

**Board of Commissioners of the Port of New Orleans
Public Information Meeting No. 1
Riverfront Cold Storage Project**

A public meeting was held at the Port of New Orleans auditorium on Tuesday, September 30, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to present to the public the initial plans for the Riverfront Cold Storage Facility at the Governor Nicholls St. and Esplanade Avenue Wharves.

After PONO President/CEO Gary LaGrange's opening remarks, Director of Port Development, Deborah Keller, introduced the Cold Storage Facility Design Team. Then she presented a Powerpoint presentation which gave an overview of the project, the need for the project, and preliminary site plans and traffic plans related to the project.

Following Ms. Keller's presentation, questions from the attendees were answered.

Question/Issue #1

Pam: How much chicken that goes through New Orleans Cold Storage (NOCS) stays in the New Orleans area?

Mark Blanchard of NOCS which presently operates the Jourdan Road Terminal stated that NOCS handles the export side of the chicken distribution business, rather than the domestic distribution. Domestic distribution is handled by other sources, so he did not have any statistics to offer in reply.

Question/Issue #2

Shea Embry: Where does it indicate (referring to Keller's presentation) the "Reinventing the Crescent" riverfront red-development project?

This question was referred to Allen Eskew of the architectural firm of EDR, which is the City's lead project architect. Eskew explained that the landside pedestrian and bike pathway of the City's project in this area would be along the sidewalk on the city side of the floodwall beginning at the St. Phillip St. floodgate and continuing to a new ramp downriver of Elysian Fields.

Question/Issue #3

Shea Embry: Is the Port designing or addressing safety issues? Specifically, safe passage from St. Phillip to the Mandeville Wharf. What is the Port willing to do?

Mr. Eskew explained that the safety question would be fleshed over the next few weeks, as will other issues. Once issues are identified and solutions proposed, the City's design team will be advise the public. Eskew said that he hopes to have a schematic around November 1.

Question/Issue #4 What would be the impact of traffic on Esplanade Avenue and traffic turning left out of the French Quarter?

Keller explained that the truck traffic associated with the riverfront cold storage facility is to be routed down Elysian Fields, which is a City truck route.

Question/Issue #5

Peggy Culligan: Is there a possibility of installing a traffic light at Esplanade?

Keller stated that the project's traffic engineering consultant, Urban Systems, studied the traffic patterns and would show the audience the computer simulation model which is the basis for the traffic plan. At this time, a traffic light does not appear to be warranted, according to the traffic experts.

Question/Issue #6

Robert Zas: Was a study conducted to explore areas upstream for the facility?

Keller said that the Port looked at all sites within the jurisdiction of the Port of New Orleans (Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard) that were owned by the Port. There were criteria: (1) ability to dock three ships, (2) direct truck route access between the interstate/highways and the site, (3) deep water for ocean vessels, (4) high ground elevation, (5) meet project funding limits.

Question/Issue #7

This question concerned sustainability and energy consumption.

Keller explained that the refrigeration system being considered is the most efficient, state of the art system recommended by Food Facility Group. She also explained that safeguards are being implemented with regard to system controls and operational standards. She said that the sealed ammonia system being considered was the best system to freeze the product in the shortest amount of time.

Question/Issue #8 This question concerned producing power on the river.

Keller stated that this project's construction schedule and funding didn't present the opportunity to consider submerged river turbines as a power source, but alternate energy sources could be studied as technology progressed.

Question/Issue #9

David Peltier: He stated that he has strong support of riverfront development, but finds this project suspect and is concerned that there was no other space along the river for three (3) ships.

Keller stated that all available sites under the jurisdiction of the Port of New Orleans were considered. The Governor Nicholls and Esplanade Wharves are owned by the Port and that the wharf structures would remain for re-use, a huge cost savings compared to a greenfield site. Other sites did not meet the criteria as well as this site.

Question/Issue #10

Pam: Her concern was the 4.1 miles of linear park proposed by the Reinventing the Crescent project and the location of the cold storage facility being between that and the Moonwalk.

Keller responded stating that the first Governor Nicholls St. has been in continuous use as a maritime wharf since the Port built it in 1919.

Question/Issue #11 A question was raised with regard to the Perry Street Wharf where there was no flooding due to its high ground.

Keller pointed out that the Perry Street Wharf is not long enough for three ships to dock at the same time and it does not offer a direct route for the trucks to travel between the wharf and the highway system as did this site.

Question/Issue #12 Unique character of the riverfront is important. Has there been any thought to setting aside refrigeration space for the French Market vendors and a place to store fresh foods.

Mr. Blanchard stated that NOCS has been in business since 1886. It is the oldest cold storage facility in the region. The products that are handled at the facility changes with the product availability and the economy. He stated again that this facility was geared toward export, but that things could change based on the market demand. For the near future, the space would be needed to warehouse exports.

Question/Issue #13 A concern was brought up regarding the area and rush hour traffic.

The Urban Systems traffic engineers displayed the traffic computer model simulation developed using actual traffic counts during peak traffic time period for trucks coming and leaving the site.

Question/Issue #14

Victor Brown: Question regarding truck queuing and access early in the morning.

The traffic engineers explained the available space at the facility both, at the truck docks and the truck staging area at the downriver open wharf area. They also said that there was truck staging off site at private truck stops where truck drivers would wait until their appointed times to arrive at the cold storage facility. Those truck drivers would be managed via radio communication with the cold storage facility. It was also mentioned that the truck drivers to the cold storage facility were regular route drivers and were familiar with the operations. Once established at the new facility, it would be very routine.

Question/Issue #15

Peggy Culligan: Is the load bearing capacity sufficient?

The structural engineer, Don Makofsky, responded by stating that Governor Nicholls St. Wharf has a load capacity of 850 pounds per square foot and the Esplanade Avenue Wharf has a load capacity of 350 pounds per square foot. He said that the Esplanade Avenue Wharf, which is an older wharf, would be reinforced where needed.

Question/Issue #16

David Peltier: If the Port were offered \$80 million, where would the cold storage facility be located?

Lagrange stated that that was a valid question and it would still be located at this site because of the significant savings in cost and time compared to acquiring property the Port does not own, getting permits to build a wharf, and finding additional funds, if the Port could even locate a long enough area of deep water riverfront property with direct truck access to the highway system.

Question/Issue #17

A statement was made that the public wants transparency and a breakdown of the criteria used and which other sites were considered.

Keller stated again that a number of sites were explored and that a number of criteria had to be met. (See question no. 6 above)

Question/Issue #18

John Williams: Asked if alternate energy sources were considered.

Project lead architect, Ray Manning stated that the project team has been giving permission to investigate energy saving ideas. (Also see question no. 8)

The meeting concluded with remarks by Lagrange. The public was encouraged to use the sign-up sheet for follow-up contact and to be invited to a session at the Port Administration Building with the designers to discuss the exterior appearance of the warehouse building. Time and date to be determined.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.