

**VOICES
AT THE WATERFRONT
IN THE
VISION
2**



Joint Meeting

*Albany City Council
Albany Waterfront Task Force*

December 4, 2011

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Albany Waterfront Task Force

Mission:

To ensure the collection, review, and dissemination (to the Albany community) of adequate, factual information and data related to potential development by The Stronach Group at the Albany Waterfront (GGF site).

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Albany Waterfront Task Force

Composition:

22 Members

– 12 Appointed by City Council

– 5 Appointed by School Board

+ Chairs (or designees) of Committees:

– Planning and Zoning

– Transportation

– Waterfront

– Sustainability

– Parks and Recreation

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Six Sessions to Date

- **October 9:** Development of core questions, Data, Reports needed to understand project
- **October 16:** Focus: Site Plan
- **October 30:** Focus: Ownership, Legal, CEQA, including Measure C and Berkeley Measures
- **November 6:** Focus: Proposed Voter Initiative, Environmental Issues
- **November 13:** Focus: Economic / Fiscal Impacts
- **November 20:** Pros / Cons / Opportunities / List of information still needed (Synthesis of pros and cons; priorities)

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November 20 Task Force Meeting

Background:

- *What We Know;*
What We Think We Know;
What We Don't Know

Homework:

- *Pros (Strengths);*
Cons (Weaknesses);
Opportunities
- *Developed individually and*
submitted prior to Nov 20 meeting

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Overview

- Complex project; inter-relationship of pros and cons; cannot separate
- LBNL as 'anchor/catalyst' (*jobs, education, stature*); LBNL as 'challenge' (*loss of control, loss of revenues, scale, lack of specificity*)
- "Value" and tradeoffs: open space in relation to development, scale, height, traffic, environment, etc.
- Federal/state governments as largest employer in Albany
- Timing/content: Initiative process

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The RFQ and the “Competition” – the GGF Site

- Spectacular views and location
- Proximity to current LBNL site

But complicated (Albany issues not relevant on other 5 sites)...

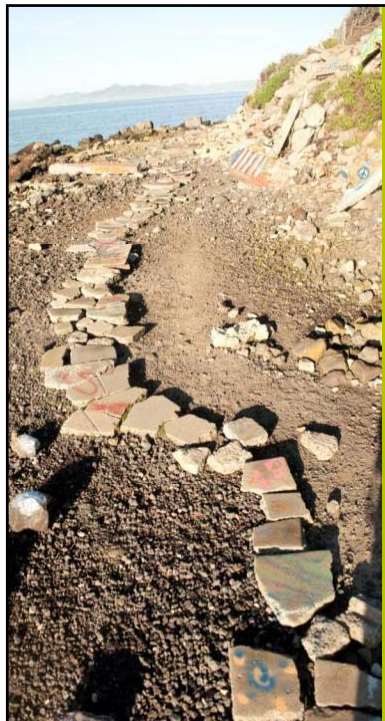
- Two cities requiring citizen votes
- Potential loss of revenue
- Private property moving into public ownership
- Relocating existing business and jobs
- Project must include *more* than LBNL, per developer and taxes
- Site that has been focus of multi-year community discussion

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Top “Pros” (per Task Force)

- Preservation of Codornices Creek
- Open space along shoreline
- Completion of Bay Trail
- Increase in parkland / open space at waterfront
- Shuttles to / from public transportation (frequency unknown)
- *Potential* for programs with schools (through LBNL)
- Connection of waterfront to rest of city of Albany (if designed appropriately)

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Other Site Plan “Pros” (Per Task Force)

- Fleming Point: dedicated open space
- Sufficient private development to make project economically viable for developer, while still creating waterfront park
- Hotel in Albany (potential for science conferences, etc.)
- Range of open space types
- Open space costs (land, development, maintenance *could* be covered by developer

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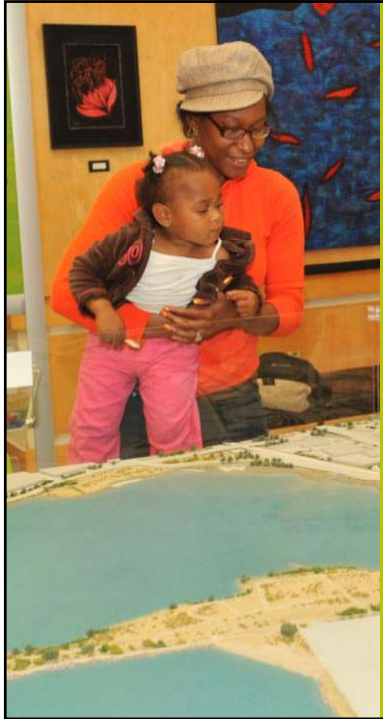


Other “Pros” (per Task Force)

Environmental / Traffic:

- All CEQA requirements would be met, but *after* Initiative vote
- Potential for advances in alternative energy/environmental technologies at LBNL
- LEED certification; sustainable / renewable energy at site; V2V site standards
- Bike paths
- Easy park access/perimeter road

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Other “Pros” (Per Task Force)

Economic / Fiscal Issues / Ownership:

- TSG’s awareness of funding needs for City and schools; private development on tax rolls
- Increase of \$300,000+/- per year to General Fund (at full build-out)
- *Potential* for increased economic activity and revenues
- 4,500 jobs

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Other “Pros” (Per Task Force)

Initiative Process, CEQA, Development Agreement:

- Final decisions about Development Agreement *might* be better handled by electeds (rather than Measure C citizen vote)
- Meets LBNL timeline (??)

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Other “Pros” (Per Task Force)

“LBNL” in Albany:

- Green technology
- Good match for Albany
- Potential for developing new scientific knowledge
- Possible draw for spin-off labs, etc.
- Image, prestige

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Overall Proposal - Pros (Per Task Force) (LBNL @ 2M sq ft + .9M sq ft + parking – Albany)

- Significant new, usable parkland;
- World class science facility comes to Albany
- Possibly best opportunity for something positive at site
- *Opportunity* for significant economic development and increase in revenues to city

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Top “Cons” (Per Task Force)

- All non-taxable activities located in Albany
- City / community loss of control in UC / LBNL portion of site
- Government would become largest employer in city
- UC / LBNL permanently reduces city / school tax base
- Vote on Initiative would likely be without benefit of full CEQA review; unknown lead agency for CEQA
- Initiative process (without full CEQA review) likened to “signing a contract containing many blank spaces”
- Fast pace not conducive to good planning; pace set by LBNL
- Scale of proposed development (appropriate for site??)
- While all parties “win” to some degree, TSG “wins the most”

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Other “Cons” (as noted by Task Force)

Site Plan:

- Part of Fleming Point becomes grass covered parking
- Unclear how 5,000 cars fit on site (Albany and Berkeley; unknown how many cars in Albany)
- All possible land uses not fully explored (no housing shown in Albany portion of site)
- Scale, type of development
- Height of buildings (esp. hotel)

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Other "Cons" (Per Task Force)

Public Open Space:

- Regional benefit that is paid for by Albany in terms of scale of development
- Ownership unknown; could remove commercially-zoned land from tax rolls

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Other "Cons" (Per Task Force)

Environmental Issues:

- Intensity of use and related impacts
- To date, no info re: actual or proposed alternative energy projects for LBNL
- Info about environmental issues re: LBNL unknown

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Other "Cons" (Per Task Force)

Traffic:

- Size of development; anticipated traffic problems; no study yet
- 5,000 car commuters, AC buses, jitneys, delivery vehicles, service for 200-room hotel + 18-20 labs
- I-80 traffic; EIR for Santa Fe development: "no adequate mitigations for this impact"

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Other "Cons" (Per Task Force)

Economic / Fiscal:

- Not enough revenue for city / schools, given scale of project
- Further reduction of parcel taxes for AUSD
- Concerns about capacity of City of Albany to fund strong negotiation team for Development Agreement
- Increase of \$300K to General Fund disappointing given scale and land value increase from entitlements

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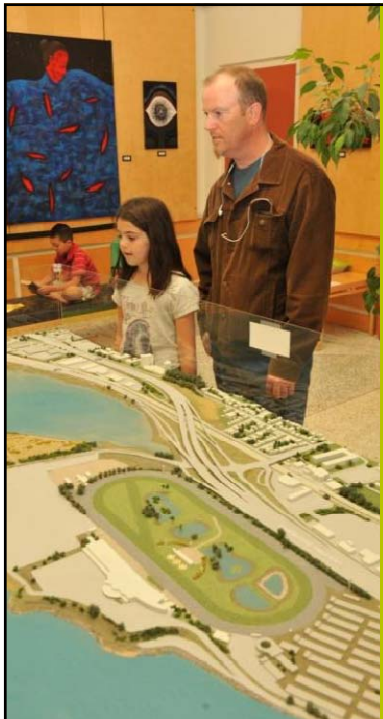


Other "Cons" (Per Task Force)

Ownership:

- City/community potentially lose much/most control over zoning and revenue potential
- Federal/state governments as owners: non-responsive to local concerns
- Massive building, minimal revenue

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Other "Cons" (Per Task Force)

Initiative, CEQA, Development Agreement:

- Confusing to voters
- Better to give community chance to vote *after* CEQA results known
- Initiative vote occurs without full information
- Potentially divisive

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Other “Cons” (Per Task Force)

“LBNL” at Golden Gate Fields:

- No tax revenue; increased city costs
- Not clear GGF is best location
- Largely single use; limited mix of uses
- Many unknowns (projects at site, additional development, environmental records)

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Conclusion

Strong sentiment that project has benefits and also challenges.

Task Force has taken its charge seriously – nearly 100% attendance at intense series of meetings – 6 Sunday evenings in 8 weeks.

Reviewed an enormous amount of material; articulated strengths, challenges, and opportunities associated with the physical realities of the project (as known at this point), as well as the community approval process (as has been described).

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