

## **Memorandum 13-008 Pier One Theatre Campground Site**

**Memorandum ID:** 13-008

**Memorandum Status:** Information Only

City of Homer

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MEMORANDUM 13-008

TO: Mayor Wythe and the Homer City Council

THRU: Walt Wrede, City Manager

FROM: Rick Abboud, City Planner

DATE: December 31, 2012

SUBJ: Pier One Theater/Campground Site

### Introduction

Options for short term and long term development of the lot have been discussed with several commissions (Planning, Port and Harbor, Parks and Rec, and Economic Development). In addition to the staff reports and other guiding documents, below is a summary of minutes and notes taken from the discussion of the commissions.

### Summary

After meeting with the various groups identified in the introduction consensus has been gained on several items found in the reports.

- Seasonal barge work could be accomplished outside of the camping season (although there was concern with site remediation after barges left).
- Kayak launch area identified on the map is supported as long as associated improvements were not such that they could not be moved if the area was needed for future development and adequate separation from barge activities was provided.
- It was recognized that the Port and Harbor Enterprise fund should benefit from activities on the site.
- It was agreed that the site should be developed in a way that presented the least constraint for future activities. Permanent improvements should be carefully sited and not compromise future revenue generating activities.
- The picnic shelter could be moved to the fishing hole area.
- Road leading to outer dock road should be improved and better delineated.
- No one was dead set about not wishing to lease 10,000 square feet on the lot but did agree that favored sites would be closest to the highway as not to impede future beach access and general lot circulation.
- Comments about a \$1 lease ranged from those not in favor(P&H), to creating some review standard considerations that include review of mission statement and form 990(PC), to outward endorsement of the Wooden Boat Society(EDC).

HOMER ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION UNAPPROVED REGULAR MEETING SEPTEMBER 5, 2012

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Bumppo Bremicker, city resident, commented regarding the Pier 1 site. He went down and measured a 10,000 sf and it really isn't a lot of area, just 100x100. He referenced the aerial photo noting where the area for the barge haul out is drawn in. If the Wooden Boat Society was able to get 10,000sf, it would be about a quarter of the area where the camping is shown. The staff report says that it represents 12 campsites, but that isn't how they are laid out and it appears to him there are about 5 sites. If the city gets money from five campsites during the summer, minus the cost of maintaining them and it really isn't that much money. They might be willing to come up with enough to compensate the City for losing five campsites. Maybe they could use fifty feet of frontage, 100 feet is

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something they just threw out. He mentioned the Parks and Recreation Commission supported the barge haul out, it's a good idea people have just thrown out there, and doesn't know if there is any real planning of it, or where the money is coming from. If it is going to make so much money then why isn't Herndon doing it?

### A. Staff Report PL 12-49, Pier 1 Land Use

City Planner Abboud reviewed the aerial photo and a concept of the barge haul out facility.

The Commission commented in favor of the concept of the barge haul out. They recognized that it is a facility that could economically benefit the City both for the harbor and for workers needing lodging, food, and other amenities. It appears to be a workable project in that the barge haul out will be operational in the off season, shutting down in the spring as the tourist traffic increases.

## HOMER ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION UNAPPROVED REGULAR MEETING SEPTEMBER 19, 2012

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Lance Peterson, city resident, commented regarding the Pier One Theater site. He encouraged the Commission to consider requiring not for profit leases provide IRS form 990 which contains information about the mission of the organization, the impact, number of participants, budget, programs, affiliations, and so on. It provides a wealth of information which would give easy access to a number of things to evaluate. The bottom line for not for profits is not the dollar sign, it is the determination if this set of activities is a real benefit to the Homer community. That is what he advocates they assess.

### A. Staff Report PL 12-49, Pier 1 Land Use

Chair Erickson expressed appreciation for Lance Peterson's feedback at the worksession regarding criteria for non profit consideration. She thinks it would be good to adopt some kind of criteria for dealing with non profits.

Commissioner Venuti expressed agreement with marking the access road better to the area. He added that there shouldn't be any permanent improvements regarding the kayak launch. Kayaks can be launched anywhere in that area and as opportunities come forward the launch location may need to be relocated.

Commissioner Stead commented regarding non profits, and when reviewing leasing criteria, it is important to be cognizant that non profits can make money and can provide for leases for their facilities. It happens all the time. An example of something that could occur out there and pay its way is a school. The North House Folk School in Grand Marais, MN is a school on public leased property and provides for a lot of different entities to have access to the harbor. It is a non profit that makes money and brings a lot of people to Grand Marais. There are other possibilities than just what we are talking about and he encouraged them to think even broader. He reiterated that non profits need to pay their way.

Discussion ensued regarding the lease policies, current uses on the lot, and concerns in effective dealings with non profits.

Rick Abboud's notes from Homer Advisory Planning Commission meeting 9/19/12

- Consider mission statement review for lease considerations
- Evaluate form 990 non-profit document in consideration of lease
- Keep access road open improve condition and mark better
- Kayak launch with caveat that it be reviewed for long range use in lot (able to move to new site if necessary)
- Support for moving shelter to fishing hole area

## PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION UNAPPROVED REGULAR MEETING SEPTEMBER 20, 2012

### C. Staff Report from Rick Abboud, City Planner, re: Pier One Theater/Campground

Ms. Engebretsen provided some insight on this subject.

Discussion ensued and the commissioners offered some suggestions on some of the best uses for the parcel and

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agreed by consensus that the road into the parcel requires improvements and that the campground should be redesigned. The area used for day use and bar-b-que need to be maintained. The picnic shelter could be relocated but definitely needed improvements. Reconfiguring the road next to the area where dredge spoils are dumped and reconfigure the land gained for the campground.

Julie Engebretsen's notes from Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission meeting of 9/20/12

P&R Advisory Commission Notes on Pier 1 property 9/20/2012

- Keep the barge moorage far enough from the kayak launch so they don't interfere with each other
- Would rather see private enterprise provide barge haul out services than the City. Don't want the City to compete with private enterprise
- The campground and barge haul out are not compatible. Concern about the spring transition from barge haul out, back to campground. What will happen to all the paint chips, etc? Who will do the re-grading and put the campground back together?
- Campground needs a face lift. Need to maximize number of spaces for camping, and protect the viewshed.
- Protect the day use area over by the fishing hole. Don't allow camping there. A Shelter/BBQ area would be nice.
- Fine if the existing shelter is removed. Its just about falling down.
- Concern over future leases and vehicles and pedestrians crossing Homer Spit Road. Don't want to create traffic problems like the Spit has further down.
- The proposed lease area is underutilized. There is room for something else to happen.
- Like the idea of a grassy berm along the trail, and defining the camping spaces from the road. A concert mound might work closer to Pier 1.

### PORT AND HARBOR ADVISORY COMMISSION UNAPPROVED REGULAR MEETING SEPTEMBER 26, 2012

A. Memo to City Commissions from City Planner Abboud Re: Pier One/Campground Site dated September 14, 2012

City Planner Abboud reviewed the staff report with the aerial photo referencing the camping, suggested area for the barge haul out, Pier One Theater, the water trail kayak launch, and the Wooden Boat Society.

The group discussed the concepts presented by City Planner Abboud and expressed their concerns about the idea of non profits getting the \$1 per year lease rates on property on the spit. Non profits benefit our community but it is foolish to be giving the land away. They don't think there should be a permanent structure for the kayak launch because it would be better for them to have the ability to relocate the launch when needed. They supported keeping the campground in place until another viable use comes up. City Planner Abboud noted the Port and Harbor Commission comments are in line with the Planning Commission's ideas for the site.

They talked about other concerns including the spit trail, load launch ramp, dredging, and parking.

Rick Abboud's notes from the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission meeting on 9/26/12

- not in favor of \$1 lease
- positive about kayak launch if not barrier to future development options (concerned about scale of permanent/non moveable improvements
- desire to improve 'haul' road
- agreeable to campground use in the interim
- long range idea in support of marine school

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION UNAPPROVED REGULAR MEETING NOVEMBER 13, 2012

Bumppo Bremicker, city resident, member of the Kachemak Bay Wooden Boat Society, to speak about the Agenda item A under New Business the Pier One Parcel. He stated he talked to Rick Abboud, City Planner, in September 2012 regarding a place for the Wooden Boat Society. Mr. Bremicker proceeded to read a statement regarding the previous attempt to lease a 10,000 sf area of that parcel, the current intent to use it as a Barge Haul out; reviewed

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the area being suggested for use by the Kachemak Bay Water Trail Group; of the value the Wooden Boat Society has brought to the City over the last 20 years; and the amount of money saved, almost \$20,000 towards constructing a permanent building. He outlined what the Wooden Boat Society proposal for the space. Mr. Bremicker distributed a handout to the Commission entitled "Summer 2014". Mr. Bremicker went on to state that the Wooden Boat Society has been in discussions with the Kachemak Bay Water Trail group and are considering joining efforts since each group can work with the other.

Dave Seaman, president of the Wooden Boat Society, spoke on petitioning the City for a Lease and that they have always held their festival on the Spit. He explained that to haul their boats too far would cause a problem and he advocated the site that they have recommended. Mr. Seaman further noted the areas that they have been directed away from the water and pointed out the area that provided the best access. He did mention that he would be in favor of over-slope however there would be a higher cost to implement. He described how they move in and set up and as the years have gone by they have accumulated more equipment so would definitely appreciate a fixed spot for a permanent home. He noted that they are more a social and learning club and not in business to profit. He would like the support of the EDC.

Mr. Bremicker stepped up to provide a more detailed description on the selected or preferred location using the overhead aerial on the Pier One Parcel in response to questions from staff. Mr. Seaman proceeded to explain that there is a preference to be closer to the Harbor since it is more protected, however will accept the alternatives, as outlined by the Wooden Bay Society and using the area recommended by the Water Trail and joining forces with them would be adequate to accommodate their intents. He thanked the Commissioners for their time.

Jim Lunny, Vice President, Wooden Boat Society, was present to advocate for the commissioners support by expressing the value he feels the Society offers and brings to the community as a whole; he reiterated comments that have been provided by other members of the Wooden Boat Society. Mr. Lunny added that the annual festivals attract a number of visitors and that could grow with the opportunity of a more permanent place to house the equipment. He further noted that having a more permanent home would open up the opportunity to teach also. Mr. Lunny pointed out that Port Townsend and Lake Union in Washington with a population base 200 times Homer each have separate events on the same bay, both well attended and what value is added to their respective communities.

Mr. Wagner commented that it is all Economic Development and hopefully it can be brought together and approved by the City.

Mr. Faulkner questioned the proposed water trail and commented on the Wooden Boat Society providing more revenue than has been proposed. He did acknowledge that it was an out of the way corner. He thanked them for coming to the meeting.

### A. Marine/commercial district zoning on Spit - Pier One Lot Planning

Chair Sarno read the title into the record and stated that she may have a conflict being a member of the Wooden Boat Society.

Staff deferred to the Clerk. Ms. Krause stated that having declared a possible conflict it would be the commissioners present to vote if she actually did have a conflict.

There was a brief discussion and the commissioners determined that Chair Sarno did not have a conflict. The discussion that followed made the following points:

1. Attendance by the City Planner to speak on behalf of the enclosed memo and information would have been preferred.
2. The background on the money that purchased the land and for what purpose and how and when they get their money returned.
3. Harbor users paying higher fees to support the arts.
4. The \$1 per year does not adequately pay back the value to the Enterprise Fund.
5. They are not a theater company they are a harbor. They have the responsibility to earn money for the Harbor.
6. Competition for existing Kayak Rental companies.
7. Discussion may be needed with existing businesses and the Water Trail group.
8. The location selected by the Water Trail/Wooden Boat is appropriate.
9. The Barge Basin is full and employing local residents a barge Haul out has been discussed long term and will provide earning potential for the community.

After further comments Chair Sarno inquired if the Commission was ready to issue a recommendation or wanting to postpone a decision until the next meeting. For the most part all commissioners were in favor of the idea having the Water Trail and the Wooden Boat Society there but wanted more details on the proposed plans.

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Ms. Davis, responded to Chair Sarno, that the proposed Water Trail/Wooden Boat usage would be very good for the younger residents of the area offering an opportunity to work with adults.

Staff noted that they could have all the parties available for discussion at the next meeting if desired.

The commission agreed by consensus to postpone further discussion to the next meeting.

The commissioners did not discuss other prospects or recommendations as outlined in Staff Report 12-53 dated September 14, 2012 from Rick Abboud, City Planner in any further detail.

There was no further discussion.

### COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Mr. Bremicker commented on parking in downtown Homer and he identified a large parcel of property that is owned by the City that could be used as a central parking lot and even noted that the individual parking at businesses downtown could be minimized. Next Mr. Bremicker commented on the purpose of the Wooden Boat Society and offering the opportunity to the people to build and sail their small wooden craft along with the kayaks. They have no intention to offer competition with any other existing business. They want to work together with everyone and they do have a plan. He noted that at \$0.50 per sq ft for \$1875.00 commercial rate they may be able to negotiate for that; putting the Wooden Boat out near the road would not work for their needs, Mr. Bremicker recommended using it for other businesses and knocking down the existing building as it was unsafe.

Mr. Seaman commented that they are not in the boat livery business, but would be amenable to maybe working with existing businesses; however they have no intention of performing that service; he commented that they did a tour of the Spit in kayaks a few years back with Dave Brann and it was very interesting and had a great time. Mr. Seaman commented on the proposed Barge Haul out and that it would not impair the camping in the summer.

Mr. Larry Sloan, city resident, commented on RV parking, not clear what is meant by temporary, questioned if it is over-nite or day use; Legislation available for business start-up general regarding Charter and Halibut fishing, he is reading that there are too many operators and not enough product; he suggested recommending the forum reschedule to a few weeks earlier before the Council meeting on January 25, 2012 since Council will be making a decision on natural gas in regards to the availability of adequate gas for the City. Since gas and oil were to be to major attendees this would provide some very relevant information for Council. In regards to the Wooden Boat Society, he stated he was in agreement with the comments on commercial operators and the social aspect of some value but not enough to counter the necessity of paying the operations and maintenance of the Spit. The commercial aspects have to have priority.

### COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Wagner commented on including a Business Plan in their Proposal or simple Budget may help. He also is glad the Commission is back meeting again.

Commissioner Faulkner commented that Mr. Seaman meet with Mr. Brann before the next meeting to clarify their intent. He did state it was his intent to attend the Water Trail meeting. He also encouraged the Commissioners to come up with someone to fill his seat.

Commissioner Schmitt commented that it was always very interesting being on the commission; it gives a good perspective of both the community and the local government on what is going on; he did appreciate the Wooden Boat Society has enjoyed working with wood and sailing wooden boats; he definitely wants to see them on the Spit and they need to work it out so it benefits them and the existing businesses; it is all part of the process. He looks forward to hearing the rest of it at the next meeting.

Ms. Davis thanked the Wooden Boat Society and has certainly been a fan and agrees with everyone on the commission that clear lines need to be drawn and should not impede on existing businesses but believes it is a great idea.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION UNAPPROVED REGULAR MEETING DECEMBER 11, 2012

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

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Trish Lillibridge commented on the Wooden Boat Society proposal. She is member of the group and speaking on her own behalf. She said they had a successful booth at the Nutcracker Faire and their members constructed the booth and demonstrated excellent wood building skills. They had a sheet for the public to sign if they support the bid for a permanent location on the spit and they received about 180 signatures. They received positive feedback from people in the community and the enthusiasm and excitement was great. The Wooden Boat Society has been active in Homer for about 20 years.

### VISITORS

#### A. Dave Brann, Kachemak Water Trail

Dave Brann co-chair of the Kachemak Bay Water Trail Association gave the Commission an overview of their progress and the benefits of having a trail head on the lot where the Pier 1 Theater is located. The water trail is a defined route around the bay from the Homer Spit to Seldovia that is connected by camp sites, lodges, day use areas, and so on. Goals include providing more access to locations throughout the bay and contributing to economic vitality of the communities around the bay. He has looked at a variety of economic studies done by water trails around the country. Right now there are about 200 established water trails, including coastal, river, and lake trails. Water trails create community economic benefits by serving as a community amenity as a destination type of experience and an attraction for visitors and residents. It can encourage local entrepreneurship in creating new opportunities for area businesses seeking to diversify or expand their offerings. Water trails are very popular around the country right now and this will provide a huge opportunity for entrepreneurs to get on board. Fostering regional destination tourism by providing strategic planning and management is necessary to create broader visitation appeal and ensure stewardship of the bay and education. Mr. Brann said the group is working closely with Seldovia in planning the other trail head site, and also folks in Halibut Cove and other businesses around the bay. Outdoor recreation, tourism, and water sports are a way to broaden the structure in communities that may rely on one or two industries. Building a community's sense of pride and well-being through opportunities for residents to enjoy and preserve their local natural resources is key. Although it has been promoted nationally, a big part of this is for local benefit. Mr. Brann explained the Maine Island Trail, created in the '80s to connect state owned islands along the coast, has grown to cover 375 miles of the Maine coast, with 150 sites to camp or for day use areas. Annually the water trail brings in \$1.75 million in spending to Maine's economy, including \$553,000 annually from people using the water trail. The Northern Forest Canoe Trail, an inland trail from New York to Maine, brings in \$12 million in economic impacts to that region. Mr. Brann said in his own work he has identified 6 potential user groups that would contribute to the area with 150 user days from May through September and five participants from each group it equals 4500 user days in the 5 month period. If each person generates \$100 per day in spending, there is potential to create \$450,000 in the area. The numbers add up pretty quick. The economic vitality chapter in the Comprehensive Plan recommends investing in local infrastructure, parks, and civic improvements that serve locals as well as visitor by promoting longer stays, increased expenditures, and more repeat visitation as a form of economic development. The Water Trail Association is a strong supporter of the Wooden Boat Society and they have shared goals of making the groups stronger as well as the economic picture in Homer. They support a home on the Spit and the Wooden Boat Facility a trail head start. There are already water trail groupies that are ready to come.

In response to questions Mr. Brann explained that the Association received a grant and is working on a website for the Kachemak Bay Water Trail, there is a national system being created and when ours is complete we will be in line to be a member of the National Water Trail system. He attended tonight to provide information. He will keep the commission updated and let them know if any actions for support are needed. Mr. Brann thinks it makes sense for the kayak launch to be with the Wooden Boat site in the same place on the spit and explained what would be needed for an effective launch site, including parking and informational signage.

#### B. Dave Seaman, Wooden Boat Society

Dave Seaman, commented on behalf of the Wooden Boat Society. He showed the Commission photos of logos and designs done by local artists for the society's logo and events, of people enjoying the activities related to the society, boat restoration projects, and boat building classes through the college. Mr. Seaman noted there is still industry in town for wood boats and always jobs available for shipwrights of any skill level. Also, the Wooden Boat Society sponsors a sea shanty singing group called the Rubber Bootleggers. He reviewed their recommendation for the location of the Wooden Boat Society building, noting that the location they selected would be out of the way for a year round site with a lot of potential for usage, and reviewed their building plan. Any support the Commission can give for the Wooden Boat Society to acquire space on the spit would be helpful.

### PENDING BUSINESS

#### A. Marine Commercial District Zoning on the Spit- Pier One lot planning

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City Planner Abboud reviewed the staff reports which provide an over view of the site, recommended layout for the uses, and explained that there is a process for determining who will lease property on the spit. Harbormaster Hawkins provided feedback supporting the proposed layout. He provided an overview of what the barge haul out may entail and the financial benefit to the Port and Harbor enterprise fund and the opportunity created for work. He also elaborated about the kayak launch facility pointing out that after launching kayaks, people would park in the public parking area. They have been working on the Wooden Boat proposal for a few years, an issue is that building a permanent structure is a commitment and he thinks it needs to be located where it is a good fit and the City won't be sorry they committed to down the road.

The Commission discussed the suggested land use options, raised questions about road layout in relation to the dredge spoils and the potential location for a permanent structure for the Wooden Boat Society as shown in the site plan.

FAULKNER/SCHMITT MOVED TO ACCEPT THE PLAN PROPOSED BY THE PORT AND HARBOR AND PLANNING STAFF AND FURTHER RECOMMEND THAT THE CITY COUNCIL SUPPORT THE EFFORTS BY THE WOODEN BOAT SOCIETY LOCATE A BUILDING ON THE SITE.

Mr. Faulkner commented that he would support a dollar per year lease.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

Rick Abboud's notes from the Economic Development Commission meeting on 12/11/12

- positive about short-term plan as presented
- good with idea of offering an area near Spit Road for lease
- did support an opportunity for the Wooden Boat Society

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