

PRESS RELEASE



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Citizen Envisioning @ Harbour

18th June 2005

HKCEC expansion: Ex-co should honour commitment to public participation in decision-making

In response to the Executive Council's decision to give policy support to the expansion of the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC), Citizen Envisioning@ Harbour (CE@H) today made the following response:

1. The Ex-co decision was announced during the public envisioning stage for the enhancement of the Wanchai waterfront. CE@H express regret to Ex-co's support for HKCEC expansion as it impairs the integrity of the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee's (HEC) public engagement process;
2. Knowing that HEC members have expressed reservation to the HKCEC expansion proposal in the HEC Briefing on 5 January 2005 and that the public are being invited to actively participate in the harbour-front enhancement exercise in Wanchai (of which the HKCEC site is an important element), the Ex-co decision works against public expectations for harbour-front enhancement.
3. By ignoring the HEC-endorsed harbour planning principles and the TPB-endorsed Harbour Vision and Urban Design Guidelines, the Ex-co decision will likely put the Town Planning Board in an untenable position when HKCEC submits its development application in due course.
4. Due to the uncertainty the Ex-co decision has created for the Harbour-front Enhancement Review for Wanchai, Causeway Bay and Adjoining Areas, CE@H members on the HEC will reconsider their participation in the WDII Taskforce unless the government provides a prompt clarification and confirmation of support for HEC's role in the enhancement of the harbour-front and adjoining areas in Wanchai.

5. CE@H urges EX-Co to affirm its commitment to allow public access to decision-making in the current community engagement process, withhold its support on HKCEC expansion, and respect the views of the people in its final decision.

Citizen Envisioning @ Harbour (CE@H) is an alliance of 17 professional, academic and citizen organizations and calls for integrated planning and citizen participation in sustainable development of the harbour and harbour-front.

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