

Keri O'Brien

From: Arlo Haskell <arlohaskell@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 12, 2023 1:18 PM
To: Jimmy Weekley; Billy Wardlow; Samuel Kaufman; Clayton Lopez; Teri Johnston; District IV; Mary Lou Hoover
Cc: Albert Childress; Steven P. McAlearney; Katie P. Halloran; Keri O'Brien; David Dunn; Evan Haskell; Willy Benson
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SCS comment on 3 Mallory agenda items

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Keri — please attach this comment to related agenda items 31, 35, and 44. Thank you.

Dear Mayor & Commissioners:

We write today regarding three related items on this week's agenda: the Contract Modification for the Mallory Square Master Plan; the Time Extension Amendment for the Mallory T-Pier; and the Consent Agreement with Ocean Key House regarding submerged lands near Mallory Square.

The City has invested significantly in the Mallory Square Master Plan. Led by the Planning Department and with design services from the Sasaki firm, the process has been a model of constructive community engagement. The visual renderings emphasize the vibrant sunset and waterfront views which draw so many visitors to Mallory. This project has the potential to create something of real value for the community that will also be a draw for visitors. Expanding Sasaki's scope of services seems like a wise decision at this time.

Meanwhile, the City has also invested in designs for a major expansion of the Mallory T-Pier. This project has been led by the Ports Department with engineering services from the Jacobs firm. The intent of the T-Pier project remains unclear. As the public well knows, the expansion was designed to accommodate large cruise ships. The Ports Department has more recently stated that the expansion is needed for "disaster response" or "emergency operations." However, the public has not been advised what sort of "emergency operations" are envisioned for the T-Pier, nor whether the proposed design would actually support such use. Nor has the public been presented with renderings showing how the elevation of the new T-Pier will obstruct waterfront views from the Square.



In the image above, you can see the existing dolphin platform at left which is proposed as the base elevation for the new T-Pier. **If the entire T-Pier is allowed to be built at this height, visitors standing or sitting at the water's edge will not be able to see any water in the channel and will only see the tops of the palm trees at Sunset Key.**

Since the T-Pier expansion was designed in 2019, its potential uses have been limited by Commission decisions regarding cruise ship activities at Mallory. Further limitations will result from the Consent Agreement with Ocean Key, which would reduce the maximum length of vessels allowed at the T-Pier from approximately 664' to only 500'.

Why is the City still pushing a four-year-old plan designed to accommodate large cruise ships at the T-Pier when this use is no longer possible? Does the City really need a 216'-long T-Pier to serve vessels of a maximum length of 500', when for decades it accommodated much larger vessels at a much smaller T-Pier? How will this massive new T-Pier impact the views from Mallory?

In our view, if additional time is needed for the T-Pier proposal, it must be used for a wholesale revision of the design to suit the City's actual current needs.

Although these two public infrastructure projects are literally side-by-side, they are managed by separate City departments and designed by outside firms working independently of one another. We believe the City's siloed approach to Mallory Square and the T-Pier creates an unnecessary risk of incompatible outcomes. If this unwise approach continues, we may end up with a new Mallory Square that is worse than the one the City is trying to improve.

In our opinion, these projects should not be permitted to continue under separate management, when the water-side developments can and will have such a profound experience on the land-side experience at the Square. Both processes should be consolidated under the Planning Department to ensure that the designs are complementary and not contradictory.

Does the City really want the dominant feature of its new Mallory Square to be a fenced-off island of concrete that blocks the views of the water? The time is now to correct the City's course and avert this outcome.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Arlo Haskell

on behalf of

Committee for Safer, Cleaner Ships

Evan Haskell, President

Capt. Will Benson, Vice President

Arlo Haskell, Treasurer

David Dunn, Secretary