

GOALS AND GUIDELINES FOR BCNA BOARD ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

I. GENERAL STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Waterfront Committee has developed the following guidelines for assessing the impacts of proposed development projects, both on their immediate sites and within the Barbary Coast neighborhood as a whole.

Overall, the Barbary Coast Neighborhood Association supports development which contributes to a vibrant, sustainable neighborhood: quality housing (rental and owned), local service businesses, enhanced public transit, and a pedestrian friendly environment.

The BCNA acknowledges that "quality housing" is a somewhat generic term. To us, the description suggests appropriate architecture¹, public spaces, view corridors, and additional attractive features like pedestrian arcades, setbacks from sidewalks, playgrounds and water fountains. We favor "green buildings," as that term is acquiring meaning, through energy efficient, imaginative design and building code requirements.

Successful neighborhoods have local supporting businesses (with on-site proprietors): pharmacies, bicycle shops, food stores, non-chain restaurants, bakeries, household products and other enterprises whose type can't be predicted but which contribute to a welcoming neighborhood attracting a lively mix of population: age, lifestyle, family friendly, recreation, goods, services. BCNA supports visionary planners who see the value in a pleasurable pedestrian scale urban landscape. We support the tradition, established in the 1962 SF Planning maps, of a 40 foot height limit along The Embarcadero (the pier and seawall sides) starting from the Ferry Building and Park northward.

BCNA supports improved maintenance and expansion of public transportation, including bicycles. Many Barbary Coast residents work within a bicycle commute of their jobs. Improved transit will decrease automobile congestion. Better public transit is a long-term investment for the whole area, with the medium term benefit of starting to reduce the number of unsightly parking lots along The Embarcadero in the NE Waterfront. In the short term, to support local businesses, developers need to provide adequate parking, as much through such imaginative plans as redirecting Farmers' Market customers to the existing parking garages (Embarcadero Center, Maritime Plaza, etc) as through adding new parking spaces.

BCNA endorses buildings other than housing if they contribute to our community's benefit and if they conform to zoning, aesthetic, transportation, air quality, seismic and "green" guidelines as outlined below.

Finally, BCNA upholds the use of the EIR to ascertain what the effect of any one development will have on their community as it relates to other development projects in the pipeline. BCNA requires that the San Francisco Planning Department address the cumulative effects of multiple developments within the Barbary Coast's small but increasingly desirable neighborhood. Assessing the details and the impact of each singular project is vital, but the aggregate impact of multiple new projects on neighborhood life must be included in the EIR for each individual project.

¹ See section II-D for definition and criteria of "appropriate architecture"

II. SPECIFIC REVIEW GUIDELINES

The following points will govern BCNA evaluation of projects for our neighborhood.

A. PLANNING and ZONING.

New developments must be in compliance with existing codes relative to height, bulk, and compatibility with adjoining buildings. BCNA approval of development projects depends on:

1. An analysis, lot by lot, not simply building by building, of parcel use within the neighborhood.
2. Building height and mass relative to the existing neighborhood. Sound arguments must be made for any variances. *We remind all developers of the 40' height limit along The Embarcadero, which is a matter both of existing zoning and of Northeast Waterfront Historic District requirement.*
3. Protection of scenic vistas and view corridors. Analysis should be made based on the Urban Design element of the City's General Plan.
4. Effects of increased shadowing and altered wind patterns.
5. Plans that particularly suit the waterfront location, that is, maritime-related uses, broadly conceived.
6. Adherence to Historic District guidelines. See number 2, above.
7. Consideration of Port's Waterfront Land Use Plan and Design and Access elements that relate to Port managed properties in the Northeast Waterfront and the Barbary Coast neighborhood (e.g., seawall lots). In addition, developers must consider the Public Trust common law requirements when planning development on Port property.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS on NEIGHBORHOOD and CITY.

BCNA will approve of developments that follow standard practices, giving utmost consideration to the following critical issues:

1. TRANSPORTATION and PARKING.

- a. The proposal must pay adequate attention to short-term (ten year) parking matters, and support development of a longer-term public transportation mix. (See General Statement of Principles, page 1)
- b. Highest priority given to a developer who works with the community to reduce impact of parking and traffic congestion on the surrounding neighborhoods.
- c. The proposal should support a reduction of parking lots and auto-oriented development that contribute to a Transit First policy. For example, developers might enhance existing jitney service from outlying parking sites to the Barbary Coast.
- d. The proposal must enhance pedestrian experience with spectacular views of our outstanding neighborhood.

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- f. Developers should collaborate with existing businesses that have the same parking needs.
- g. We recognize the overall value of such additions to the City as the Port-related developments in the NE Waterfront (e.g., the Exploratorium and the Cruise Terminal, but we also recognize that this puts a heavy burden on our neighborhood in regards to traffic on The Embarcadero. We ask that such large developments take into account the traffic congestion that will ensue, making our neighborhood less livable, and that they make every effort to mitigate such congestion.

2. AIR QUALITY.

Projects must not cause substantial degradation of existing air quality, neighborhood wide, as demonstrated with studies by appropriate agencies.

3. GLOBAL WARMING.

The inconvenient truth of global climate change and a rising level of the Bay must be specifically addressed in each project. This criteria is relevant to projects located near the waterfront and/or Port controlled development projects.

4. ARCHAEOLOGY.

A project proposal must consider the likelihood that archaeological artifacts will be discovered.

C. LAND USE

A development design should encourage neighborhood-serving businesses on the street level.

D. DESIGN & AESTHETICS.

Project designs should be appropriate and innovative but complementary to existing structures and vistas

1. BCNA favors projects of human scale which are leading-edge but complement the adjacent surrounding architecture.
2. Given our neighborhood's unique situation, each proposal design should protect or enhance scenic vistas and view.
3. Appropriate architecture refers to a consensus among stakeholders which reflects a design and scale that complements the neighborhood context. For example,
 - a. The architecture should first be part of a project which is in full compliance with all local, state and federal building codes, ordinances and zoning directives.
 - b. The project should add both to the overall functional and aesthetic well being of our neighborhood.
 - c. The project should equal or exceed the standard quality of life that the neighborhood has established for itself.

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- d. It should be sustainable (green) as so far as it is financial practical.
- e. The project should plan for open space/landscaping and discourage covering the site completely with structures.
- f. The project must address local contextual guidelines and demonstrate as a positive addition to the neighborhood.

E. RECREATION PROJECTS.

The design of public park and recreation spaces should provide for varied activities: child's play, adult jogging, dog walking, and anyone's sitting about and observing.

F. GREEN BUILDINGS.

Projects should implement green building techniques, including material conservation, energy efficiency, sustainable construction techniques and additional criteria as may be developed.

III. DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

The Barbary Coast Neighborhood shall review favorably the following development priorities:

1. Early engagement of community by developer to design and plan the building.
2. If building on the seawall lots (from Ferry Plaza northward), maintain a maximum 40' height
3. Develop ground floor space that encourages neighborhood-serving retail. Rent street-level retail on a scale that renters can afford, thus enlivening the neighborhood.
4. Highest priority given to a developer who works with the community to reduce impact of parking and traffic congestion on the surrounding neighborhoods
5. Neutral review of the EIR if EIR paid for by the developer.

IV. PROVISION FOR REVIEW AND REVISION OF THESE GUIDELINES

1. These guidelines will be reviewed biannually or as requested.
2. Revisions will be approved by a 2/3 majority of the BCNA Board of Directors.

Draft prepared by BCNA Waterfront Action Committee members, Jan Holloway and Jonathan Middlebrook.

Discussion and revisions by WAC members at August 14, 2008 meeting; referred to BCNA Board for consideration; BCNA Board approval of final guidelines (version 1.1) on September 25, 2008.