

20/10/2001

\$12m price tag for marae

By STEPHEN FORBES

THE Maori group lobbying for a marae at Te Atatu Peninsula believes the development could cost up to \$12 million.

The Te Atatu Marae Coalition wants the Waitakere Council to provide 10 hectares on the 35ha Harbourview South property pro-

posed as the People's Park.

Chairman Haare Tukariri says the coalition has yet to work out how it will find the cash but plans to have a proposal ready for council consideration by September 26.

"It has to be self-funding. We don't want to have to go to central Government," Mr Tukariri says.

He dismisses critics who claim Maori will have to sell some of the 10ha to pay for marae facilities.

"We don't want to sell land," he says.

"That's what happens with our critics when they try to denigrate our proposal."

Waitakere City Council senior public affairs adviser Dai Bindoff says the council is open to suggestions from the coalition and has already agreed to provide 2.5ha for a marae.

Mr Bindoff says the 2.5ha offer is not final but it is too early to give details.

Talks still need to be held to decide how a marae will fit in with the proposed park, he says.

Maori have pushed for a marae in the area for about 30 years.

Non-coalition members joined the campaign in August — organising a protest march to deliver a proclamation of Maori sovereignty to city councillors during their monthly meeting.

Mr Tukariri, who distanced himself from the protest fearing it might hinder the coalition's negotiations, says Maori will not back down.

"We are not going to go away. We have invested too much in this."

The September 26 council meeting starts at 5.30pm.

• **Bob Harvey has a dream, page 3.**

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