

Your Ref.: CB2/PL/PLW

11th November 2003

Clerk to Panel on Planning, Lands and Works
Legislative Council Secretariat
3rd Floor, Citibank Tower
3 Garden Road, Central
Hong Kong
Attn: Ms Sarah YUEN

Dear Ms YUEN

**Panel on Planning, lands and Works and Panel on Home Affairs
Joint meeting on 18 November 2003**

We refer to your missive of 24 October and would like to give our views as per attached paper for your consideration.

Thank you for consulting us on the above important issue that affects the property sector and the public interest.

Yours sincerely,

Edmond F K CHAU
for President
Hong Kong Institute of
Real Estate Administration

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Panel on Planning, Lands and Works and Panel on Home Affairs Joint Meeting on 18 November 2003

Comments

The HIREA supports the appreciable development project of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD). However, we would like to express our views as follows:

Social Considerations

The prime aim of the project should adhere to the community needs and expectations whilst it is not advisable for commercial development to overshadow the theme. A world class integrated arts, culture and entertainment district will surely be an attraction for people visiting Hong Kong and the local population.

Geographical Features

The selected design whichever it may be, will certainly attribute beauty to the Harbour. Performance venues, museums, lagoon, entertainment facilities, podium park, landscaped terraces, waterfall promenade and partially transparent canopy, etc. will be attractions to tourists and our citizens. We are going to add features which we are lack of to the scene of Hong Kong. Such masterpieces are welcome.

Financial Concern

It is envisaged that planning and decision by authority/concerned committees are essential. Any replanning or changes caused completed works to be abortive must be carefully examined since it is always under public critics and audit.

Community Involvement

Membership of the Steering Committee for Development of WKCD are all Secretaries of relevant Bureau and Heads of Departments. It is thought that representatives of the public and from professional bodies should be invited to take part and give advices in consultative committees. Public consultations and efforts on community relations should be strengthened. Misunderstanding and misinformed are detrimental.

Development Right

It will be unfair, unjust and unacceptable to the citizens at large should the right of WKR be granted to one developer. Since there are only limited number of developers capable to care for planning, design, finance, construction, procurement, fitting-out for completion of the WKCD and subsequent operation, maintenance and management of the core art and cultural facilities, the successful proponent will inevitably be the foreseeable consortium. The matter will naturally turned to be scandal and political turmoil. A situation of development right vs. politics will emerge. This unfavourable situation should be avoided.