



**Interbay Working Group Meeting
December 5, 2012**

Attendees:

Bob Beebe, KG Investment Management
Bruce Wynn, Interbay neighborhood Association
Don Root, CEO, GM Nameplate
Eugene Wasserman, North Seattle Industrial Association
Gene Hoggund, Magnolia Community Club
John Coney, Queen Anne Community Council, Uptown Alliance
Joseph Gellings, Port of Seattle
Martin Kaplan, Queen Anne Community Council
Nathan Hartman, Kerf Design
Adam Silvers, Resident
Charles Wathen, Interbay Urban Center
Jeffrey Hummel, Hummel Architects, Interbay Urban Center
John Gaines, Freehold Group
Kent Angier, Kauri Investments
Steve Gillespie, Foster Pepper

City Staff:

Patrice Carroll, Senior Planner, DPD
Geoff Wentlandt, Senior Planner/ Urban Designer, DPD
Michael James, SDOT

At this meeting we reviewed existing conditions; identified issues associated with currently land uses, and discussed future land use opportunities in the study area.

Review of Existing Conditions

A series of existing conditions maps were developed and presented to the working group (Draft maps are posted on the project website

<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/EnvisioningInterbay/ProductsandFindings/default.asp>

Highlights of existing conditions:

- A third of the study area is within the BINMIC

- Largest land use categories include open space 25%, residential 17%, public facilities 11% warehouse 11%, retail/services 11%, industrial 10%.,
- Industrial use is generally light and small– warehousing, sales, distribution, woodworking, etc.
- Few owner-operated industrial properties, many investor-owned properties
- South corridor near Whole Foods has larger parcels and more consolidated ownership
- Major truck routes include 15th Ave/ Elliot Ave and Nickerson Street.
- 15th Ave is high volume arterial – highest volume at the Ballard Bridge– over 62,000 average weekly daily traffic
- Most frequent transit is Rapid Ride D with stations at Dravus Street, Armory Way and Prospect Street. Corridor has several weekday express bus routes.
- Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes available for a portion of corridor
- Physically, the study area includes the mostly flat valley floor with areas of historic fill. Topography rises steeply buffering the adjacent neighborhoods from the corridor.
- The potential liquefaction area is extensive, and the areas south of the golf course are vulnerable to sea level rise.
- Recreation and park areas include P-patch, golf course, driving range, soccer and ball fields. There is little tree canopy within the study area, but greenbelt lands and Kinnear Park are adjacent.

Questions and Comments on Existing Conditions Information

Industrial Uses

- Some owners “sit” on industrial land waiting for rezones.
- Could be longer term demand for large footprint industrial.
- Not all industrial has impacts- some people like the industrial character, don’t mind living near industry, and want to be close to it.
- Industry is worried about mixing residential and industrial- complaints about noise (e.g. GM Nameplate did have complaints about fan noise, but it got resolved).
- Noise from rail yard is loud can be heard in Magnolia, often noisy late at night.
- Any reduction in acreage of industrial land is a concern to some industrial stakeholders.

Vehicle Traffic + Transit

- Need to include traffic numbers that reflects traffic related to cruise ships. Port did a traffic study for the Cruise Terminal and the Magnolia Bridge replacement.
- Include information on bus boardings.

Environmental Constraints, Recreation, Open and Greenspace

- Tsunami inundation area is another constraint.

Jobs

- Clarify the source of job numbers.
- Report on the projected number of jobs in the BINMIC from the Neighborhood Plan/ Comprehensive Plan – have the targets been reached?

- Review the Planning Commission’s Industrial land Study. Need to consider the citywide trends in need for industrial land. Comment - the study overestimated industrial jobs by including construction jobs as industrial during a construction boom.
- Clarify what jobs are included in “services.”

What’s Valued

Transportation

- Access to I-5 and to Duwamish MIC
- Corridor allows efficient travel
- Corridor connects Queen Anne and to other centers
- Corridor provides essential access for Magnolia- only three connections in and out.

Commerical/ Retail

- Commercial is diverse, and easy to access for people passing through the corridor.
- Good to have services along a commute route- convenient, cuts down on number of auto trips.
- Whole Foods and Pete’s Coffee are very popular.

Housing & Recreation

- Housing is affordable
- Lots of recreation assets - stadium, golf course, etc.
- P-Patch

Industry

- Industrial character
- Industrial jobs

Other

- Diversity of uses

What’s not Working

Transportation

- Bicycles in the BAT lanes impede traffic—should be on a separate trail.
- Need for a level bike route around the hills.

Vacancy

- Lots of commercial is vacant. Comment: Owners of Interbay Urban Center took Whole Foods space off the market rather than discount the rents.

- Vacant commercial space in Interbay.

Neighborhood Connections and Services

- 15th Ave is a wall for Queen Anne and Magnolia. People shop in their local business districts, or outside the area.
Lack of a strong east/west connection between Queen Anne and Magnolia
- Need for more services for local population (30,000 people in Queen Anne and Magnolia). That will connect Interbay into the communities on either side. Will eliminate longer shopping trips to destinations further away.
- No spaces for events or gatherings (e.g. Palouse Festival)

Development

- Restrictions make it difficult to support new construction on industrial land. Need more flexibility. 75,000 sf is not enough to support a big box (Home Depot) type retailer.
- Need larger limit on non-industrial uses
- Small building size – difficult to lease a 15,000 sf warehouse.

Housing

- Need housing to support businesses that are here.

Opportunities

North (near Dravus)

- Once apartments are rented, vacant commercial will fill up.
- Workers – want more places to eat. Can't walk to Whole Foods, need to get in a car.
- Need more businesses.
- Older building provide affordable space for local businesses
- Mixed use can include industrial and residential (e.g. living space above Dusty Strings); lots of multi-family residential already here that co-exists with industry; delicate match with heritage industrial.

South (near Whole Foods)

- More retail - Whole Foods is experiencing rapid year over year growth in sales.
- Had thousands of people for Mobile Food Truck event at Armory Way.
- More retail; great location for big box retail; University Village type retail.
- Uses south of corridor- office, live/work, residential- could continue here.

General

- Indoor recreation like the Vertical Gym in Ballard. Unique character from conversion of industrial building. Comment- wanted to develop something like the Bellevue Club, but couldn't make it work.
- Older buildings can be a source of affordable space for retailers and start-ups.

- Residential and industrial uses don't mix- noise, dust, are problems.
- Residential can be compatible with industrial uses (e.g. Granville Island in Vancouver).
- Look at other uses where industrial isn't coming back.
- Residential growth outside of urban villages is OK in the right location. Industrial advocates supported the Dravus rezone.
- Distilleries are taking off.
- IC zone has been successful – can satisfy retail and commercial needs
- Adaptive reuse of industrial buildings for indoor recreation- soccer, club, pools.
- Could there be uses that would support the Cruise terminal. Passengers could come to Interbay for a “Woodinville” experience.
- Would more retail have a negative impact on local business districts in Queen Anne and Magnolia?

Other Questions, Comments and Suggestions

- Provide additional resources to study the traffic impacts of any rezoning proposal.
- Expand the study area be expanded to include the Port's upland properties. This will have a huge impact on land use and traffic in the study area.
 - Port responded that the area had been studied for highest and best use. Consultants (Kidder Matthews) concluded that outdoor storage was the best use. Soils are extremely poor and the cost of development would be very high.
- Uptown is a future job center which could also impact the corridor.
- Use the term “undeveloped land” instead of “vacant land.”
- Consider the capacity of utilities.
- GM Nameplate's employees come from all over.
- Don't “broad brush” the area- don't apply one solution everywhere.
- Focus on areas that will be rezoned- don't need a big study.
- Develop a broad strategy for the corridor, don't focus on a few parcels.

Update on Seattle Department of Transportation Studies

DPD is coordinating with SDOT regarding tow transportation studies in the corridor. Michael James will join working group meetings to share information about those studies.

- Sound Transit's Board approved the scope for the high capacity transit study between downtown and Ballard in mid-November. The study will begin early next year and be completed by mid-2014. It will evaluate a range of potential high-capacity transit services, routes and station locations.

- SDOT's Industrial Areas Freight Access Study will begin in January 2013 and be completed in mid 2014.