



Berkeley Pier Ferry Concerns

From Jan Dolzer <mail@jan-dolzer.net>
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To zab@berkeleyca.gov <zab@berkeleyca.gov>
Cc BCDC Public Comment <publiccomment@bcdc.ca.gov>

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Dear Berkeley Zoning Adjustments Board,

I am writing to you as one of many concerned users of the small-boat dock in the Berkeley Marina South Sailing Basin. Being an avid sea kayaker and member of both the large SF Bay Area kayak clubs, Bay Area Sea Kayakers (bask.org) and Western Sea Kayakers (westernseakayakers.org), I regularly attend or initiate club-based training events in this unique location. Very few, if any, locations in the Bay Area provide the same opportunity to practice boat control or rescue skills in a safe, flat water environment in the morning, and then progress to a more challenging place with choppy waves just outside the breakwater created by the winds that typically build later in the day.

For many decades, this location has therefore been used by sea kayakers for skills and rescue practice events. The substantial upgrades of the parking lot a few years ago, as well as the restoration of the small-boat dock last year have been very welcome improvements to make this place even more usable! I am sure the swimmers and surfers, who also regularly use the dock and parking lot, feel the same.

A ferry terminal at the Berkeley Marina will require substantial space for vehicle parking. The existing spots next to the former Hs. Lordships restaurant will not likely suffice. Since it stands to expect that ferry riders would use parking at the South Sailing Basin, rather than the more remote overflow parking, a four- or five-hour time limit for those parking spots has been proposed. That, however, would interfere with how we kayakers use the lot. While I can't speak for swimmers, surfers or sailors, the typical event for sea kayakers as described above lasts from early morning to mid-afternoon. More than 4-5 hours, that is.

Considering the somewhat questionable benefit that ferries contribute to relieving commuter traffic, I have to ask you to consider deciding against a ferry terminal at the Berkeley Marina. Rail- or even road-bound public transit offerings continue to be the best bang-for-the-buck solutions in the Bay Area for the time being. Thanks for your consideration!

Best regards,

Jan Dolzer