

Waterfront Watch – Oral submission to S and P meeting 10th June 2010 – 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 place where they can relax and as the public was consulted in November last year Wellington 2040 – The Future of our Central City it is with a certain cynicism that I would now like to quote from Our City – Our Future: residents survey results WCC August 1997.....The waterfront contains the greatest area of remaining open spaces 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. Under OPPORTUNITIES the report goes on to say "Develop the waterfront as a major open space with frequent connections to the city and significant green areas.

So here we are 13 years down the track looking to 2040 still asking the public what they want. This despite the Framework for the Waterfront April 2001 and countless consultations over the years, May 1996 with Ann Breen and Dick Rigby from the Waterfront Centre in Washington DC, May 2008 American Architect Cathy Simon who like Breen and Rigby agreed what an asset our Waterfront is and should be the major green space in Wellington and of course Jan Gehl who was recently quoted during a visit to Christchurch. Variation 11 "I favour public involvement. No one can effectively prevent anyone from speaking out their opinion in the press"

So what a surprise to read in the Statement of Intent by WWLtd in April this year to the CCC, that under QW redevelopment bullet point 2 "Implementation to take place over the course of the next twenty years".

We ask the question WHY the full responsibility for waterfront development does not return to council (as previously recommended by council officers) as the costs of maintaining WWL are too great and could be used more positively elsewhere. We understand the maintenance of Waitangi and the Events programme already comes under council control

Under Interim uses in the draft plan, Bullet point 2 it says "changed economic circumstances, locally and globally, have resulted in the likelihood of waterfront sites not being developed in the short or medium term. Current predictions are that we may not see development occurring on most of the larger waterfront sites for at least three years. It would appear therefore that to justify the retention of the company "feasibility studies" for Interim uses are being investigated which could well be undertaken by the transfer of certain members of the staff to Council with considerable savings.

With regard to points raised in our Submission, the feed back we receive from our members and friends is that Frank Kitts Park works very well as it is and just needs improvements to the southern end of the Event Centre and more play equipment (as does the play area at Waitangi).

As evidenced from the attached photos Frank Kitts Park is the city's most popular venue for regular events such as summer city, Festival of the Arts, Relay for Life, Dragon boat races to name a few, and it is now of course the site of the "sponsored" Christmas Tree.

Again from feedback we receive, Frank Kitts Park is not a suitable site for the Chinese garden, with the steady stream of traffic along six lanes hardly a place of rest and contemplation but support is still there for the original location at the Transition Site in Waitangi Park, especially for the public's choice by Rachel Hughes during the design competition for Waitangi Park. The framework on Page 37 quotes "the Chinese community has indicated the area to the east of Te Papa is its preferred location". We have always supported this concept and feel that the Chinese Garden Society have been treated extremely badly.

We still do not believe the youth of our city are being well catered for. Apart from the very popular skate board park there is no covered venue for teens to meet and with the current empty space on the ground floor of the Stock Exchange and the relocation of the brewery plant, consideration should be given to a Youth Club along with a replacement venue for the Lunch time Business sporting group if their current venue in Shed 1 is denied to them. The open sided "tensile tent structure" at an unbudgeted \$2.4 million hardly an attraction in the winter weather we are currently experiencing. And not as handy to the CBD.

We support the Motorhome Park, and although reference is made to "temporary" it is stated in the Consultation documents that construction is unlikely to start on Sites 8-10 for at least 3-5 years, further landscaping should be undertaken as currently it is far from welcoming. We do not approve of the "designer" toilets between Shed 11 and The Loaded Hog and the public should have access to the toilet facilities (not the showers) as it would appear there is a member of staff on duty every day. There should also be better signage for the other toilet facilities ie Shed 6 and the patrons to the many bars and restaurants are catered for..

In conclusion would refer you to the Press release by Cr Laidlaw on behalf of the GWRC re input on its park network plan....Publically owned open spaces are becoming increasingly important in today's society. We want to work with other open space providers in future to get a balanced mix of active and passive recreation facilities. Our region is becoming culturally diverse and the population is aging and these factors are driving a demand for more quality open space close to where we live.

Pauline Swann for Waterfront Watch



