

惠靈頓林園協會

Wellington Chinese Garden Society Inc.

17 February 2011.

Submission to the Wellington City Council Strategy and Policy Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

I speak today on behalf of the Wellington Chinese Garden Society Inc. to express our concern and dismay that the implementation of the waterfront project may be transferred to and undertaken by the City Council.

The Garden Society considers that the retention of the present structure with Wellington Waterfront Ltd. (WWL) is important from both matters of principle relating to management of the waterfront as a whole and also with particular reference to our project of establishing a Chinese garden. It has the right skills and capacity to manage and assess the complexity and scale of the demands and projects, and as a separate structure has fewer distractions (competing issues) and conflicts of interest to handle.

Generally we consider that Wellington Waterfront Ltd. as structured is well supported by Board members drawn from the City Council, private sector organizations and the general public, providing a global perspective.

The possibility that the waterfront projects will be transferred to and undertaken by the Council is of particular concern and importance to the Wellington Chinese Garden Society in view of the fact that the design process is now well advanced towards the establishment of a long awaited Chinese Garden that is now to be sited as an integral part of Frank Kitts Park.

The Garden Society has worked for many years with Wellington Waterfront Ltd. and has established a very constructive dialogue with them. The design of the Garden is very complex and must not only meet the objectives expected in an inner city park but must also address the aspirations that the people of Wellington have for the wider waterfront.

The concept of a contemporary Chinese Garden that also reflects the story of the Chinese community in Wellington has been challenging to say the least. We are now in the position where Wellington Waterfront Ltd., The Wellington Chinese Garden Society and Wellington's sister cities in China have reached complete agreement. Any disruption to the dynamics that have been forged between these parties has the potential to undo much good work.

This is of particular importance when consideration is given to the cultural context within which we are working and in the understanding that all parties, particularly Wellington Waterfront Ltd have now established. Continuity is very much valued by Chinese in working partnerships and relationships.

As you know, the Wellington City Council has sponsored the Chinese New Year celebrations over the past 2 weeks. The festival culminated in the Sunday market, the street parade and the cultural show. The Trust which organizes the events keenly supports the Chinese Garden project – and this year we were once again invited to have a stand in the market.

We were fortunate in being able to provide further information on progress of the Garden. The display was very well received and aroused a lot of interest. Support was evidenced by the many people who signed up to be friends and their commitment to help in the ways that they may be able, was extremely encouraging.

In particular we were able to show the progress in design, following a number of visits to Wellington by our sister cities' landscape designers and experts and the visits by members of the Wellington City Council, Wellington Waterfront Ltd., our landscape design consultants and the Wellington Chinese Garden Society to China, as recently as June 2010.

The Memoranda of Understanding resulting from these visits have reinforced the common commitment to establish a Chinese garden in Wellington. The design for the Garden has now been approved by all parties and contributions by way of materials and labour will be made by Xiamen, Beijing and Tianjin.

It should be noted that commitment to help with the Chinese Garden in Wellington has featured in MOU's with the sister cities for a number of years.

Dean Cato of Story Inc., the designer of the New Zealand Pavilion at the Shanghai Expo 2010 is an enthusiastic supporter of the Garden. Dean has committed his expertise and assistance to preparing the marketing strategy for the fund-raising campaign. Upon completion of the marketing material the Chinese Garden Society will commence fund-raising in earnest. We expect this to start mid-year.

We hope to be on track to confirm this project in keeping with WWL's forecast for a 2013/14 redevelopment of Frank Kitts Park.

The Wellington Chinese Garden Society urges the City Council to take our submission into account.

Thank you again for listening to our submission.

Esther Fung
Secretary