

CITY OF MORRO BAY
HARBOR ADVISORY BOARD
SYNOPSIS MINUTES

The regular meeting of the City of Morro Bay Harbor Advisory Board was held Thursday, June 7, 2007 at 7 PM in the Veteran's Hall, 209 Surf ST, Morro Bay, California.

I. ROLL CALL

Present	Members:	Rodger Anderson Ed Ewing Gene Doughty Michele Leary Bill Luffee Lynn Meissen
Absent:		Jim Phillips
	Staff:	Rick Algert, Harbor Director Polly Curtis, Office Assistant

Chairman Anderson informed the Board that Jim Phillips is absent, but he submitted comments on the Parking Management Plan agenda item. Mr. Algert introduced the new Harbor Advisory Board member, Bill Luffee, appointed by City Council. He said he appreciated Bill and all the Board members serving as volunteers, and he is looking forward to working with Bill on issues we have in the harbor.

II. MINUTES

Mr. Doughty moved the May 3, 2007 Harbor Advisory Board minutes be approved as submitted. The motion was seconded by Ms. Meissen and carried unanimously.

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Jeremiah O'Brien, President of Morro Bay Commercial Fisherman's Organization, said he will make comments on the next agenda item, but he would like to say that commercial salmon fishing season opened to Point Arena on May 1st to an extremely slow beginning. The price offered to each vessel is \$6.50 and \$6.00 to the fisherman, which is a very low price, and makes it hard for a fisherman to bring money home to his family after paying the cost of fuel and overhead. Now the area is closed from Point Sur north; and there are not many fish currently in the areas south of Point Sur.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

IV-1. 2020 Vision Presentation

Mr. Algert introduced Ms. Nancy Barta as a member of the 2020 Vision Committee, saying that she will talk about the harbor portion of the 2020 Vision document only. Ms. Barta said she is a member of the new follow-up committee of the original 2020 Vision committee. She said she calls this committee the "What Now" committee, and listed the names of the current members. Ms. Barta said she prefers not to work in a committee setting, and values input from people who do not want to be on another committee. She requested input from the Board on priorities of the first 2020 Vision list, and will compile responses and submit them unedited back to the 2020 Vision committee. Ms. Barta offered her e-mail address to the public in order to receive as much feedback as possible. Her e-mail address is nb@infoville.com.

Mr. Jeremiah O'Brien, president of Morro Bay Commercial Fisherman's Organization, said he was requested by Mr. Ewing to address the issue of boatyard needs in Morro Bay. He said some funding was designated to study the area for a possible boatyard facility. Mr. O'Brien noted that in recent months boats have sunk in the bay, and this is now designated a National Estuary; therefore, a boatyard is necessary to maintain boats to keep them from sinking. He said Avila and Moss Landing are the next closest boatyard facilities, which are both remote and tough to access due to the difficult entry from the water. Mr. O'Brien said it would be an energetic move, but he hopes it begins now, as the idea of installing a boatyard facility in Morro Bay has been tossed around for years.

Mr. Algert reviewed the history of the boatyard concept, noting that a Boating Access Facility Committee was formed in 1997 to study the concept of the area north of the power plant intake structure, but it was contingent on land availability. Then the City acquired the Den Dulk property from the power plant, which is the area that can be used to install a travel lift and a travel lift pier. City Council designated the project, and an economic study followed, which showed there was not enough market in Morro Bay to invest \$1-million or possibly \$2-million. The result of the study is a Concept Plan, which means planners would still need to look at the area to consider land usage and financing; so the process is definitely not close to having an architect draw up plans.

Mr. Ewing noted that in the 2020 Vision document, the H1.2 section under Goals/Activities that states, "Remove derelict boats in City jurisdiction; encourage state to remove boats outside of City jurisdiction," has actually been done. He said also steps are being taken already on the H2.2 section stating, "Encourage the development of the infrastructure necessary to adequately support fishing industry – ice, processing, fuel, etc." Mr. Ewing said a boatyard is necessary in Morro Bay for pollution control, but it will not pay for itself; so funding is needed by grants, and the Department of Boating and Waterways would probably be the agency to go to. He said this should be either number two or three on the 2020 Vision priorities list for the harbor.

IV-2. Parking Management Plan Comments

Mr. Bruce Ambo, Director of Public Services, reviewed the background of the Parking Management Plan, saying Mike Prater and Rachel Grossman put the current PowerPoint presentation together. Mr. Ambo said the purpose of the Plan is to determine the current status of parking supply and demand in the City of Morro Bay; to evaluate the standards, and to modify them as needed. He said the concept is to maximize effective parking resources that we have currently. He said to date, an inventory was done of existing conditions to assess the turnover of parking spaces and who is using those spaces, such as locals versus out of state vehicles. He said two public workshops were then held in 2006 to gauge the reaction of the community; then evaluations and assessments for options and financial components followed. Mr. Ambo said public review of the Draft Parking Management Plan is currently underway, and the Plan will go to City Council on June 25th.

Mr. Ambo said the conclusion of a 3-month period of study shows there is only an isolated parking challenge on a few key blocks during a few hours on a few days. He said there is no overall parking supply problem, but there is need for efficient and effective management of existing parking areas. Mr. Ambo discussed the implementation strategies, such as signage, employee parking, expanded trolley service, angled parking, green parking, in-lieu fee program, and alteration of time limits. He said the expanded trolley service being considered would be adding a new trolley and a new route from Morro Rock to Tideland Park to run during summer weekends and on holidays; and this may be grant funded and in-lieu (City) funded.

Mr. Ambo reviewed the conceptual five-year timeline following adoption of the Parking Management Plan with the recommended Action and Implementation Plan, and confirmation of potential funding strategies. Mr. Ambo asked the Board for comments or questions.

Ms. Meissen said she loved the new trolley idea, but asked if there might be a problem with maintenance costs after the initial grant-funded acquisition. Mr. Ambo said ongoing maintenance certainly is a key issue, especially due to the problem of an electric trolley, because current mechanics have only maintained gas-powered trolleys. However, he said the dividends to the community would pay off well due to the experience itself of riding the trolley from the Rock to Tidelands Park. Ms. Meissen questioned Mr. Algert on the proposition of metered parking along the Embarcadero, as she had witnessed the situation in San Pedro when parking meters were installed, and it was detrimental to the businesses. Mr. Algert responded that he is proposing the idea of controlled parking only in the boat launch ramp area.

Mr. Ewing asked Mr. Ambo about the consideration of changing the Embarcadero to a one-way street. Mr. Ambo said the City Council discussed the idea one or two years ago, and decided it would not be a good idea at the time. Mr. Ewing replied he believed it would never be a good idea, as he understood that approximately 90% of the businesses would be against it. He also asked if the map on page 59 showed the elimination of 4 parking spaces in front of Beach Street on the Embarcadero. Mr. Ambo said the Plan netted out more spaces, rather than eliminating them. Mr. Ewing suggested positioning the HarborWalk on the other side of the Embarcadero to keep those parking spaces for the local boat owners. Mr. Prater said the HarborWalk project is intended to begin at the Rock parking lot and work its way back, but current plans only allow it to reach Coleman Park, as there is not enough funding for a larger project, and there have been many issues presented by the Coastal Commission. Mr. Algert said the power plant intake structure and north was the only area awarded funding, but those HarborWalk plans do show the elimination of some parking spaces near the fishing boats.

Mr. Doughty asked Mr. Ambo the cost of the Parking Management Plan document currently being reviewed. Mr. Ambo said this is a required document by the Coastal Commission which cost approximately \$40,000 and was paid by the parking in-lieu fees. Mr. Doughty said the traffic circulation issue is not addressed in this Parking Management Plan, but he believes an electric trolley would be beneficial in many ways, including environmentally due to no gas fumes; or possibly check into alternative fuels, such as fish oil.

Mr. Luffee asked Mr. Ambo where the money is coming from for the signage implementation. Mr. Ambo said Cal Trans approved gateway signs and the funds will be released from those signs; he said Morro Bay is probably first in line for those funds. He said the next step is to order the signs to ascertain the exact dollar amount.

Ms. Leary said she believes the additional new trolley would be a very good idea that would help eliminate parking problems, and she agreed with Mr. Doughty that a trolley which could run on fish oil would be even better. Ms. Leary agreed with the launch ramp parking fees for boat trailers since it would be used mainly for the purpose of clearing out the area of trailer boats that stay in the same spaces every day without moving.

Chairman Anderson said to Mr. Ambo he understands the desirability of the conclusion of a study that shows only limited parking problems; however, he believes there is one fatal flaw. He said he has lived and worked for 40 years in the most impacted area of the parking study, and has witnessed the parking situation closely. He reminded Mr. Ambo that the Galley Restaurant was closed for renovation during the time period of the study, but operations will be starting

again soon and the area will be heavily impacted once again due to the 15 employees and 80 chairs for customers in the restaurant. Mr. Anderson agreed that Morro Bay needs to make better use of the parking spaces we currently have available; however, enforcement is the issue. He recommended pushing forward the enforcement program, as this will encourage employees to turn over their parking spaces, park farther out, and allow patrons of the restaurants and local businesses to use the spaces. Mr. Ambo agreed, and said that revenues from enforcement can also go back into the Parking Management Program to aid in further solutions.

Mr. Algert reviewed the various issues discussed by the Board, saying he will recommend that City Council adopts the proposal of parking control with fees at the boat launch ramp. He reminded the Board that this is a concept plan of the HarborWalk and it does appear to effect parking for fish loading zones; so the Board should definitely make a recommendation if they want to see that changed. Mr. Ambo said he will forward all of the comments to City Council, who will then sort the comments into priorities.

Mr. Anderson asked the Board for further discussion on the issue of one-way traffic on the Embarcadero. Mr. Doughty replied that as he stated previously, traffic circulation is not addressed in the Plan, and he has not met any leaseholders who would want to have one-way traffic on the Embarcadero. Mr. Anderson said he also supported the business owners who prefer to leave the Embarcadero as a two-way street.

Mr. Anderson asked the Board for further discussion on the issue of parking fees at the boat launch ramp. Mr. Ewing asked Mr. Algert if the slip holders at the launch ramp would need to pay fees. Mr. Algert replied they would not pay fees; the charge would be only for the double stalls for the boat trailers, not the single spaces that the fishermen use. He said the system would be a typical "Iron Ranger" and may bring revenues of \$30,000 to \$50,000 per year. Ms. Leary asked if trailers might then start parking on the north end of the Embarcadero. Mr. Algert said that could be one of the potential problems. Mr. Anderson said some people have used the launch ramp as a storage area, and there are limited spaces; he felt the proposed modest fee was necessary. Mr. Doughty said he was opposed to the fee, as it seemed to punish local people in Morro Bay who want to use the launch ramp with a small boat to go out fishing for the day. Ms. Meissen said she walks to Tidelands twice a day and does notice the vehicles with boat trailers who remain in the same parking spaces for five days in a row without going into the water. She said for this reason, she is in favor of charging a fee for trailer boat parking in the launch ramp lot.

Mr. Anderson reviewed the top four issues and asked the Board to vote on each issue for recommendation to Staff and City Council.

- 1.) Charge a fee for boat trailers and towing vehicles to park in the boat launch ramp.
Passed with a vote of 5 to 1.
- 2.) Recommend improved enforcement of parking time limits on the Embarcadero.
Passed unanimously.
- 3.) Commercial loading for slips is critical for continued service and the Parking Management Plan needs to reflect that. Recommend prioritizing parking spaces and loading zones for fishermen with slips on the Embarcadero; rather than remove them for the installation of the HarborWalk.
Passed unanimously.
- 4.) The addition of a new trolley in Morro Bay.
Passed unanimously.

IV-3. Cancellation of July 5, 2007 Meeting

Cancellation of the July 5, 2007 Harbor Advisory Board meeting was agreed to by consensus.

V. INFORMATION ITEMS

V-1. Harbor Department Status Report

Mr. Algert reviewed the following items for the Board:

HarborWalk

Salmon Disaster Relief

Ice Machine Ribbon Cutting

Exempted Fishing Permit Application

SLOSEA

Oysters, domoic acid reports

Rock to Pier Run

Marine Interest Group Meeting

Marine Mammal Rescue Center

VI. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Ms. Leary stated that Saturday, June 9, is free fishing license day in California, which means anyone can fish all day without a license.

VII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

August: Boat Yard Concept Plan
Parking Management Plan
Status of Fuel Dock

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

This meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM

Submitted by,

Polly Curtis
Harbor Department