

Comments from the March 30th City Council Workshop on the Jack London Square Redevelopment Project

Nancy Nadel

- Excited about the potential
- Enormous amount to digest, and has only recently clarified to the point where it could be understood
- Likes: Harvest Hall, foot of Broadway improvements, increase in open space, green building requirements
- Outstanding issues: inclusion of Washington St. spaces in parking allowance (“sounds like a subsidy”), how existing spaces will be replaced
- F2 and G don't compare well to the rest of the design, “need a lot of work”
- Dislikes significant and unmitigated pollution impacts, mitigations should be worded to REQUIRE not just encourage, should have a [fiscal] contribution to transit and include improvements like water taxi
- Has a problem with all the variants and would not like to see the mostly office space realization.
- The fast food major variance is a problem and she'll be watching it closely
- Concerned that there is no energy efficiency standard included in green standards
- No linkages to downtown
- Clarity of who the developer entity is is unclear and concerned that both the developer and what is developed can change without coming back to council
- The minimum project and conditions that are necessary for it to happen are unclear, concerned that the developer could not build the minimum project just because its not profitable enough.

Danny Wan

- He is not surprised that the design is changing and has changed up until this day
- Wonders why, according to the developers figures, they are building EXCESS parking capacity
- Doesn't like a plan with a majority of office space
- Wonders why: if this FDP is so great and will be so successful, the developer has a problem committing to it?
- Wants to know: what is the developers thinking on connection to the rest of the City?

Jane Brunner

- Whoever of the public speakers said there wasn't enough time was absolutely right
- Liked: the project in front of us (the FDP architectural model), lots of open space and Harvest Hall is a good addition
- Concerned about: the blank wall along Embarcadero created by Barnes and Noble combined with the theater or Site D
- Would like to hear city staff discuss the massing of all the buildings together around F3, F2 and F1.

- Asks what it would mean to create “an office park” in this space. We need to look at the worst case scenario for amount of office spaces
- Concerned that the Bay Trail around the hotel is not wide enough and would like to see it 50', or at least 40' wide all the way.
- Wants to get: a chart from staff about how the developer agreement compares to standard practice.
- Would like to see: further design of the garage.
- The developers are getting something from us, which is 15 years to complete the development and we need something in return which is a commitment that the gist of the project stays the same over that period.
- Need to see changes to documents from this day on red-lined.

Henry Chang

- Wants to hear from developer that changes actually made it better (in their opinion), or if they simply made the changes because they were forced to by community pressure.
- Not a mixed use development - no residential, why?
- Does EIR address all changes to 66 Franklin, doesn't have a problem with them if it did.
- Has a problem with minimum project and 15 year term. The city learned a lesson from previous projects where they were waiting for years for developer. Need to have a date for project to be completed.
- Doesn't like the locking in of fees due in developer agreement, will this hurt the city over 15 years?
- Its a great model but... “one end is like Miami, the other is very flat”.
- Wasn't the space in front of the Port Building supposed to be the location for a tall hotel? So why avoid blocking the view there by building small building instead of a large one as originally planned?
- Public comments about Site G are probably not entirely about the size, its the relationship to the Amtrak Station which is a light steel and glass building, whereas the Site G garage is “very heavy”.
- Doesn't like: the narrowing of the view at the end of Broadway.
- “Lets do something with Jack London Square”

Jean Quan

- Current design is much better than original proposal design in terms of scale and pulling back from the estuary.
- Adding an extra three floors to 66 Franklin would encroach on the open space created around it.
- Believes there should be more discussion about Site G
- Understands that the developer needs “a little bit more freedom” [than a fixed plan]
- Most worried about the long term impact of the development on transit
- The city should think about under-grounding 880 through the city to glue the city back together, at least through Chinatown. Put it on the 20 to 30 year plan.
- Not sure about office space, but it could be good

- Has the same question about the lack of residential space in the development, perhaps its because it requires too much parking?
- Parking should look at the entire area since it will impact surrounding areas (parks outside of Chinatown to visit it)
- Fees – whats the value of what the City is giving away in the developer agreement
- If this is a 15 year agreement then we need to have some requirement that a minimum project MUST be built and if it isn't then we should “have an out” for the City.
- Maybe the project requires more of a recreation element in the mix (but not a baseball park!)

Desley Brooks

- Comparing to Pike Place in Seattle – that has a lot of traffic yet its not bad
- Other waterfronts she has visited such as Baltimore and Seattle have tall buildings by the waterfront so we should keep scaling our downtown
- The developer should engage artists right from the start
- Don't have open spaces for the sake of open spaces, use them in some way to give people a reason to visit them
- As Sanjeev (of East Bay News) says, this is a project with regional impact and this was a commercial area before it became residential.
- Gave an example of a city where little design follow through was applied with bad results.
- Los Angeles is a good example of a city that applies high design standards to even the smallest details with great results.
- The petitions (models and drawings) should be displayed in City Hall so people can come look at them
- Should consider the local area – Oakland – first and everyone else after.
- Doesn't understand the approval process
- Cited Vancouver and Seattle as cities where design really made the difference between great and poor developments

Ignacio De La Fuente

- Thanked the community at length for their input and detailed work of analyzing and commenting on the plans
- Said the developers are listening
- Commented that we've been working on the Forrest City project for 3 years now without breaking ground. This project is neither going too slow or too fast and there will be plenty more opportunity for all to have their say.
- This is an Oakland first project, the waterfront belongs to the people
- The project should provide living wage jobs
- Asked: “Why no residential?”
- Parking – its a Catch 22 situation but clearly even if all spaces are built and all available spaces are utilized there will clearly not be enough spaces to meet the demand it will generate without impacting local residential areas. Therefore we need to consider the impact on the overall area and not just the project needs itself.

- Concerned about the wisdom of granting a 15 year development period without measurements of success.
- Must make sure that the 6 year goal is completed.