

Historic piers ready for return to spotlight

Offices, eateries and a promenade slated for site

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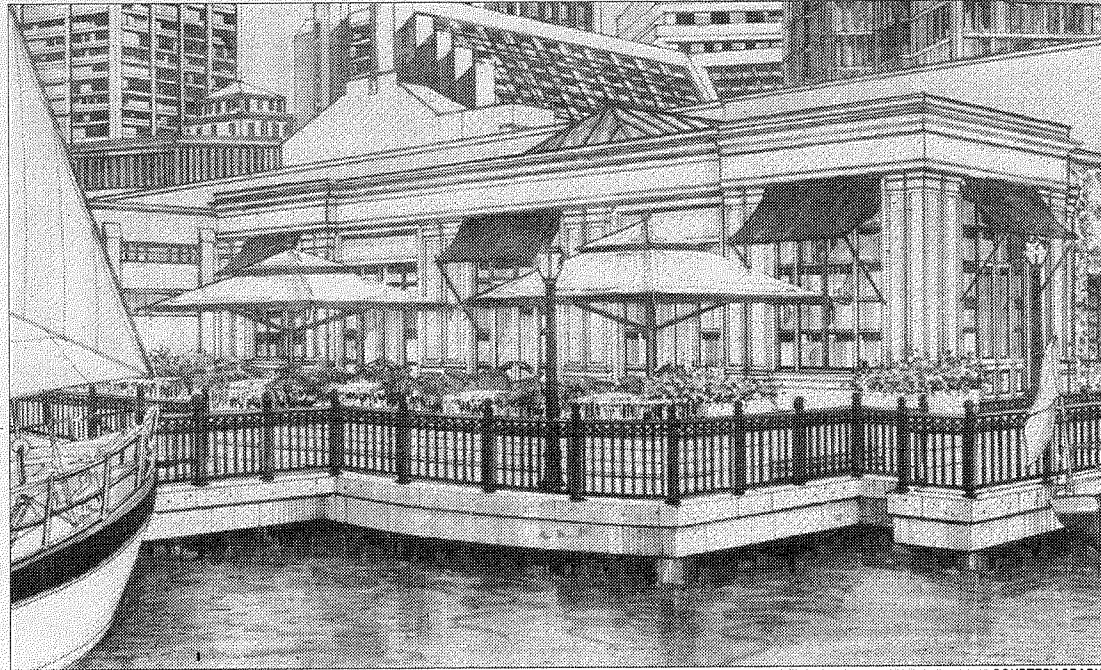
Beginning in 1927, the Delta King and Delta Queen, grand riverboats known for their stained-glass windows and mahogany staircases, chugged overnight from Sacramento to San Francisco's Pier 3.

But after the boats stopped running in 1940, the pier slowly fell into disuse.

Now, after years of quiet, the pier will be bustling again next year when a major office, shopping and restaurant complex opens in the historic bulkhead buildings at piers 1½, 3 and 5. Cruise ships, water taxis and yachts will depart from the site.

The project has met with little or no controversy, in contrast to the recent public battle over a controversial sports and retail complex proposed for piers 27-31 and a planned waterfront hotel.

Still, that doesn't mean winning approval to rehabilitate the three piers, all on the National Register of Historic Places, was easy or quick. But after years of planning,



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The Pier 1½ Restaurant will be located in the old Delta Ferry Waiting Room near the entry to Herb Caen Way.

the developer, San Francisco Waterfront Partners LLC, began construction on the \$50 million project along the Embarcadero from Washington Street to Broadway last year and expects to wrap up next June.

The project includes 60,000 square feet of prime office space, about 17,000 square feet of res-

taurant, café and retail space and 40,000 square feet of public access, primarily a Port Walk that will allow strolling along the Bay.

Pier 3 will offer the majority of the office space, with expansive views of the Bay. During construction, Hornblower Cruises will continue to operate from Pier 3, where a ticket office will open

when construction is completed.

The former waiting room for the old riverboats will house a new restaurant and oyster bar with an outdoor deck. The Pier 5 bulkhead building will become offices and a café.

Ellen Jonhck, head of the Bay Planning Coalition, said the project enjoyed broad support.

By the numbers Piers project

\$50 million: Cost of project scheduled to open next summer
60,000: Square feet of office space
17,000: Square feet of restaurant, café and retail space
40,000: Square feet of public access

Source: Port Commission

"The enhancements are right in tune with the history of the site, and more of the shoreline is opened up," she said.

Simon Snellgrove, president of San Francisco Waterfront Partners LLC, said his project, like the Ferry Building, is designed to appeal to locals, in contrast to waterfront developments such as Fisherman's Wharf and Pier 39 that primarily attract tourists.

Cathy Merrill, who sits on a port advisory committee, said she did not believe the project would be competition for the Ferry Building or surrounding restaurants.

"The more the merrier," she said. "It will only heighten interest and maintain the vibrancy of the area."

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