Unofficial Notes for

Cambridge Waterfront Development Presentation to Public Partners

County Office Building, Rm 110 May 20, 2025

* Tom Hutchinson, State Delegate
* County Commissioners, - Mike Detmer, Ricky Travers, President Lenny Pfieffer,
* City Manager, Glenn Steckman, Mayor Lajan Cephas, Commissioners Brett Summers (1), Frank Stout(3), Brian Roche(5)
* CWDI Board members –M. Riehn (virtual) - state Appointee, T. Crosby (virtual) - county appointee, G. Nichols - city appointee, N. Chabot - city appointee, F. Narr, A. Hengst - county appointee,
* Ken Usab, consultant from Morris & Richie Associates,
* Federal Partners - Mid-Shore Regional Council and Economic Development.

1. Welcome/Introductions

* Handouts included architectural drawing packet of the waterfront called the “Regulating Plan”. The public was asked to return the packets to CWDI.

1. Thank You to Our Public Partners – City, County, State & Federal.

3. Promenade Update

* Angie Hengst, President of CWDI, spoke about the progress on the Promenade.
* The concrete of the Promenade is a base. There will be brick pavers on top of the concrete. The concrete is for any emergency vehicle that needs to access the waterfront on the Promenade.
* It is 65% complete. It is a $3m project. $2.4 m is coming from a grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) with a $600,000 match from CWDI.
* CWDI is up to date with payments to the construction company, Earth Movers. The arrangement is the funds for them are paid by CWDI. CWDI is then reimbursed when the grant money comes in.

Questions

T. Hutchinson, State Delegate –

* Q - Where did the $600,000 match money come from?
  + Answer, F Narr, CWDI: $300,000 of it was allowed to be the land that the promenade is built on. The remaining $300,000 came from a grant match from Governor Moore when he first came to office.
  + K. Usab, Morris & Richie, said the land Narr is talking about is just the footprint of the Promenade.

4. Development Planning & Design Update

* CWDI meets 2 times a month with Brian Hermann, Planning Commission Director. These meetings are virtual.
* The consultants on the CWDI project – Lew Oliver, urban developer, Ken Usab, Principal/Engineer with Morris & Richie Associates, Ed Johnson, Network Realty Partners. Have been development consultants since CWDI inception. Ian Lockwood, Livable Transportation Engineer with Toole Design designed parking areas and spaces, streetscapes with valley gutters, wide sidewalks, flush curbs.
* “Regulating Plan”
  + Updated plan from 2023.
  + The original 2023 plan had some mistakes. In the 2023 plan, the main street focus was Radiance Drive. CWDI board members felt Radiance Drive cut-off the water front. Waterman’s Way was added to the new Regulating Plan and became the focus of the waterfront.
* “Harbor Plan”
  + Made up of 5 components
  + The green open space, 2 restaurants on the water, family fishing pier, mixed use buildings on Waterman’s Way.
  + The family fishing pier is being built by Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and is attached to the land at the waterfront.
  + The green space along the waterfront has the 3 story mixed use (commercial/residential) buildings bordering it and Waterman’s Way.
  + The green open space is connected to all things that happen at the harbor.
  + The land parcels contain more detail and design. The waterfront has been bisected by 2 new streets - Radiance Drive and Waterman Way.
  + The green space in the front of waterfront parcel is going to have a restaurant on either side of it. The green space will be versatile as any kind of open-air event – musical, festival, family picnics.
  + The mixed use buildings behind the green space will be commercial on the first floor and residential on the second (and third) floors.
* “Residential Walking Neighborhoods (1)”
  + Bordering Maryland Ave.
  + One, two, and three story townhomes
  + Includes walkable pathways.
  + Parking spaces in the back.
  + Borders the “Elm Tree Park” area.
  + Felt the scale of these townhomes suited the Marylnd Ave neighborhood.
  + Residences will have views of the water from their second floor.
* “Residential Walking Neighborhoods (2)”
  + Similar to the other walkable neighborhood.
* “Maritime Avenue”
  + Starts at Maryland Ave and Hayward St.
  + Enhanced walkway by the Richardson’s Museum.
  + The shipbuilding will be visible to the public on the walkway.
  + Walking tours will be available to the public of the shipbuilding restoration of Richardson as well as direct access to the museum.
* Green Open Space
  + Restaurant on either side of the green space. These are smaller restaurants more like Snappers’ size.
  + Room for Food Trucks during festivals
  + Down by the Promenade will be entrance to fishing pier which is 500 feet long with “T” on the end and portable stage for events
    - Will be port for a Water taxi and boat from Richardson Maritime Museum to discharge there attendees.
  + Green space is 2 football fields wide and 1 football field deep
  + We have not designed this area yet but there will be more active areas and passive areas
  + Can accommodate 8.000 – 10,000 people
  + Festivals and events are expected to close down Waterman Way.
* Phase 1
  + Development is supposed to include the hotel and one or both of the restaurants.
  + The existing infrastructure will be utilized for this purpose.
  + It is thought that the existing infrastructure will not support all 3 establishments.
  + A new pumping station will have to be built to support these businesses.

5. Hotel Parcel Area Update

* CWDI is still working with Tauhid Islam of the Pinnacle Hospitality Group to come up with an acceptable hotel design that conveys the character of Cambridge that the CWDI board would like to highlight.
* CWDI will develop a concept plan for Pinnacle Hospitality Group. Lew Oliver will help CWDI with the concept plan.
* Pinnacle was given pictures of the hotel at Oakley Beach which used to be a popular destination in the earlier part of the 20th century.
* The hotel will go on the point of the parcel.
* Added 4 buildings to the hotel site. These are 3 story 6 unit residential condo buildings to the left of the hotel right on the dock.
* At the intersection of Radiance and Franklin Streets, there is a mixed use building that could have a number of uses (retail, museum, etc).
* The condos and mixed use building can be used to negotiate positively with the hotelier, if those units could be made available to the hotel’s use. Also, offering activities to the guests of the hotel.
* Mixed use building could be used for weddings, family events, etc), and enhance the destination experience.

6. Yacht Maintenance Update

* Purchase of more land from CWDI discussions have taken place.
* There is no final agreement.
* George Robinson is expected to dredge for his travel boat lift in October 2025
* Met with Mr. Robinson last month and will meet with him next month.
* Yacht Maintenance wants to purchase 1.3 acres more from CWDI.

7. Use of Broker to Market Development Opportunity

* CWDI has determined that they will use a broker to market the CWDI property to developers across the US.
* Frank Narr asked if using a broker complies with the transfer agreement made with the city of Cambridge. The answer was yes.
  + B. Summers, Ward 1, asked if CWDI wants a resolution written.
  + Glenn Steckman, city manager, asked CWDI to consult with their lawyers. The initiation should come from CWDI.
* Brett Summers, Ward 1 Commissioner, will be helping CWDI with this endeavor.
* CWDI will need assistance in writing an RFP to attract brokers.

8. Questions

Tom Hutchinson, State Delegate –

* Q - Asked about residential units. He counted 19 residential units on the drawing. Are these condos? Townhomes?
  + Answer, F. Narr: Lew Oliver, urban developer, had envisioned 2 story duplexes.
  + Answer: K. Usab: The 6 unit residential buildings would be stacked “townhome-like” condos.
* Q - Do you own Richardson Museum?
  + Answer, F. Narr: Yes we do because they were financially distressed and we had the money to help buy them. Gave Richardson a 2 year lease to give them time to be able to raise the money to buy their property back.
* Q - Are the residential units between Radiance Street and Bern St townhomes?
  + Answer, F. Narr: Yes. Does this mean there is no room for the YMCA at the waterfront? Answer, F. Narr: No, this plan is flexible enough to be changed to accommodate other ideas. We have not had a conversation with the YMCA since the REOI went out in 2022.
* Q - Why can’t CWDI put out RFP asking developers to build site as presented? (Directed to B. Summers).
  + Answer, B. Summers, City Ward 1: It is a matter of the best way to disseminate the information. Concept plans are used along with RFP or in the brokerage world, an “Offering Memorandum” is used along with demographic information and “Pro Formas” to market the site. It would be explained what the site would be used for. If you hire a national broker firm or an international broker firm. It will be marketed to developers continually. It should not end with one RFP going out. The broker should be meeting with CWDI every 2 weeks.

Mike Detmer, County Commissioner –

* Q - Do we really need a green space that accommodates 4,000 people? Is this the best use of this valuable piece of land? We have other green parks that can accommodate people for events and can be used as parks.
  + Answer, T. Crosby: I think the green space, with the addition of the commercial entities – restaurants, fishing pier, promenade, will be very successful.
  + Answer, B. Roche, City Ward 5: Commented that Ed McMahon from the Urban Land Institute, is world renowned for his community talks about green space and sustainable development and urban design. His research proves that development by the water increases the value of the waterfront block only. However, if you put green space between the development and the water, it increases the value of the property up to 4 blocks back from the water. This is true with Long Wharf Park and with Gerry Boyle Park. The West End properties have proven to be profitable for the city and they are set back from the water. This is one of the things that Mr McMahon espouses. In addition, Lew Oliver is well known for his developments. Such as Seaside, Florida. Everyone has access to the water in that community.
* Q – Aren’t we limiting the desirability of the waterfront and tying the hands of a developer the more we finish what the waterfront should look like?
  + Answer. B. Summers, City Ward 1: A broker will be marketing to one master developer or couple developers. As long as there is no infrastructure built, the developers and broker can work with Lew Oliver and infrastructure can be changed to accommodate their ideas.
  + Answer, B. Roche, City Ward 5: There are covenants that guard public access. This concept plan follows our comprehensive plan which we are about to update. The community wanted streets on a grid. They did not want dead ends or cul-de-sac.
  + Answer, B. Summers, City Ward 1: Until we get a developer here, we are just talking concepts. We do not have to decide how much green space there should be until we get an interested party to work with our consultants and staff.

Ricky Travers, County Commissioner –

* Commented that he has seen all the concept plans that have come through and this is the best plan yet. This development is not going to be done all at once and we don’t want it to be. Thanked CWDI for all their hard work.

Len Pfieffer, County President –

* Commented that he has been involved for some time now. The county doesn’t have any money and CWDI doesn’t have any money. Mr. Pfieffer was involved in taking developers around the property in the past and none of them bid on the property. The developers said that it would not be profitable for them. It is time to stop working on concept plans and put shovels in the ground. We need to get the hotel built on the site and put money in the coffers.

Angie Hengst thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting.

*Notes taken by A. Kennedy, CAN member*