

5<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Waterfront Watch Oral Submission to Draft Waterfront Development Plan

Waterfront Watch continues to advocate for the people of Wellington who love the Waterfront and have made it abundantly clear over the years that they want it to be “a people place”, “a happening space” and a place where they can relax. For example we would like to refer you to a survey conducted by **Wellington City Council “Our City – Our Future: Resident Survey Results August 1997”** .

Page 28....**THE CITY**

**A vibrant inner city where the streets and parks, squares and waterfront form a network of safe, functional and stimulating spaces for people and events.**

And later this month we are being asked for our views on the future of our Central City 2040 and all sounds familiar.....

- **Page 4: WELLINGTON HAS A FANTASTIC HARBOUR SETTING, and under 11 (Page 8) Waterfront we are asked as the central city grows we need to consider:**
  - **the role and purpose of the waterfront and the activities it accommodates:**
  - **whether the waterfront should retain its own distinct identity?**
  - **What future demand will there be on the waterfront.**

We would like to draw your attention, once again, to recommendations made by Ann Breen and Dick Rigby of the Waterfront Centre in Washington DC to a waterfront forum in May 1996. saying that Wellington had reached a critical point in deciding what to do. They said “You have a chance to create a superlative waterfront....**Some suggestions were;**

- **some kind of interior winter garden so people could enjoy the harbour views during the winter**
- **more displays on the maritime heritage of the harbour**
- **facilities to house environmental and maritime education programmes.**
- **new and expanded play areas.**

We would also refer you to the Community Consultative Committee in its 1996 Report “**Public Space area should be designed in detail and developed first, with commercial development to follow**”

However so much of this was ignored and finally (see attached document) after series of meetings and surveys, we were given Variation 17...history now but sometimes many wonder if the current debate is going in the same direction. But Wellingtonians continue to make their preference known

**In a recent poll conducted by the Dominion Post on the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2009 “WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE ON WELLINGTON’S WATERFRONT?”**

- a) **JUST LEAVE IT AS IT IS 52.3%....**
- b) **A WOODLAND 25%**
- c) **AN ICE SKATING RINK 22.7%.**

We would also like to quote from the Dompost editorial on the 15<sup>th</sup> August 2009  
 “Decisions that are taken now on the Waterfront will define its character and that of the city for at least a hundred years. That is why it is so important to get it right and deliver what the citizens want even if that means taking more time than the supporters of Variation 11 would like. Wellington should not end up like Auckland’s Viaduct Basin – a soulless area.

Our main point here is that the WCC needs to listen carefully to what the people of Wellington want. We doubt very much that Wellingtonians want the Waterfront to be used for revenue generation – they see it as a recreation space and a place where people can relax and enjoy themselves.

.Here is an additional point. With a steady trend towards inner city residential living, often in apartments with little or no private outdoor space, the city’s open spaces also serve as local neighbourhoods. The Waterfront contains the greatest area of remaining open space available in the central city. There is consistent public support for maintaining and developing its green character and public access to the water’s edge.

We would now like to make a few further points to our submission.

We still support the December 2008 decision to extend the implementation of the Waterfront project over a 10 year period but **we oppose the reviewed decision not to transfer the project’s development and management responsibilities to Council until 2012** (which goes against Council Officer’s earlier recommendation). We would refer you to the WWL Review of 2008/09 Annual Report where it is stated that as a permanent consequence of the December 2008 review that the number of directors was reduced from 8 to 5 and the employees from 13 to 7 at a saving of \$1.2 million. We would suggest that if the most of the remaining staff were transferred to Council there would be further savings and the projects would be under full council control.

**5. Engaging with the Public: All the roles and structures set up to govern the waterfront must be open to public scrutiny.** This principle is a right of Wellingtonians as “owners” of the waterfront through the City Council and would like to quote here from a written statement made by an Environment Judge **“the Wellington waterfront is a place people are passionate about”** This is echoed by an email Waterfront Watch received this week from a member of the public who missed the deadline to send in a submission on the current draft waterfront plan. This person made the point that there are other ways of communicating to the public that the WCC needs to consider if it is genuine about wanting to know what people think and believes one of the reasons there hasn’t been more of an uprising is because none of the displays/impacts

have been posted at the specific sites eg where you are standing looking at the water, there could be a building blocking your passage and view. This would be far more effective at communicating the effect than all the other ways on the list but is not included in "formal consultation" and would reach the people most affected...the ones who use the area.

. **The Projects:**

**Berthage:** We are pleased to see acknowledgement that shipping and boating movements are important to the waterfront and note that the recent naval visits have added colour and interest to the waterfront.

**Wharf Pile Maintenance:** We would refer you to the Waterfront Review 2009, Page 42 which quotes from Holmes Consulting Ltd that the total re-piling costs are \$9.77 million. We urge that this work is undertaken over a 10 year time frame as recommended. We are still of the opinion that part of the \$11.5 million spent on public space around the Meridian complex should have been allocated to the Outer T as a priority.

**Waitangi Park:** We support some low cost landscaping, especially in the Transition Zone and like many Wellingtonians consider that this is where the Chinese Garden should be located as indicated in the original design competition.

**Overseas Passenger Terminal:** With the project not scheduled to commence until 2012/13, we have concerns over who will be responsible for maintenance, repairs etc as apart from all the associated industries related to the Marina activities, the Function Centre is very popular for Conferences, exhibitions and functions.

**Taranaki Wharf:** If there is any changes to the design of the Wharewaka complex a new Resource consent should be applied for and there should be a full report to the S and P committee in public session. We also remain opposed to the construction of an additional bridge from Civic Square. Any further landscaping should ensure that the public's safety is paramount as the current area around the grassed mound has been the scene of several accidents.

**Frank Kitts Park:** We do not support any additional expenditure on Frank Kitts Park. This is not a high priority area and continues to host many successful and varied events throughout the year, especially during the Festival of the Arts and Summer City. Only minor improvements are needed with the provision of more play equipment.

On Page 37 of the Waterfront Framework it is noted that the Chinese community indicated that the area East of Te Papa is its preferred location for a Chinese Garden. With the historical interests of the Chinese community in this Te Aro area, specifically Blair, Allen, Haining and Frederick Streets we do not consider Frank Kitts Park a suitable alternative site. A Chinese Garden should be a place of rest and contemplation and we

consider the garden would be compromised situated along the edge of Jervois Quay, a very busy traffic route.

**Queens Wharf:** We support the plans to revitalize this shabby precinct and look forward to an excellent master plan formulated from creative ideas from the Blue Skies competition. We do not support the suggestion of a temporary ice skating rink in this precinct and note that the document states that consideration of this facility has been put on hold until the result of the Outer T competition. One has to question, therefore the inclusion of this site in the Interim Uses section.

**Kumutoto:** We do not support any of the designs for Sites 8, 9 and 10 for the following reasons: These buildings will privatize limited public space.

**Page 18 of the Framework** it is recommended that any new buildings will be complementary to and on a scale appropriate to the existing heritage buildings ie Sheds 11,13, 21 and the Ferry Ticketing Office and that views from city streets need to be preserved, and improved where possible, especially the view from Bowen along Whitmore across the harbour to Mt Victoria.

We do not support the proposal for a so called “designer” toilet block (at an estimated cost of over \$400,000) in the position suggested between Shed 11, Loaded Hog and Fronde There are many toilets in the area (the Museum of City and Sea, Academy of Arts, TSB Event Centre, Shed 6 and the various restaurants) these should be better sign posted. When the Meridian was granted consent we understood there were to be public toilets made available. Is that correct? They certainly could be provided there or in the “Shell” building for considerably less money. They would not be an “eyesore” either.

## INTERIM USES

**Campervan Park:** We support a temporary campervan park on Site 10. After the Rugby World Cup would like to see it replaced by a recreation area designed with young people in mind to cater for the projected increases in families living in city apartments. The existing play areas are geared for young children and are too small. We do share the concerns of Great Harbour Way and Cycle Aware that traffic movements be well controlled.

**Temporary Tensile Fabric Structure:** We do not support this project as in past Festival of the Arts and Summer City programmes, there has been provision made for various forms of entertainment on Frank Kitts Park and Waitangi Parks and Queens Wharf We cannot understand the suggestion that a development of this type would add a significant venue space for a variety of uses when these events already happen.

We would like to take the opportunity to congratulate Alan Brown on the promotion of the various craft stalls under Frank Kitts Park and for the Saturday Craft Market which is to commence on the 12<sup>th</sup> December. Like the produce markets on Waitangi on Sundays this is the kind of activity the public look for and enjoy.

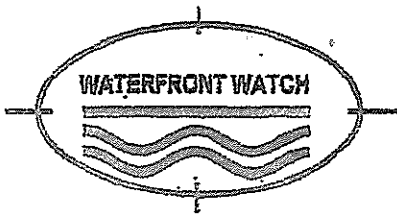
Finally one of our members recently spent some time in Panama City. In the last few years a 2 km stretch of waterfront adjacent to the CBD has been developed as a recreational promenade. It is used intensively, particularly in the weekends. There are wide boulevards, basketball courts, parking areas, low buildings for public concerts and speakers, boat moorings **and no high rise or commercial buildings**. The attached photos of the waterfront show ordinary people enjoying open public space. You will note that previously we have shared with you similar photos of Barcelona and Chicago.

We do not want our beautiful Wellington Waterfront littered with high rise commercial buildings and we want any developments there to be in the interests of the wider public and Wellingtonians in particular.

Pauline Swann for Waterfront Watch







# WATERFRONT WATCH INC

REF: 38A / 39A

PO Box 19045, Courtenay Place, Wellington  
waterfrontwatch@xtra.co.nz

## WHAT THE PUBLIC WANTS ON THE WELLINGTON WATERFRONT

1. 1996. Waterfront Watch presents a petition to the council signed by more than 10,000 people opposing big new buildings on the waterfront.
2. 1996. Waterfront Watch commissions a Market Research Company to carry out a telephone Survey about what Wellingtonians want on the waterfront. The results of this survey show that 90% want buildings on the waterfront to be restricted and want LOTS of open space.
3. 1996. 800 people attend a meeting called by Lambton Harbour Management, where they Vote against plans for new buildings on the waterfront, and they specifically vote for a park Free of buildings at Chaffers.
4. 1997 (July). A public meeting called by Civic Trust passes a resolution that the entire Chaffers area between Te Papa and Oriental Parade be declared public parkland in Perpetuity.
5. 1997 (July) A council survey – professionally run – shows a majority preference for more parks and recreational areas on the waterfront, and 70% state their belief that only minimal residential or commercial development should be allowed on the waterfront.
6. 1997 (November) At a public meeting convened by Waterfront Watch, resolutions are Passed requesting a reduction in the number of large new buildings on the waterfront.
7. 1998. City Voice (weekly newspaper) commissions a survey – professionally run – In which 70% state their wish for a 100% park at Chaffers.
8. 2000. (February) Wellington Town Hall packed by more than 2000 citizens protesting against Variation 17. The meeting passed unanimous resolutions opposing buildings on the Waterfront and demanding the retention of public open space and views.  
2000. (March) A petition with 12,000 signatures opposing new buildings on the waterfront is presented to council. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> petition opposing new buildings, and with even more signatures than before.
9. 2400 submissions from the public in opposition to Variation 17. Of 932 submissions on Chaffers Park, only 3% supported new buildings on the park. Variation 17 was withdrawn in April.
10. 2001 (January) Council commissions a market research company to find out what people Want on the waterfront. Asked what they wanted on the Transition zone east of Te Papa The official results released by council show that 86% vote against any new buildings in this area and ask for landscaping.
11. 2002 (November) The public vote for a Chaffers Park design with minimal buildings.
12. The same preference is shown in another professionally run survey commissioned by the Council. (The Council chooses another design)