th Meeting

1.1 **The Chair** said that the Secretariat circulated the draft minutes of the 5th meeting to Members on 4 July 2011 and received proposed amendments from Mr Vincent Ng, Mrs Margaret Brooke and himself. After incorporating the proposed amendments, the revised draft minutes were circulated to Members on 14 July 2011. As no further amendment was proposed at the meeting, the revised minutes were confirmed.

Item 2 Matters Arising

A. *Proposed Establishment of a Statutory Harbourfront Authority (Paragraph 2.9 of the minutes of the 5th meeting)*

2.1 **The Chair** said that at the last meeting, Members had a productive discussion on the potential of establishing a statutory Harbourfront Authority and recognized the need to conduct research on local and overseas authorities with a view to identifying the key parameters and possible models for Hong Kong. He informed the meeting that the Harbour Business Forum (HBF) had kindly agreed to conduct such research at its own cost.

2.2 **Mrs Margaret Brooke** referred Members to a brief scope of the research tabled at the meeting and supplemented that it was basically a desktop exercise making reference to various studies previously undertaken by HBF, the former Harbour-front Enhancement Committee (HEC) and Legislative Council's Subcommittee on Harbourfront Planning (the LegCo Subcommittee). The studies focused on the institutional arrangements of overseas harbourfront management set-ups. HBF considered it sensible to consolidate those studies and compile a report setting out the possibilities, pros and cons of different models, and their relevance to the system of Hong Kong. Regarding Item 2 of the outlined scope of service, HBF had prepared a preliminary long list of possible case studies and would welcome Members' suggestions on additional areas to be covered.

2.3 **Mr Roger Tupper** thanked HBF's for its effort and suggested that it might also be useful to look at how Yokohama and Pusan had redeveloped their waterfronts.

2.4 In response to the Chair's question, **Mrs Brooke** said that unless there were a lot of suggestions from Members, it should be possible to consolidate the previous research results and compile a report for discussion by the Commission by the end of September.

B. *Proposed Establishment of a new Task Force on Water-land Interface (Paragraph 3.18 of the minutes of the 5th meeting)*

2.5 **The Chair** said that the Secretariat had prepared a paper on the matter, which would be discussed under Agenda Item 7 of the meeting.

C. *The Paper on “Proposed Proportionality Principle on Reclamation of Victoria Harbour” prepared by Mr Winston Chu (Paragraph 5.4 of the minutes of the 5th meeting)*

2.6 **The Chair** said that the Secretariat had received the paper prepared by Mr Winston Chu, which would be discussed at the next Commission meeting in September 2011.

2.7 **Mr Winston Chu** said that after having done the necessary research, he had taken more than three months to write the paper which had received blessing from leading counsel and his legal advisers. He asked the Secretariat to send the paper to Members early so that Members could have more time to digest the contents. A copy of the paper had also been sent to the Secretary for Justice (S for J). He suggested inviting S for J to the next Commission meeting. **The Chair** agreed with the suggestion.

(Post-meeting note: The paper was sent to Members on 19 July 2011.)

Item 3 Progress Report from Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island (Paper No. HC/12/2011)

3.1 **The Chair**, in his capacity as the Chair of the Hong Kong Task Force, presented the progress report.

3.2 **Dr Peter Cookson Smith** updated the meeting that he had refined the draft checklist for processing advertisements/signboards at the harbourfront. The draft checklist was ready for circulation to Task Force Members.

Item 4 Progress Report from Task Force on Kai Tak Harbourfront Development (Paper No. HC/13/2011)

4.1 **Mr Vincent Ng** briefed Members on the progress report.

4.2 The meeting noted the contents of the progress report.

Item 5 Progress Report from Task Force on Harbourfront Developments in Kowloon, Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing (Paper No. HC/14/2011)

5.1 As Prof Becky Loo, the Chair of the Kowloon Task Force, was out of the town, **Mr Nicholas Brooke** presented the progress report on her behalf.

5.2 On the Tsim Sha Tsui Piazza Project and the proposed revitalization of the Star Ferry Pier, **Mr Philip Yung** said that a more comprehensive approach would be adopted to take the development proposals and ideas forward. The Tourism Commission would submit a paper for discussion at the next Kowloon Task Force meeting.

Item 6 Presentation on the Fresh Food Wholesale Trade, its Roles and Facilities along Victoria Harbourfront

6.1 **The Chair** welcomed Dr Liu Kwei Kin, Assistant Director (Agriculture) and Ms Wendy Ko, Senior Agricultural Officer (Planning & Livestock Farm Licensing) of AFCD, who made a presentation on the subject with the aid of a PowerPoint.

6.2 **The Chair** asked about the progress of the proposal to enhance the vicinity of Western Wholesale Food Market (WWFM) some months ago. While the wholesale markets might justifiably remain at the harbourfront due to their mode of operation, they could be made more attractive and interesting to tourists. He asked for the figures on the quantities of produce which were still delivered to the markets by sea. He also asked whether the Government had explored the possibility of relocating the WWFM and Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Food Market (CSWWFM) to caverns or newly reclaimed land outside Victoria Harbour.

6.3 **Mr Lam Kin lai** said that after the statutory minimum wage came into force, the pre-cooking food packaging operations previously at the wholesale markets had been relocated to the Mainland and many food chains, chain restaurants and supermarkets had started to obtain wholesale food supply directly from the Mainland. Besides, with the prohibition of fish trawling, the marine fish throughput had dropped. Because of these developments, the demand for wholesale market space should have dropped too. He asked whether AFCD had made a thorough assessment on the future need for the wholesale markets in the next 5 to 10 years and whether there was room for surrendering some of the space in the wholesale markets for harbourfront enhancement.

6.4 **Dr Peter Cookson Smith** said that it should be technically possible to open up some piers at CSWWFM for public use. For WWFM, he considered that the piers therein could be modified and parts of the market could be opened up as promenade to enhance the connectivity with the adjoining areas along the Sheung Wan waterfront.

6.5 **Mr Winston Chu** said that, as a matter of principle, priority for using harbourfront land should be given to those facilities which had to be located on the harbourfront. To him, it was sensible for the fish markets to be located at the harbourfront.

6.6 In response to the Chair's and Members' comments, **Dr Liu** and **Ms Ko** made the following points:

- (a) essentially all fish and fishery produce destined for Hong Kong arrived by sea;
- (b) to maintain their competitive edge in the fast changing business environment, many fresh food wholesalers, especially vegetable wholesalers, had been providing pre-cooking food packaging and preparation services for food retailers. AFCD would facilitate the provision of these value-added services by the wholesale trade;
- (c) while some larger food chains were shifting their pre-cooking food packaging and preparation operations to the Mainland, there were still a large number of smaller operators in the fresh food business who could not enjoy the economy of scale by doing so. It was observed that the demand for space in the wholesale markets went up as the statutory minimum wage was introduced because wholesalers needed more space to provide more value-added services to retailers. Currently, the wholesale markets were fully occupied except for those vacant poultry stalls which would no longer be rented out because of the control measures related to avian flu. By and large, the demand for fresh food wholesale space was still high and it was estimated that the situation would remain in the near to medium term, as Hong Kong people still preferred fresh food to frozen or chilled food; and
- (d) for CSWWFM, an initial idea was to open up part of the carpark on 1/F for public enjoyment and AFCD would engage the District Council and the relevant stakeholders if the proposal was to be pursued. Out of the five piers therein, three were currently in use for unloading activities of fishing vessels. AFCD was open to suggestions on how to turn the remaining two vacant

piers to some other uses and would keep the dialogue with the wholesalers to identify means to rationalise the use of the market space at different times.

6.7 In response to whether the wholesale markets could be relocated to caverns, **Mr Thomas Chow** said that the Works Branch of DEVB was conducting a study to increase land supply by reclamation outside Victoria Harbour and rock cavern development. He added that in exploring whether these wholesale markets could be relocated to cavern, one consideration would be the transport infrastructure required. He would relay the suggestion of studying the relocation of food wholesale operations to caverns to his colleagues in Works Branch.

6.8 **Ir Peter Wong** opined that all the wholesale activities were put under one roof due to historical reason and for the convenience of the operators. Apart from fish, other wholesale activities did not require a harbour frontage. Some of the dry food wholesale activities could be relocated elsewhere to release more harbourfront space for public enjoyment.

6.9 **Mr Tam Po Yiu** said that it was a subject for AFCD's further study as to whether the space provided for pre-cooking food packaging and preparation operations was excessive to demand. AFCD should also study the option of making use of other piers in Hong Kong to serve the food wholesale industry.

6.10 **Dr Liu** said that AFCD had organised the WWFM Flea Market cum Carnival and the experience gained was very valuable. Consideration could be given to organising similar activities at CSWWFM. In taking this forward, AFCD would actively involve the wholesalers and take into account advice from the District Council and the Kowloon Task Force. AFCD would also continue to work with the Commission's Secretariat in coordinating actions within the Administration.

6.11 **Mr Thomas Chow** said that opening up the wholesale markets or some areas within them for public enjoyment of the

harbourfront would certainly be a good initiative. The Commission and the District Councils concerned had to consider the practicability and feasibility of the various ideas in terms of finance and other relevant parameters. For instance, in considering opening up the wholesale markets to the public, the interface and safety issues between the operators and members of the public would need to be addressed as lorries and workers with push carts would be operating within the markets during the operational hours.

6.12 **The Chair** said that he agreed entirely with what Mr Chow said and that detailed consideration of the relevant issues was required. In closing the discussion, he said that he would ask the respective Task Force to focus on the two opportunities to see how the opening up proposals could be taken forward having regard to the feasibility and practicability issues.

Item 7 Proposed Establishment of a New Task Force on Water-land Interface (Paper No. HC/15/2011)

7.1 **The Chair** said that it was necessary to look at activities within the harbour and at the harbourfront in a holistic manner. Water-land interface was an important element to be taken into account when planning future harbourfront enhancement projects and measures. He took Members through the paper and asked for their views on the proposed terms of reference (ToR) and modus operandi as set out therein.

7.2 Regarding the proposed membership, **Mr Roger Tupper** said that the Task Force should also include representatives from harbour users, so that the Task Force could collect views from different stakeholders including the shipping and boating community.

7.3 On the question of overlapping ToR with those of the three existing Task Forces, **Ms Gracie Foo** said that it was a genuine issue as raised by a Member at the last meeting. The

three existing Task Forces were geographically based while the new Task Force would look at the overall water-land situation. As a pragmatic way to deal with the overlapping issue, it was suggested in paragraph 6 of the paper that specific proposals would continue to be submitted to the relevant geographical Task Force while the new Task Force would explore the related water-land interface issues holistically and strategically.

7.4 Taking that Members were generally satisfied with the proposed ToR, **the Chair** encouraged Members to join the new Task Force and asked the Secretariat to issue an email to Members in this regard.

the Secretariat

(Note: The Secretariat issued an email on 4 August 2011 to invite all Members to join the New Task Force and Members were asked to respond by 15 August 2011.)

7.5 **Mr Winston Chu** said that the workload of the Commission was heavy and it would be difficult for Members to attend all the meetings of the Commission and its four Task Forces if each member organisation was only allowed to nominate a regular representative and an alternate.

7.6 **The Chair** said that it was a common problem as all Members were very busy. That said, allowing more than two different personalities on the four Task Forces might affect the consistency in decision making. Moreover, by design, the Commission would not expect all the Commission Members to join all the Task Forces.

7.7 **Mr Chris Fung** supplemented that it had been stated in the Commission's House Rules that each member organisation might only nominate a regular representative and an alternate.

7.8 **Mr Vincent Ng** said that the situation would be even more difficult for Members appointed on personal basis, to whom the alternate representative system did not apply.

7.9 **Ms Gracie Foo** said that Development Bureau

recognised that some member organisations could not send representatives to all the three existing Task Forces, not to mention a 4th Task Force. Members should accept that the workload should be shared out and that member organisations should decide which task group to join. After further discussion, the meeting agreed that the Secretariat should send out invitations to Members for joining the new Task Force which should operate having regard to Members' workload capacity.

7.10 Regarding the representation of interested parties on the new Task Force, **Dr Smith** said that these parties could make presentation to the Task Force but Members had to make sure that no conflict of interest situation would arise. Echoing Dr Smith's view, **Mr Chu** said that Members of the Commission were acting in the public interest. If private interest was brought into the Task Force, it would be a fundamental conflict of interest which would undermine the Commission's value and creditability, especially in the case of the harbour which was a special public asset under the law. While welcoming interested parties to give presentations and advice to the Task Force, it would not be appropriate to let them sit on the new Task Force to advise the Government and participate in the decision making process directly.

7.11 **Mr Tupper** responded by saying that the new Task Force should adopt a holistic approach because harbour activities were spread throughout Victoria Harbour. For this new Task Force, he suggested that representatives of the harbour user community, such as various concerned harbour user associations but not individual commercial companies, should be included.

7.12 **The Chair** said that it was not the intention to have private interest represented on the new Task Force and co-opting members from concerned associations or organisations could be a way forward. In this regard, the Commission could come up with a list of potential candidates and seek the endorsement of the Commission.

Item 8 Any Other Business

A. Victoria Harbour Icon Design Competition

8.1 With the aid of PowerPoint slides, **Mr Ronald Leung** of DEVB briefed Members on the recently completed Victoria Harbour Icon Design Competition and the latest progress of the Harbourfront Signage Scheme. Taking this opportunity, he thanked Members for their on-going support to the Competition. He also introduced the logo of the Commission, which was selected from among the entries of the Competition.

8.2 Speaking in his capacity as one of the jurors in the Competition, **the Chair** said that the jurors were unanimous in choosing the winning entry of the Victoria Harbour icon and there had been due process in the selection. On the Commission's logo, he said that he personally liked it very much as it summed up and would be a very good tool for promoting the Commission's work. He agreed that the Secretariat could proceed with the production of Members' name cards bearing the Commission's logo.

8.3 **Mr Winston Chu** opined that the Commission's logo was excellently designed except that the Chinese characters could be slightly larger for easier reading.

8.4 **Mrs Margaret Brooke** said that as the majority of visitors at the moment were Chinese-speaking, she presumed that the words "Victoria Harbour" in Chinese would also come with the icon to be used on signage. **Mr Ronald Leung** said that while the official winning design of the icon only contained the English words "Victoria Harbour", the designer could be asked to prepare a Chinese/bilingual version. In addition to the several design features of the icon that symbolized the harbour, there would be continuing efforts to enable both locals and tourists to recognize it as the icon of Victoria Harbour including roving

exhibitions and distribution of souvenirs bearing the icon at various harbourfront-related events.

8.5 **The Chair** invited DEVB to take on board Members' comments in fine-tuning the final design of the icon.

B. Informal Exchange Session with Members of Legislative Council's Subcommittee on Harbourfront Planning on 9 July 2011

8.6 **The Chair** said that a number of Members attended the session on 9 July 2011, in which members of the LegCo Subcommittee led by Prof Hon Patrick Lau shared their experience gained in their visit to the waterfronts of Boston, New York and Vancouver in April and May 2011. He drew Members' attention to the LegCo Subcommittee's PowerPoint presented at the session, in particular Conclusion No. 2 therein, which firmly stated that Hong Kong needed a statutory body supported by professional staff to oversee and implement harbourfront enhancement projects. He said that the LegCo Subcommittee's research would be very useful to the Commission in considering what might be an appropriate model for Hong Kong.

C. LegCo's Motion Debate on Prof Hon Patrick Lau's Motion on "Perfecting Harbourfront Planning and Management in all Districts of Hong Kong"

8.7 **The Chair** said that last week, there was a LegCo's motion debate on Prof Hon Patrick Lau's motion on "Perfecting Harbourfront Planning and Management in all Districts of Hong Kong". The second item on the motion was to establish a statutory body and recruit professionals to co-ordinate and implement strategic harbourfront development. The motion was passed unanimously in the LegCo. Although the motion had no legislative effect, it was very encouraging that the LegCo had given clear support for the Commission to move towards the direction of establishing a statutory Harbourfront Authority. **Mr**

Thomas Chow supplemented that in leading the Administration's response in the motion debate, Mrs Carrie Lam, Secretary for Development, said that while in future the Administration would have to consider any proposal to establish a statutory Harbourfront Authority, she was personally supportive of it.

(Post-meeting note: The information about the LegCo's motion debate was circulated to Members on 19 July 2011)

D. Legislative Council's Subcommittee on Harbourfront Planning meeting on 19 July 2011

8.8 **Mr Thomas Chow** informed Members that the LegCo Subcommittee would hold its next meeting on 19 July 2011. The Administration had prepared a paper for discussion at the meeting, which set out the Commission's work in the past year and the Administration's work in harbourfront enhancement. He asked the Secretariat to circulate the paper for Members' reference.

the Secretariat

(Post-meeting note: The paper for the LegCo Subcommittee meeting was circulated to Members on 19 July 2011)

E. Annual Report on the Commission's Work

8.9 **The Chair** said that after a year of operation, it would be useful to recap what the Commission had done and achieved by producing an annual report for the community's and stakeholders' information. The report should be bilingual but needed not be lengthy.

the Secretariat

F. Second Workshop to Develop Strategic Plan

8.10 **The Chair** said that the first workshop to develop a strategic plan for the Harbour had been very productive. He welcomed all Members to attend the second workshop which would be held on 23 July 2011, so that Members could consolidate the ideas and decide on what would be appropriate and achievable for the harbourfront.

8.11 There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:25 pm.

**Secretariat
Harbourfront Commission
September 2011**