

Comments on City Dock #1 EIR
Anthony Michaels [tony@proteusenv.com]
Sent: Thu 1/13/2011 11:27 PM
To: Ceqacomments
CC: Anthony Michaels; Garrett, Barb
Dear Port of Los Angeles,

I would like to submit the following comments as part of the public hearing process for the Environmental Impact Study process for the City Dock #1 Marine Research Center.

Overall, I applaud the creation of this center. It is the right thing to do at the right time and leverages many of the natural benefits of the Port, Los Angeles and California to create some important public goods.

I would like to suggest that the focus of the review and the plan encompass the full mix of research, education, training, innovation, entrepreneurs, job creation and outreach to the public in a very balanced way. These are all important elements of the plan and engage a wide range of constituents. The current plan seems to focus on the needs of SCMI (which are important), but does so in a way that is out of balance with the plan that will lead to success for the overall facility. Bring in all elements of the plan, ensure their linkage with each other and with a diversity of outside communities and approve a plan that provides for this full mix and an adaptive balance of activities as opportunities arise.

Let there be fun! You rightfully want the public and the promenade to come through this space and provide access. Let there be things to do and make sure that they are fun! Mix in the arts. Add in a variety of food opportunities. Encourage or even mandate regular public events. Make the promenade through this area an interactive science museum experience. Let the public peer into the buildings to see what is going on and have every building have a public space and a gift shop. Create community among the tenants and open that community to the public.

I strongly support the retention of the existing warehouse buildings as a shell with the new structures created inside. However, the repair of the over-water piers may be incredibly expensive. Only a small proportion of the uses identified for the space require a lot of waterfront and, in practice, the whole thing might be successful with only part of that over-water landscape. Thus, the most cost-effective thing may be to tear down some of the warehouses and retain only those that need the waterfront space. I wonder if that balance could be incorporated into the EIR options or balance of options. It is unfortunate that the warehouses are partially over the water and this reality means that a gradation of options for new or reuse of the warehouses is warranted.

I support the business incubator as a critical tool for the whole project and another element that will make this unique on a global basis (I have a conflict of interest here as I run a company that could benefit from that very facility). I suggest that you keep the use of that space flexible and generic in the EIR since it is hard to accurately predict exactly what kinds of companies might need that space.

I suggest that the jobs elements of the EIR be thought through carefully. I think that there are more jobs in this overall plan than people might realize and that important benefit should be an accurate part of the overall balance.

I would suggest that you be fairly careful about how proscriptive you are on specific elements of the types of research or education are done. There are adequate safety mechanisms built into environmental laws, OSHA and other agencies to ensure that the standard practices in marine science are safe when these rules are followed. Placing additional restrictions on molecular biology, marine mammals, the types of fish that could be held, the types of class topics that can or cannot be done, whether the department of defense funds research or if any of it helps safeguard our military are all examples of things that I suggest not be too proscriptive in the EIR. Reference the existing laws and the safe records of the local universities. Maybe set up some kind of tenant review process for subleases. However, please don't micro-manage in advance who and what can use the facility. It would hinder its success in many different ways.

I hope that these are useful comments. I am available to help in any way makes sense for you.

Cheers, Tony

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