Re: Cruise Terminals or a Living Harbour – or can we have both?

Further to presentations made by the Tourism Commissioner on November 4, 2004 to the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee, we understand that there is a need for Hong Kong to welcome cruise liners in an appropriate manner. We also appreciate that becoming a home port for cruise liners can create new job opportunities and may visually enhance our harbour.

However, we believe that it is wrong to address the need for a home port by first inviting (property development) proposals for an intermediate one-berth mega cruise terminal. We call on the Government to halt the tender procedures and to FIRST commence a ‘Living Harbour Review’.

Given the competing requirements for the very limited land available along our harbour-fronts, a sustainable process is required to secure community support and to shorten the planning, decision making and implementation cycles for the development of vibrant harbour-fronts with world-class facilities for leisure, tourism and commerce.

Within the harbour planning process, the ‘Living Harbour Review’ identifies all future marine uses for Victoria Harbour based on Hong Kong’s four economic pillars and the aspirations of its people. Possible uses include dinghy sailing, wind surfing, yachting, fishing, rowing, swimming, water taxis, harbour cruises, circular ferries, international cruises, China coast cruises, floating restaurants, dragon boat races, power boat racing and sea planes.
Each use will require marine facilities and land-based infrastructure. The review can identify possible locations, specify any need for piling and recommend appropriate development and implementation models. Following the review, tenders can be called for the building and management of the necessary infrastructure, including the first phase (first berth) of a multi-berth home port for cruise liners.

Further, with the ‘Living Harbour Review’ based on the principles of sustainable development and open to public participation, the necessary overriding public needs tests can be passed.

Following legal advice, Government departments have now classified piling for marine facilities as reclamation under the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance. It is questionable that it was the intention of the Judge to place reclamation for marine facilities under the same strict requirements as reclamation for the creation of land. This interpretation must be challenged to ensure Hong Kong achieves a world class living harbour and an exciting and interactive water-edge.

On May 1 2004 the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee started its work, which includes advising the Government through the Secretary of Housing, Planning and Lands on harbour planning.

We urge the administration and all Government departments to fully engage with the work of this committee. The ‘Living Harbour Review’ can be coordinated by the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee, in cooperation with the Tourism Commission, Marine Department and Planning Department. Citizen Envisioning @ Harbour offers its full support for a speedy implementation.

Yours sincerely,

Albert Lai
Convenor, Citizen Envisioning @ Harbour
5/F Wong Foo Yuan Building
Department of Architecture
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Shatin
New Territories
CC: Cruise Terminals or a Living Harbour – or can we have both? November 18 2004

Mr. Donald Tsang
Chief Secretary for HKSAR
12/F, Central Government Offices
West Wing
Lower Albert Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Fax: 2524 5695)

Mr. Henry Tang
Financial Secretary
12/F, Central Government Offices
West Wing
Lower Albert Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Fax: 2840 0569)

Mr Stephen Ip
Secretary
Economic Development and Labour
Room 812, 8/F,
West Wing, Central Government Offices
Lower Albert Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Fax: 2537-2751)

Mr John Tsang, JP
Secretary
Commerce, Industry and Technology
8F West Wing
Central Government Offices
Ice House Street
Central, Hong Kong
(Fax: 2537-6720)

Mr. Michael Suen
Secretary for Housing, Planning & Lands
Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau
8th Floor, West Wing
Central Government Office
11 Ice House Street
Central, Hong Kong
(Fax: 2537 9276)

Ms. Eva Cheng
Commissioner for Tourism
Hong Kong Tourism Commission
2nd Floor, East Wing
Central Government Offices
Lower Albert Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Fax: 2523 1973)
Mrs. Selina Chow  
Chair, Hong Kong Tourism Board  
9th-11th Floors, Citicorp Centre  
18 Whittield Road, North Point, Hong Kong  
(Fax: 2806 0303)

Mr. Bosco Fung  
Director of Planning, Planning Department  
17/F, North Point Government Offices  
333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong  
(Fax: 2869 7241 / 2116 0751)

Mr. Tsui Shung Yiu  
Director of Marine, Marine Department  
Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road  
Central, Hong Kong  
(Fax: 2541 7194 / 2544 9241)

Members of the Real Estate Developers' Association  
Room 1403 World Wide House, 19 Des Voeux Road Central, Hong Kong

Chair and Members of the Town Planning Board,  
c/o The Town Planning Board Secretariat  
15/F, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong

Chair and Members of the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee  
c/o Ms. Christine Chow, The HEC Secretariat,  
Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau  
9/F, Murray Building, Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong

Members of Citizen Envisioning @ Harbour  
Business Environment Council  
Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong  
Centre of Urban Planning and Environmental Management, The University of Hong Kong  
Conservancy Association  
Hong Kong Institute of Architects  
Hong Kong People’s Council for Sustainable Development  
American Institute of Architects, Hong Kong Chapter  
Designing Hong Kong Harbour District  
LIVE.Architecture Programme, Department of Architecture, The Chinese University of Hong Kong  
Urban Design Alliance  
Sustainable Development Concept Magazine "SEE"  
Central and Western District Development Concern Group  
Division on Building Science and Technology City University  
Hong Kong Council for Social Services  
Caritas Mok Cheung Sui Kun Community Centre  
Caritas Community Centre - Caine Road  
St. James’ Settlement  
Hong Kong Christian Service

Chair and Members of the Legislative Council