

Boating Mooring and Waterfront Access Targeted Discussion Conversation Summary

October 27th 2021

Purpose

To share and discuss emerging ideas that will influence the preliminary master plan and to gather specific feedback regarding boating, mooring and waterfront access.

Participants

Community Participants

[REDACTED] - Queen City Yacht Club
[REDACTED] – Toronto Island Marina

City Staff

[REDACTED] – Corporate Real Estate Management
[REDACTED] – Economic Development and Culture

Project Team

City: Lori Ellis, David O'Hara, Alex Deighan and Pablo Muñoz
Consultant: Victoria Bell - DTAH

Agenda

Presentation shared: City Staff; Lori Ellis and Consultant; Victoria Bell
Questions and answers facilitated: Lori Ellis and Consultant; Victoria Bell

Victoria Bell shared Maps that demonstrated preliminary thinking including:

- Path of travel for servicing each yacht club and their tenders
- Internal lagoons showing proposed limitations/ proposed non-motorized areas
- Finger docks at Hanlan's dock wall
- Hanlan's mooring wall
- Plan proposes a networked system to align with the Marine Strategy
- Additional rental points for non-motorized water craft
- Concerns raised in relation to increased uses

Summary of feedback

Mooring, Docking and Deteriorating Wall

██████ shared that the Toronto Island marina has a long term lease which includes managing offsite mooring along the entire length of the mooring wall at the east side of Hanlan's plus the 2 areas on either side of long-pond. The Toronto Island Marina used to manage the entire wall from the RCYC to the Sun Fish Cut, however these walls have not been maintained by the City and they are currently crumbling. The Toronto Island Marina has chosen not to provide mooring along these areas as they are unsafe. The police have placed "No Mooring" signs trying to deter boaters however they continue to be used. Demand for mooring walls is extremely high. Mooring walls are full every weekend.

██████ explained that finger docks act as overflow docks and do not provide electricity/power. Boaters prefer mooring walls since there is access to power and it is closer to services. The Toronto Island Marina is planning to install finger docks in the spring of 2022. He further added that he thought the Marina needed to be considered a city asset, to be reimagined, invested in and provided critical infrastructure upgrades including new dock walls and re-naturalized areas.

Party boats and Increased Activity

Both ██████ and ██████ indicated that party boats have increased at the Island since the pandemic started, some formal with permits (commercial party boats) some without (club scene boats). During lock down, club promoters realized that they could charter boats and have unsanctioned parties at the Island. Primarily docking along the Hanlan's mooring wall but to some extent in the east side of the Island as well closer to Algonquin. The boats are not only bringing people but also acting as a stage with large sound systems that draw crowds. Issues usually arise between midnight and 6 am. The City, Warren and the Police Department are aware of the issue. The police has conducted "blitzes" with paid duty officers with no effect. Some boats are departing from Ontario Place but it is unclear where others are originating from. Party boats leave piles of garbage, big fires etc. Gordon suggested these party boats were not going to go away, and that they would have to be legitimized to some extent in order to "play by the rules".

New Boaters and Speeding

Participants also shared that since the pandemic started there has been a massive boom in the boating industry which has fundamentally changed how the harbour is used. There are a lot of new and inexperienced boat users on the water. There is also an increase in sea-doo's. Speeding has become a big issue. Speeding is controlled by the port authority and the federal government.

Bridges and Connections

The project team shared that they are exploring/proposing a circuit of walkways and raised boardwalks through the ESA behind water treatment plan with bridge access to Mugg's Island. Victoria asked if this crossing would be helpful for the marina, ██████ expressed that it would only be helpful if it was a vehicle crossing. ██████ cautioned the team to check in with emergency services regarding closing this channel to boat traffic. He explained that in the winter they create a temporary bridge that needs to be easily lifted in case emergency services needs to pass through.

Increased Rentals

██████ expressed some concerns with increased rentals. Some of the areas suggested for increased rentals and paddling are already very congested and require a high skill level to navigate. ██████ shared that smaller vessels are hard to see at dusk. It was also noted that a kayaker was already ran over by a water taxi and that they have seen people struggle to get back on their boats behind bigger vessels.

The suggestion to "corral" paddlers in certain areas was encouraged since it got paddlers away from larger boats. Gordon suggested the marina has under developed space for paddleboat storage and that they will be asking the City to expand their paddling offerings. He added it would be safer to get people over to the Island on a ferry before getting on a paddleboat so they didn't have to paddle across the busy harbour.

Restricting Motorized Vessels along Long Pond

█ and █ shared that some of the proposed non-motorized areas are used by several vessels. They encouraged the project team to connect with charter boats and EMS regarding access to Long Pond. Chartered boats use long pond especially in poor weather and EMS uses the dock behind the school as their primary access. It was brought to the team's attention that the TDSB built and paid for the dock.

Wayfinding

Both participants shared that the public/private boundaries across the Island are not very clear and that more direction needed to provide for people.

Suggestions

Suggestion to connect with Harbour Liaison Meetings

Suggestion to connect with █ = Contact for Information on expansion considering City Side (Follow-up)

Yacht Club Interests

Yacht Club Leases up in 2025

Request to be kind considering flooding x2 and COVID impacts enough City support

In the plan to date there has not been a lot of mention of the yacht clubs