

City of Bainbridge Island
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND HARBOR COMMISSION



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Darlene Kordonowy

FROM: Bob Selzler, Chair
Bainbridge Island Harbor Commission

DATE: December 13, 2006

RE: *Harbor Commission Annual Report to the City Council for 2006*

As required by BIMC 2.46.030, the Bainbridge Island Harbor Commission hereby submits its 2006 Annual Report.

It was a busy year for the members of the Harbor Commission and our city support staff. Activities of this group included the submission of several legislative items to Council, a renewed commitment to support the efforts of our harbormaster and marine officer and, in many instances, actual involvement with situations on island waters.

Since the city's adoption in 2005 of the open water marina concept (Anchoring and Mooring Plan) that project has been moving forward toward implementation thanks to preliminary funding by Council and diligent work by staff. The project is in a design and permitting phase under the guidance of an independent contractor with expertise in this field. The advent of such a marina will provide boaters with a safe haven for their vessels and the city with a far more definitive means to manage the harbors and how the public uses them.

In anticipation of the establishment of the offshore marina, the commission determined that a conversion of the status quo in the harbor to an organized and managed use of public lands would require a tremendous effort that would best not be left to some future official marina implementation date. Our first concern was that, given the physical attributes that vessels would be required to meet in order to reside in the marina, it was obvious that many of the boats in the harbor then and now would not qualify for a moorage agreement due to their severe state of neglect. Thus, working with staff we recommended and endorsed an increased effort to rid the harbor of derelict vessels.

We are happy to report that along with increased support at the state level and the timely decision by Council to fund the effort many derelicts have been processed this year and several more are in line to be disposed of pending the outcome of an ongoing legal proceeding.

In addition to the derelict removal program it was obvious to the Harbor Commission that existing city code was very thin or non-existent in matters pertaining to municipal harbor management. For years the police department and city staffers have been fielding concerns and

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complaints from local citizenry regarding the utilization of harbor waters and the city dock only to find that lack of regulation has tied their hands. In an effort to correct this situation a Harbor Commission sub-committee was established and tasked with the polling of citizens, city staff, the police department and other commission members in order to identify and prioritize acute utilization problems in the harbors.

From this effort, which included considerable discussion and input from the public at our monthly meetings, a finalized set of recommendations for legislative action was presented to the city and Council earlier this year. It is our hope that each of these recommendations will be implemented in the very near future. The various provisions that will be made available to them (as a result of your support) will finally provide the city's code enforcement personnel with the tools they need to bring order to our harbors and to pave the way for a successful implementation of the open water marina.

Other items of interest to City Council that the Harbor Commission, our staffers or individual members have been involved in over the course of the last year would include:

1. Worked with the Army Corps of Engineers to remove approximately 40 tons of creosote treated logs, abandoned dock sections and other floating debris from the island's harbors.
2. Participated in the ongoing Oysters for Salmon project in Eagle Harbor to explore the possibility of utilizing shellfish on a large scale to improve water quality.
3. Provided our endorsement and testimony at public hearings regarding the acceptance of federal funds that will be providing a new marine patrol vessel to the Bainbridge Island Police Department.
4. Submitted a recommendation to Council to terminate water skiing activities in the inner harbor area of Eagle Harbor – accepted and implemented.
5. Submitted a recommendation to Council to allow for water skiing and other powered water sports adjacent to the beach area at Pritchard Park – accepted, implementation pending negotiations with EPA and staff prioritization.
6. Submitted a recommendation to Council to allow for speeds exceeding 5 knots in the harbors for wakeless rowing activity support vessels – accepted and implemented.
7. Physically assisted the harbormaster and the marine officer with several vessel impoundments, sinkings, draggings and other on-water situations.
8. Advocated for establishment of a substantial budget commitment from Council to fund ongoing derelict vessel removal (DVRP) – implemented. A total of 25 vessels entered the DVRP process this year with 7 ultimately disposed of, 9 which left island waters on their own accord, and 9 that are awaiting resolution of a legal proceeding.

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9. Revised and made ready for publication the COBI boating brochure that outlines recreational water use opportunities as well as existing municipal regulations. This piece is provided to boaters by the harbormaster, the marine officer and the harbor stewards and is also available at various informational kiosks.
10. Developed strategies to achieve more economical and efficient means of physically processing derelicts vessels with the goal of reducing disposal costs to the city and state.
11. Worked with moored boat owners to relocate their vessels out of Waterfront Park waters so as to open the area up for recreational activities and to achieve compliance with city law.
12. Worked with staff to identify and schedule for removal several unused or otherwise abandoned mooring buoys in Eagle Harbor.
13. Supported staff in their efforts to publish details pertaining to the city's derelict removal program available on the COBI website.
14. Assisted staff in restoring public accessibility to road ends. Staff is also to be commended for the hard work related to other public access issues including the IAC conversion in Waterfront Park and several grant proposals that will benefit the general public's use of our parks and harbors.

The Harbor Commission appreciates the continued strong support we are receiving from all departments and entities within Bainbridge City government. Additionally we are very appreciative of the ongoing efforts by staff to accommodate our needs and finally the assistance and input that we receive from harbor stewards and the general public is invaluable. We hope that what we are attempting to accomplish meets the approval of Council and by extension all concerned constituents.

Bob Selzler
Chair, Bainbridge Island Harbor Commission

cc: Jim Harris, Interim Director
Planning & Community Development