

Date: March 12, 2009



**TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board**  
**FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation**  
**SUBJECT: Jericho Marginal Wharf - Reconsultation**

---

## CONSIDERATION

*A) THAT the Board direct staff to undertake an online bulletin board and a focus group process for Jericho Marginal Wharf project as outlined in this report.*

*OR*

*B) THAT the Board direct staff to undertake a facilitated consultation process as outlined in this report.*

## POLICY

On July 7, 2008 the Board “approved” the Concept Plan (1-C) for the Jericho Marginal Wharf as described in this report and illustrated in Appendix I.

## BACKGROUND

In 2007 the Board appointed Moffat and Nichol as consultants to prepare options for public input in regards to the marginal wharf.

In 2008 the board undertook a public consultation program consisting of;

### Notification

- 3 illustrated site signs, up for a total of 3.5 weeks, including 3 weeks prior to public open house.
- Postering in West Point Grey Community Centre and apartment buildings.
- 500 flyers hand delivered to residences within two blocks of park boundaries 2 weeks prior to the public open house.
- Contact with stakeholders.
- Newspaper advertisements in the Vancouver Courier and Ming Pao one week prior to the public open house.
- Media coverage.
- Public open house announcement on Park Board website (2 weeks prior).

## Open House

- Public open house, March 12, 2008, approximately 70 people attended.
- Surveys picked up and/or filled out at open house – 65 responses.
- Interactive webpage including survey posted on line March 13 – May 9, 2008 and emails received as “pbcomment” – 481.
- Board Meeting.
- 5 delegations heard on July 7, 2008.

The total cost associated with this program was approximately \$3,500 including \$1,400 for the consultants and staff to attend meeting, prepare materials and analyse public feedback.

On the basis of this consultation program and after listening to the delegations on July 7, 2008, the Board selected an option (1-C), which provided a compromise of the various interests expressed during the consultation process.

The consultation program is consistent with the Board’s practices for a project of this nature in a park which serves the surrounding neighbourhood as well as a much broader resident and visitor base.

The primary purpose of the on site signs and newspaper advertisements is geared to notify the public at large and park users. The primary purpose of the residential drop off is to notify those who may be impacted by a project, but not necessarily use the park on a regular basis.

The online survey feature was designed to provide an opportunity for those not able to participate in the open house.

This type of process is not a scientific sampling of public opinion, rather it gives the Board a cross section of opinions and values about the issue at hand.

Participants were well informed about the options and lack of information was not reported to be an issue at the Planning and Environment Committee meeting of February 2, 2009. At the Committee meeting delegates represented well informed positions on the options that were before the Board. Some delegates were not supportive of the decision which the Board made in 2008 and argued for more process.

At the Board’s request in 2009, the Planning and Environment Committee reviewed that decision. After hearing from ten delegations, the following resolution was passed, “That the Committee recommends staff to bring forward a report outlining a more extensive consultation program with respect to the Jericho Wharf”.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Jericho Marginal Wharf project has now been subject to two Park Board meetings, June 11, 2007 and July 7, 2008 and one Committee meeting, February 3, 2009 with a number of delegates representing a variety of views on the matter. The perspectives brought to the Board represent retaliation for historical reasons, and removal for environmental and public reasons. It is doubtful whether more of the same process will generate any new arguments in support or against the selected choice, nor is more of the same likely to improve the representativeness of the views brought to the attention of the Board.

Improved representativeness could be achieved through a polling of a statistically valid random sample of Vancouverites and regional residents. Polling companies typically offer these services at a much greater cost than the cost spent to date. A complication of polling around a design issue is the difficulty of communicating the range of choices and implications of each to poll participants, prior to them offering an opinion. Two options are presented as choices:

### **A. Online Bulletin Board/Focus Group**

For issues of this complexity and limited general awareness sometimes polling companies conduct focus groups and online bulletin boards, where individuals from a variety of backgrounds and knowledge are brought together in person and/or online to participate in structured discussion. Focus groups of about eight people at a time are brought together for a facilitated discussion, with the facilitator probing for preferences and the reasoning behind their preferences. A series of groups of individuals, with a variety of social-economic and demographic characteristics are brought in. Focus groups tend to be effective at generating good qualitative data from a range of participants who may or may not have any previous exposure to the issue about preferences but they are not a statistically valid representation of community views.

An online variant of this process is the online bulletin board, where participants are selected to participate by phone. An online bulletin board would have about 15 people at the time, over a 2 – 3 day period. Participants would be provided with the necessary background information, in this case the illustrative drawings, cost estimates and advantages or disadvantages of each option. The facilitator would then pose online questions and follow up questions to probe reasons for preferences.

For a project of this nature, two online bulletin groups would be recommended. One group would be made up of residents who live nearby the park and the second would be residents from elsewhere in the city.

Should the Board wish to acquire more qualitative information, staff recommends that a focus group for stakeholders and online bulletin process for residents be undertaken. In preliminary discussions such a process would cost in the order of \$20,000. Should the

Board proceed on this approach a proposal call would be issued and a consultant selected. Funding is available within the project budget.

### B. Facilitated Consultation Process

This option would bring a facilitator into the process to conduct two public community workshops, and up to two working group meetings with up to 12 selected individuals. The community workshops would be held in two different locations in the city with an expectation of attracting a broader range of citizens. The project background and current options would be presented and feedback recorded. The community workshops would also be a forum to invite interested members of the public to participate in a working group.

The working groups task would be to narrow the options under consideration, to one or two and develop an online feedback tool to solicit broader input into the final choice(s).

Notification of this entire process would be through advertisements in the Courier and a poster campaign at community centres.

Staff and engineering consultant support would be needed to attend the meetings. Staff would also be loading up, monitoring the online feedback and processing the data. The working group would report its findings out to the Planning and Environment Committee.

The cost associated with this option would be in the \$7,500 to \$10,000 range.

Timing of either option would likely take 3 – 4 months to complete and actual work on the wharf would not likely proceed until 2010.

### **SUMMARY**

In response to the Board's Planning and Environment for a more extensive consultation process, staff have provided two options for more process.

Prepared by:

Planning and Operations  
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation  
Vancouver, BC

PR:ek