

PUBLIC COMMENT CORRESPONDENCE - Mary Rohrer

August 18, 2015 – Public Comments made by Mary Rohrer, QMI

QMI met with District two staff approximately (8) eight times from November 2012 through October 2013. Vice Mayor Lowenthal attended one of these meetings and left early.

During the last meeting (October 2013), district two staff told QMI they could no longer meet with QMI at the direction of the city attorney's office as it may be viewed as the city interfering with the ships Master lease holders contract. The city then suggested QMI continue discussion with the ships sub operator (Evolution Hospitality). QMI made every attempt to continue to work directly with the ships management and has experienced nothing but non responsive interference.

In January 2014, QMI made a presentation to the CHC outlining our goals and hopes for the preservation of the ship. The outcome of the presentation was positive, with Commissioner Burks suggesting a study team be out together and comprised of the CHC, the ships operator and QMI as the community partner. We viewed this as not only progress, but a possible means for further engaging the CHC into the actual on goings for the ships preservation projects.

Exactly two weeks following our presentation to the CHC, Evolution Hospitality took legal action against QMI making unfounded allegations that we were aggravating preservation efforts. QMI responded factually and no legal action was taken or remains now. The ship's subcontracted and unionized hospitality provider will not "allow" QMI to make financial contributions to the ships preservation efforts and continues to take steps to ignore any of our efforts.

It is for this reason, that in July 2014 we requested a meeting with Mayor Garcia for possible recommendations. We had exhausted all possibilities within our reach to get a resolution.

A meeting was scheduled for September 2014 and the Mayor's office cancelled it one hour prior. We were assured by Tim Patton, that meeting would be rescheduled. As of today, the Mayor has refused to talk with us.

Several phone messages, emails and letters have been sent to his attention asking for clarification on several items relevant to the preservation and oversight of the RMS Queen Mary.

Here are a few concerns:

Mayor Garcia will not speak with QMI directly. He has asked staff to talk with us and the staff not current on the situation or its points.

We would like clarification on the formation of the QMTF and its role. We sent the Mayor a letter June 2015 and have received no response. The ships Manager has put our preservation plans on hold due to the Mayors new direction. Will the QMLTF have any dealings with preservation and or restoration projects for the Queen Mary or will the primary focus will be on the land development around the ship?

The Mayors staff is now suggesting that QMI make charitable contributions to Evolution/Garrison. This is new information as we were told previously, that the donations would go to the City of Long Beach in care of the RMS Queen Mary. The current Master lease has no "oversight" guidelines for the handling of restoration projects or for third parties making charitable contributions.

Most importantly, the Mayor will not clarify if the RMS Queen Mary's preservation and restoration projects do in fact fall under the cities preservation guidelines. The Queen Mary is referenced in the HPE as a wholly owned city asset. Are we to understand that the master lease holder, manages 100% of the preservation of the Queen Mary and all of the restoration projects? The City of Long Beach is not part of that process? What oversight policies are in place?

What or who can the City Council members suggest we do in order to move forward?

Thank you,

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August 18, 2015

Dear City of Long Beach, Mayor and Council Members,

As a community based 501c(3) nonprofit for the preservation of the RMS Queen Mary, we are kindly asking you to please consider postponing the voting of the recommended R24 amendments to the Cultural Heritage Commission ordinances to allow the community and council members ample time to consider the cultural aspects and the possible outcomes they might have on historical properties and those not yet designated as historical by the City of Long Beach.

Examples:

The RMS Queen Mary (Wholly owned City asset), the Sovereign building (south of Ocean Boulevard) and the Blackstone building (south of Ocean Boulevard).

Points for consideration:

It has been the long time intention by local preservation groups (Long Beach Heritage) and QMI to have the RMS Queen Mary designated as a "City of Long Beach Landmark". The RMS Queen Mary was added to the National Register of Historic Places on April 15, 1993 and remains recognized as a significant landmark around the world today.

The possible outcome of these proposed amendments will directly affect the long term preservation opportunities for the RMS Queen Mary, also taking into consideration the Mayors newly forming "Queen Mary Land Task Force". These proposed changes could interfere with national community preservation efforts of the RMS Queen Mary.

The RMS Queen Mary has yet to realize any benefits of the (HPE) Historical Preservation Element 2030 General Plan and currently has no "oversight" policies in place. Since 2008, multiple cases of damage have occurred to the ship. It is our intention that the ship receive local Landmark status by the City of Long Beach for proper historical protection and oversight.

It is also our intention that the Cultural Heritage Commission be allowed to act as Preservation Stewards for all preservation projects for the RMS Queen Mary. As of today, only (2) two alteration project applications have come before the CHC for the ship since 2008.

Please allow adequate time to review all the possible effects these amended changes may have on the significant future of Long beach history.

We are asking for time!

Mary K. Rohrer, Executive Director

QMI – Community Foundation for the Preservation of the RMS Queen Mary

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www.QMICare.org



