

29
12-18-10

Statement of John Gosling on behalf of the Old Town Civic Association
to
City Council
December 18, 2010
Draft Waterfront Small Area Plan

Thank you Mayor Euille and members of the City Council, my name is John Gosling and I am the President of the Old Town Civic Association and I am here today to share our views on the Draft Waterfront Small Area Plan. My comments are based on a review of the material presented by City staff at the December 13, "Community Open House Meeting".

The City staff's presentation had new material including some generalized cost/benefit assumptions, a preliminary parking plan, and an architectural model of the commercial core area at the foot of King Street that illustrated the scale and urban form of the proposed new waterfront development between the two Robinson terminals.

Several key elements of the plan have changed in response to community input including:

- Addition of a hard landscaped plaza (Fitzgerald Square) at the foot of King Street as the "heart" of the waterfront and a venue for community activities.
- Relocating the new marina to a location at the Robinson South property to improve security and to segregate commercial and pleasure boat traffic.
- Addressing the buildings framing the public spaces by proposing some outdoor art space at the Torpedo Factory as a means for creating greater transparency, and by proposing a new interior layout for the Food Courts that would include a restaurant and outdoor terraces overlooking the Marina.

However, there are still have several questions regarding the plan and its implementation that were asked by our members several months ago, most notably:

- How is the plan phased, what are the costs and how will we pay for it?
- Where are the high impact events located?
- Where is the supporting parking? The parking plan places too much reliance on valet parking and private owners willing to open parking to the public. In any event valet parking does not solve our issue – **visitor's car traffic penetrating deep into Old Town, and**
- Where are the memoranda of understanding or letters of agreement from the Corp of Engineers, the District, National Parks Service, etc., that will allow this version of the plan to move forward?

It is our understanding that the plan is anticipated to be released by the Department of Planning and Zoning in January with a presentation of the full plan to City Council in February, 2011. In order for the waterfront plan to succeed and be well received by the community, we respectfully ask that you delay the planning process until our members have time to absorb the implications of the new plan revisions and until we have time to work through some of our issues with City planning staff.

Thank you for your consideration.