

Resolution No. 2012-1

A Resolution Approving the Waterfront Concept Plan as Implementation of Land Use Goal No. 1 in the 2009 New Castle City Comprehensive Plan

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted an updated Comprehensive Plan in 2009, which plan was developed over several months in a number of public meetings by the Planning Commission and approved by the City Council after a public hearing and adoption of an ordinance; and

WHEREAS, included in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan is the following:

Land Use Plan Section

Recommended Land Use Goals

Goal No. 1: Continue to encourage mixed residential/retail/office uses.

Strategy

Located on the Delaware River waterfront, New Castle's downtown functions as a commercial, residential and recreational core of the City. The City should obtain funding for and conduct a more detailed waterfront plan to identify market needs and strengthen the downtown's ties to the waterfront. Specific issues to address include:

- Appropriate business mix
- Residential needs
- Parking needs and potential supply solutions
- Enhanced waterfront connections
- Enhanced recreational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, the City Council approved the Planning Commission hiring an engineering firm to develop a concept plan to implement Goal No. 1 stated above; and

WHEREAS, the concept plan has been completed, the main component of which proposes that a pier be built at the foot of Delaware Street off the existing wharf, which would accommodate a variety of vessels coming into the City, including the Kalmar Nyckel, Three Forts Ferry, Wilmington's Riverboat Queen and other similar ships aimed at boosting tourism and visitors to the City, meeting the goals of enhancing waterfront connections and recreational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, acceptance by the City Council of the proposed Waterfront Concept Plan would authorize proceeding to the next step of seeking funding from grant sources, to develop a preliminary engineering plan and engaging in the permitting process for the pier; and

WHEREAS, there remain a number of steps in the continuing process, many of which will require action by the City Council at public meetings, as detailed in the attached timeline; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the steps detailed above, there will be added opportunities for public participation at public information meetings and public hearings.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council hereby accepts the Waterfront Concept Plan, as prepared by Duffield Engineers, as implementation of Goal No. 1 of the Recommended Land Use Goals contained in the 2009 City of New Castle Comprehensive Plan;

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council approves seeking grant funding for preliminary engineering design and engaging in the permitting process for the Waterfront Concept Plan, and that any grant applications proposed to be submitted seeking such grant funding must be approved by the City Council at a public meeting prior to any application being submitted.

SUMMARY
City of New Castle
Riverfront Redevelopment Plan

Project Overview

The purpose of the proposed City of New Castle Dock project is manifold and includes: 1) improving pedestrian access to the Delaware River; 2) providing a seasonal docking facility for the Kalmar Nyckel and other historic tall ships; 3) providing possible docking facilities for the Delaware River and Bay Authority's Three Forts Ferry; and 4) providing boat dockage space for day use. This facility would also provide a much needed permanent docking location for the Good Will Fire Company rescue boat.

The existing pier at the City's Battery Park was evaluated for reuse and expansion for the proposed purpose but, because of the docks southern location, the flood tide currents run perpendicular to the dock face making this location very difficult for larger ships like the Kalmar Nyckel and the Three Forts Ferry to maneuver and dock. The current location of a new dock was selected so that the tidal current flow would be parallel to the face of the dock.

The dock configuration and length was developed to minimize environmental impacts. The dock is proposed to extend out into the Delaware River approximately 200 feet which, based upon available information, will provide sufficient depth at low tide to accommodate the Kalmar Nyckel and Three Forts Ferry without the need for maintenance dredging.

Improvements proposed as part of this project to the City of New Castle's waterfront area, including the pier and docking facility are expected to provide an enriching experience for residents and current visitors and are expected to attract new visitors to the City.

Permits and Permit Process

The construction of a docking facility and other associated water front redevelopment improvements will require various agency permits and approvals. Duffield Associates, Inc. (Duffield Associates) scheduled and attended a Joint Permit Planning meeting on October 20, 2011, to discuss the proposed project. The regulatory agencies attending, including the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), were supportive of the project's concept design. While this does not constitute an approval, it does indicate that the project is likely to obtain needed regulatory approvals.

If the project is planned to move forward, Duffield Associates would assist the City of New Castle in the preparation and submission of permit applications to DNREC and the USACE. The permit applications would take approximately three to four weeks to prepare once preliminary engineering drawings and studies have been completed. This schedule assumes that more lengthy and extensive natural and cultural resource studies will not be required by the regulatory agencies. As discussed later, Duffield Associates recommends completing preliminary engineering drawings and cost estimates prior to seeking outside funding.

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Once the permit applications are submitted to DNREC and USACE, it is anticipated that their initial review of the applications may take 2 to 4 months. During that time, Duffield Associates would answer questions and provide additional requested information to the permitting agencies until such time that each agency deems the applications “complete.” In addition, we would perform the necessary notifications to the permitting agencies such as the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, National Marine Fisheries, etc. to obtain their comments early on in the permitting process.

Once the permit applications are deemed complete, the projects are advertised for public comment which may vary from 30 to 60 days depending upon the agencies’ opinion of complexity of the project and potential for comments from the public.

Once the public comment periods are complete and, assuming there are no comments of substance that would delay issuance of the permits, permits would typically be issued in 2 to 4 months.

Opinion of Probable Cost (2012 Dollars)

Based on our knowledge of similar projects and after consultation with marine contractors we have developed the following concept level Opinion of Probable Cost.

1. Surveying/Preliminary Engineering.....	\$ 65,000 - \$ 75,000
2. Permitting.....	\$ 35,000 - \$ 45,000
3. Final Design Engineering	\$ 70,000 - \$ 75,000
4. Construction Services/Testing	\$ 20,000 - \$ 30,000
5. Construction.....	\$580,000 - \$660,000
6. Contingency	<u>\$ 75,000 - \$ 85,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$845,000 - \$970,000</u>

Community Transportation Funds (CTF)

This is money available to State Senators and Representatives for use in funding a fairly broad array of “transportation” related projects in their districts. Contact with these elected officials is essential in determining the availability, amount and likelihood of funding in any given year.

Transportation Enhancement (TE) Funding

This is funding available through DelDOT for construction projects which can be considered “enhancements” to more traditional transportation projects. Projects funded under the TE program can typically include such things as parks, greenway trails, bikeways and pedestrian safety improvements. The Lightship Overfalls berth project in Lewes, DE is typical of a project receiving TE funding.

State Bond Bill

The State Bond Bill mechanism can be used to fund the design and construction of qualifying projects, which have received legislative sponsorship and advocacy. Funding eligibility and amounts need to be discussed with your State Representative and Senator.

Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA)

Although less likely than in years past, the DRBA has contributed money for projects such as this. Currently, the DRBA operates the Three Forts Ferry. If the City of New Castle were able to successfully negotiate for the Three Forts Ferry to stop at New Castle’s “new” dock, there may be an opportunity to negotiate for some construction and/or operational funding.

New Castle Conservation District (NCCD) Match Funding

The NCCD often provides matching funding in smaller (typically \$10,000 - \$15,000) amounts for projects, which can demonstrate some water related ecological or stormwater handling benefits. Projects such as ancillary shoreline restoration and/or stormwater handling projects may be eligible for matching funding. The District Coordinator at NCCD should be contacted to further discuss.

Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) Funding

On a case-by-case basis, DNREC may be able to provide varied levels of supplemental funding for projects of this type or for components of this project. Eligibility should be discussed with DNREC’s Planning Office.

Homeland Security/Public Safety Grants

Since the project may incorporate docking facilities for the Goodwill Fire Department’s Search and Rescue Vessel, it may be possible that components of the project may be eligible for Public

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Safety Grants provided by the State and County Governments and the Homeland Security Federal Agency. You should discuss this with both your State and County elected officials and also with representatives from the Goodwill Fire Company.

Foundations

There are one or two Delaware based foundations that have provided grant funding for projects, which have historic, cultural, or land preservation aspects. Typically these foundations expect cost sharing from other sources. Having an agreement with the Kalmar Nyckel operation to provide a long term docking/visitation program may be an incentive for some sources of outside funding.

Home Grown Funding

The benefits of having a not-for-profit local project specifically focused foundation or trust cannot be overstated. These entities provide a mechanism to facilitate local fundraising opportunities and provide an opportunity to receive naming gifts and bequeathals and provide a legal entity to both solicit and receive grant funding. Several similar projects with which we have been associated have privately raised hundreds of thousands of dollars over a two to three year period. These funds were then used to leverage other funding and to endow operating fund accounts.

Alternative Pier Option

During the course of this conceptual study, a question arose about possibly using the existing pier and extending or modifying it to accommodate docking for tall ships and provisions for other docks similar to that recommended for the new pier and dock. Issues associated with modifications to the existing pier include:

1. Tide and current. It was identified that the “flood” tide or incoming tide in that area flows perpendicular to the face of the dock making docking during a flood tide very difficult as the current pushes the docking vessel away from the dock.
2. Insufficient docking space. The second ice breaker located directly out from the existing pier/ first ice breaker is less than 70 feet from the dock location. The captain of the Kalmar Nyckle stated that they have been pushed against this ice breaker while trying to dock at the existing pier.
3. Ice breaker condition. The existing pier and re-use of the existing pier for a proposed docking facility would require reconstruction of the existing ice breaker. It is our understanding that prior estimate for the reconstruction of the ice breaker(s) indicated reconstruction would be very expensive.
4. Accessibility, way finding and views. The existing pier is located south of Delaware Street, requiring visitors to find the way to the dock entrance. Views and creation of a “sea port” feel was an important issue during the concept planning. It was our opinion that the existing pier is too far removed from Delaware Street and a tall ship docked at the end of the existing pier would not have the same picturesque quality as if it were docked at the location at the end of Delaware Street.

Next Steps

The following initial next steps should be considered:

1. Explore potential funding sources which may help pay for preliminary engineering and permitting costs.
2. Conduct needed surveys/preliminary engineering and permitting.
3. Seek construction funding opportunities.
4. Begin permitting process.

Funding

The following are suggestions for potential sources of funding for this project. As is the case with any project such as this, the likelihood of receiving funding is improved by having public advocacy and by providing other sources of funding committed to match or supplement those being requested. This list is based upon our experience on other similar projects, but can be expected to vary over time. We strongly recommend that, before seeking funding from any of these sources, you complete preliminary engineering design and permitting to confirm viability and potential costs.



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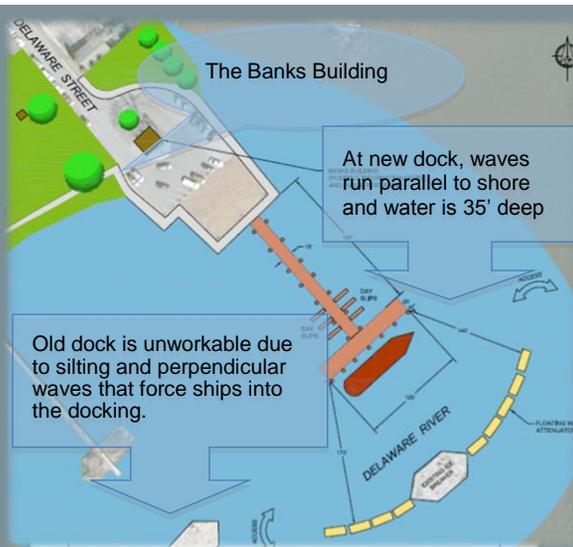
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EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN

NEW CASTLE WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

NEW CASTLE ~ NEW CASTLE COUNTY ~ DELAWARE

DATE: 25 JULY 2011
 SCALE: 1" = 40'
 PROJECT NO. 9182.CA
 SHEET: 1 OF 1



Proposed new dock

The new dock will extend 200' off the end of Delaware Street to a spot where the waves run parallel to the shore (making it safer for the boats to dock) and where the water is 35' deep (allowing adequate draft for the Kalmar Nyckel even at low tide).

Wave attenuators will be installed to reduce the power of river waves, aggressive wake, and debris and to minimize boats colliding into the dock—a problem experienced at the old dock due to the perpendicular wave action at that location.

Also under evaluation are elements such as day boat docking, pedestrian and bike connectivity, supporting amenities, and improvements to wetlands.

How will New Castle residents benefit?

- ❖ The beauty of having the Kalmar Nyckel, and potentially other historic vessels, docked at the end of Delaware Street
- ❖ Our local bike riders and walkers will have connectivity to other locations by the water (Delaware City, C&D Canal Recreation Trail, Wilmington Riverfront, and New Jersey)
- ❖ The Good Will Fire Company will have a place to dock our fire and rescue boat: reducing response time from 28 minutes to 6 minutes—saving lives and property
- ❖ Restoration of wetlands for natural beauty and birding
- ❖ Direct linkage of visitors to downtown commercial area rather than through residential areas and without bringing more automobiles into our City



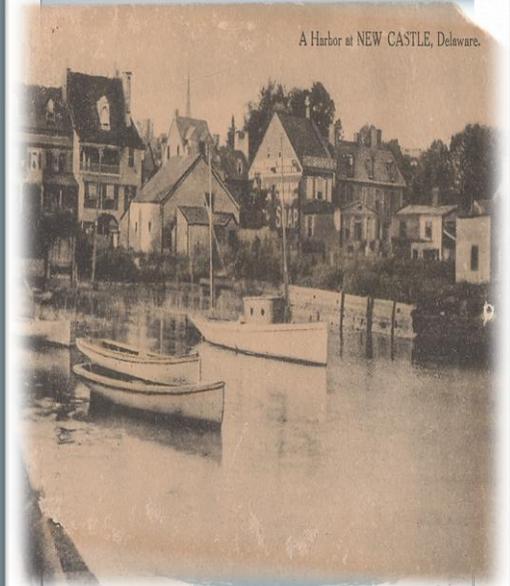
Preservation engages the past in a conversation with the present over a mutual concern for the future.

-William J. Murtagh



Historic New Castle Alliance
www.historicnewcastle.org

Revitalizing New Castle's Historic Riverfront



Will you join us in preserving our history?



The past is not the property of historians; it is a public possession. It belongs to anyone who is aware of it, and it grows by being shared.

-Dr. Walter Havighurst

Q&A



Why can't we just repair the ice piers and use one of them?

Constructed between 1804 and 1882, our seven ice piers are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Repair costs are estimated at \$1 million each: far exceeding the anticipated \$500,000 - \$800,000 cost of the new dock. See www.nc-chap.org for ice pier information and repair costs.

New Castle: always a harbor town

The first source of fresh water for vessels entering the De La Warr River in colonial days, New Castle remained an active seaport for 300 hundred years.

At Packet Alley landing, boats from Philadelphia met stagecoaches and later a railroad for transshipment of passengers and cargo. Lafayette, Andrew Jackson, Davy Crockett, Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, Sam Houston, Stonewall Jackson, and Osceola and Black Hawk en route to visit "Great Father" in Washington all passed this way.

Preserving our harbor

In 2009, the Planning Commission updated New Castle's Comprehensive Plan and recommended "The City should . . . conduct a more detailed waterfront plan to identify market needs and strengthen the downtown's ties to the waterfront." The City Council subsequently adopted this plan.

In 2011, Duffield Associates was tasked with developing a preliminary proposal to move the plan forward. Using data sources such as NOAA maps, aerial photos, and recent river depth soundings, plus contacts with regulatory agencies and interested parties such as the Kalmar Nyckel, the Delaware River and Bay Authority, and the Delafort Ferry, Duffield

proposed building a 200' dock off the end of Delaware Street. See back panel for more detail.

Next steps

The proposal was presented to residents at a design charrette where surveys showed strong support for the concept. At their October 2011 meeting, the Planning Commission adopted this proposal, which is now before City Council. If approved, a more detailed study will be done and funding sources will be sought.



Help us bring the Kalmar Nyckel back to New Castle harbor.

Does the Kalmar Nyckel want to return to New Castle? YES!

The Kalmar Nyckel's Executive Director, Foundation Chairman, and Captain Lauren are enthusiastic about this possibility. The Kalmar Nyckel envisions educational tours and two sails per day out of New Castle harbor when they are docked here.

Did you look at other riverfront locations? Yes.

Only the end of the wharf has adequate river depth without dredging.

How will this project be funded?

We will be seeking out grants and private donations. Dockage fees will be utilized to offset expenses.

Where can I go to learn more?

View the sketch plans at the library or at www.NewCastleCity.Delaware.gov