Duluth’s Bayfront: Slips 2, 3 and 4

Part I: Historic Background

Pre-development Period (before 1860s)
Prior to the development and settlement of Duluth, the Bayfront area was primarily wetland and swamp as well as a portaging area between the Superior Bay and Lake Superior. Wetland (or the original shoreline) extended up to what is now Michigan Street.

Early Development and Shipping Period (1870s to 1920s)
This historical period was initiated by the cutting of the Minnesota channel in 1872. As a result of the opening of the channel, the waterfront area at the north end of Superior Bay developed quickly. Early dockage was built over wooden piers with little or no fill added. Businesses in the area included a coal dock, the Duluth Boat Club, an Armour Packing facility, Northern Pacific Railroad Freight House and a variety of warehouses. Slips were platted starting in 1886.

Height of Shipping and Waterfront Use Period (1920s to 1970s)
By the 1920s, Duluth had a very busy waterfront. The protected Bayfront housed freight depots, warehouses, cement storage, passenger docks, railroad depots and manufacturing—making it an ideal port resource for shipping, transport, loading and unloading. Wooden pilings were used to build above the wetland areas and were then filled in as use increased.

Diversification of Waterfront Use (post 1970s)
After approximately 1970, the types of businesses and uses at and around the Bayfront continued to change to include commercial, entertainment and recreational uses. By the 1950s, rail and boat shipping was supplemented by trucking. Buildings located at the Bayfront included freight warehouses, a freight depot and a wholesale food distributor warehouse and operation facility. The adjacent property to the west was used by the Northern Pacific Railroad for siding tracks and an access road (now referred to as Railroad Street) which served the ship loading facilities on the piers between Slips 2, 3 and 4. Waterfront property began to include more public uses, such development of the DECC, small boat dockage, the Great Lakes Aquarium, Playfront and Bayfront Park. During this period the Bayfront became vacant and structures were demolished and removed.

General Ownership and Use Time Line:


1908  Slip 2: Northern Pacific RR; CSPM&O RR; iron clad dock. Slip 3: City Dock Company; limestone mill. Slip 4: platted—no structures—water only.

1950  Slip 2: Northern Pacific RR; CSPM&O RR; iron clad dock and planked dock. Slip 3: Cutler-Magner Warehouse (on wood posts); cement storage and shipping; lime kilns; Western Electric Company. Slip 4: National Carloading Corp; oil warehouse.

(continued, next page)
1955  **Slip 2:** Northern Cold Storage Warehouse; Northern Pacific RR; CSPM&O RR; Fish Warehouse.  **Slip 3:** Huron Portland Cement; Cutler-Magner Co.; warehouse; stone yard; lime kilns; Western Electric Company.  **Slip 4:** National Car Loading Corp.; Duluth Terminal and Cold Storage; oil warehouse.

1963  **Slip 2:** Northern Pacific RR; CSPM&O RR; Northern Cold Storage Warehouse.  **Slip 3:** Huron Portland Cement; Cutler-Magner Co.  **Slip 4:** Duluth Terminal and Cold Storage; National Carloading Corp.

1969  **Slip 2:** Northern Pacific RR; CSPM&O RR, **Slip 3:** Huron Portland Cement; Cutler-Magner Co.  **Slip 4:** 1963 structure remain; head of slip filled in and a structure is present at the northwest end of slip.

1972  **Slip 3:** Huron Portland Cement.  **Slip 4:** Approximately one-third of slip has been filled; multi-story building parallel with Railroad Street is built to accommodate Gamble Robinson Wholesale Food and Jeno's

1975  **Slip 4:** entire slip is filled; Gamble Robinson/Jeno's building remains the same as in 1972 but car loading and cold storage warehouses are no longer present.

1991  Foundation slab remains from Gamble Robinson/Jeno's building; no buildings remain.

(Sources: Phase I Environmental Property Assessment, Barr Engineering, 2004; MPCA Remediation Division, 2009)

**DEDABAYFRONT PROPERTY SCHEDULE**

(refer to color-coded map, attached)

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<th></th>
<th>Purchased From</th>
<th>Size (acres)</th>
<th>Original Source of Funds</th>
<th>Date of Purchase</th>
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<td>$2,306,213</td>
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*PRI: Project Re-Investment (earnings on TIF accounts prior to 7-1-1997

Note: DEDA purchased the Amatuzio property in 1994, and in 1999 the parcel was split, with the southerly portion conveyed to the City.
Part II: Recent Past, Current and Future Activities

1993 – 1994: DEDA acquired all Bayfront properties in support of the “Sam Brown Outlet Mall” project; project did not move forward.

1999: DEDA conveys a portion of this property to the City for the Bayfront Park project

2004: EPA environmental assessment funding provided to the City, a portion of which is used for baseline environmental data on properties at Slips 2, 3 and 4 of the Bayfront

Q3 2008: DEDA passes resolution (08D-57) directing DEDA Executive Director to work with DNR and others to assess potential uses to include a transient boat facility at the Bayfront

Q4 2008: Lafarge Company announces the consolidation of their Duluth and Superior operations to Superior; property put on the market

Q3 2009: DEDA passes resolution (09D-35), “Resolution of Intent to Give Consideration To a Future Private-Driven Economic Development Project That Requires the Combined Lafarge/DEDAC Lot C Properties” at the request of Lafarge real estate agent.

Q3 2009: DNR secures MN Coastal grant for a feasibility study of the Bayfront property for a transient boat facility. DEDA passes resolution (09D-36) authorizing a Cooperative Agreement with the DNR to perform technical assessment and conceptual design at the Bayfront for the proposed boat facility

Q3 2009: City Planning Division launches the Bayfront District Small Area Plan process, the purpose of which is to identify and develop recommendations that will allow for the most desirable and appropriate mix of land uses for the district.

Q4 2009: DEDA staff submit, and are subsequently awarded, a DEED grant for Supplemental Phase II contamination investigation and Response Action Plan (RAP) for Lot D—the targeted location for the DNR facility

Q4 2009: Lafarge site purchased by Pier B Holding LLC on December 31.

Q1 2010: Bayfront District Small Area Plan recommends change under the upcoming Unified Development Code to Mixed Use-Waterfront (MU-W); unanimously approved by Planning Commission on 2-16-10.

Q1 2010: DEDA staff to issue RFP for technical assessment work on Lot D for the DNR project, to include further environmental investigation/RAP development; seawall evaluation; underwater side scan; bathymetry; foundation/excavation and geotechnical evaluation; topographic/land survey; and an updated Phase I (“technical work”).
Q2 &3 2010: Technical work performed to be on Lot D. Pending satisfactory results, DNR to submit an application to the federal Boat Infrastructure Grant program on October 1, 2010.

Q2 2010: Request by Pier B Holding LLC to DEDA for an Option on Lot C is anticipated.

Q2 2010: An application for Supplemental Phase II/RAP funding for the former Lafarge/Lot C properties is anticipated to be prepared and submitted to DEED. If awarded, work performed Q3 & 4,

Other activities underway that have potential impact upon the Bayfront District:
- St. Louis County Union Depot Area Master Plan
- DTA Multi-Modal Facility
- Extension of the Cross-City Trail
- MPCA sediment sampling/potential remediation in Slips 2 & 3
- Homeland Security/Cruise Ship Customs Facility
- St. Louis River Corridor Initiative

htb 02/17/2010