

Dana Point Harbor Revitalization
PROPOSAL TO MODIFY EXISTING PROGRAMMATIC DESIGN

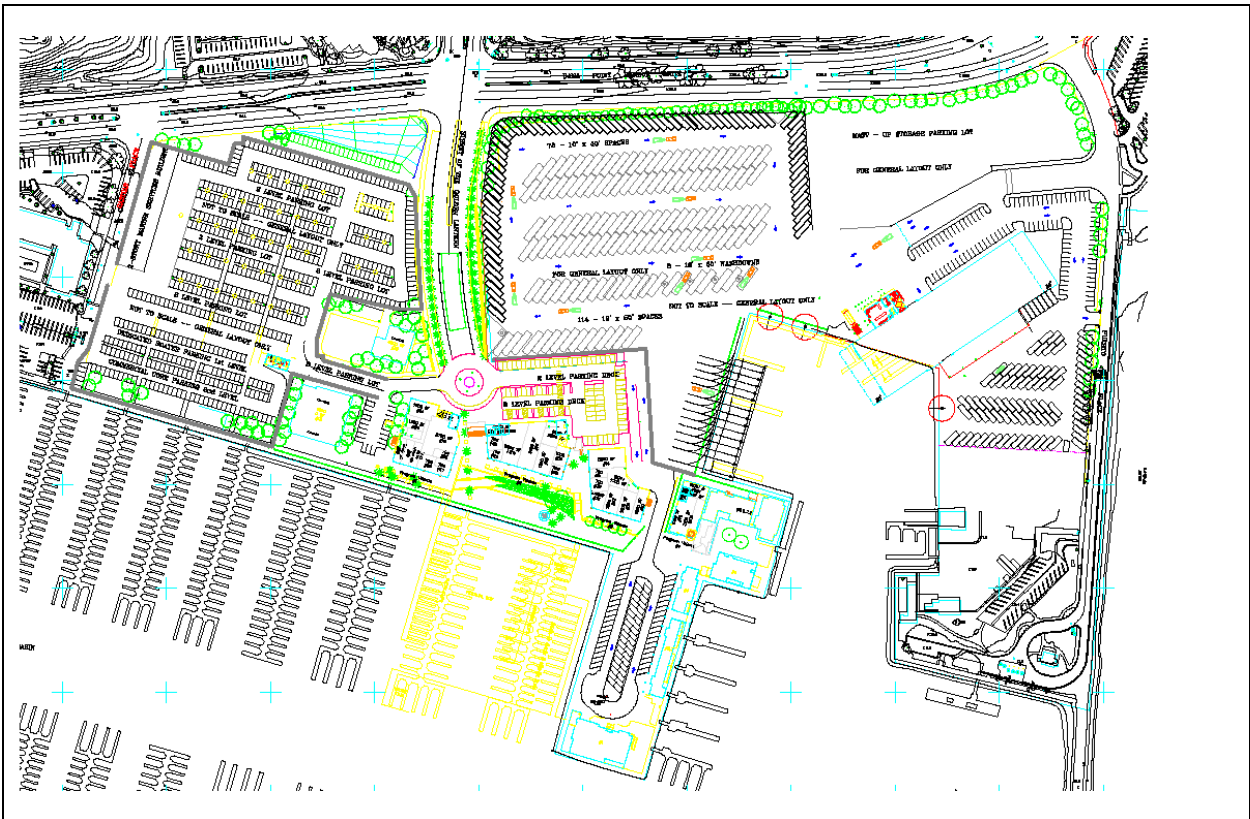
*Move the Target Location of the Proposed Two Story Parking Structure and Marine
Products Retail Store to the Southwest Side of The Street of The Golden Lantern*

Prepared by the Dana Point Boaters Association
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Current Plan for Dana Point Harbor Planning Areas 1 and 2



Proposed Plan for Dana Point Harbor Planning Areas 1 and 2



11 x 17" CAD style drawings accompany this document

Benefits from a Boating Perspective

In summary, the relocation of the proposed two level parking structure and proposed marine products store out of the existing boat launch services area, where the current plans shows it, eliminates an unacceptable loss of boating services and water access:

1. Moving these structures frees up significant surface square footage within the existing dry storage and boat launch ramp areas, now dedicated to boaters, that otherwise would be repurposed for commercial development.
 - Moving the location of the proposed parking structure eliminates the need to take away significant surface square footage.
 - Moving the location of the proposed marine products store also eliminates the need to take away significant surface square footage.
2. Moving these structures will reduce the number of existing mast up boater storage spaces which otherwise would be lost to commercial development. Today these facilities provide a total of 619 mast-up spaces. The current redesign calls for only 93 mast-up spaces to remain. This is unacceptable.

By moving these structures, this number will be significantly increased, hopefully back to about 400-500 mast-up spaces, and ideally from a boating perspective, more than that.

It is essential to affordable boating access that mast-up storage continue to be the primary dry storage alternative available within the harbor. The monthly costs per foot for boat storage and access in the proposed barn, while not yet known in specifics, will be higher than dry storage.

In addition to the convenience of being able to put one's boat in the water whenever desired, mast-up storage provides the opportunity for boaters to conveniently perform low cost, do-it-yourself (DIY) projects. For projects from a few minutes duration up to several weeks or months, today dry storage boaters can work on DIY projects whatever they wish. The proposed boat barn provides more limited boat access, by appointment, with valet service that operates only during scheduled hours on scheduled days.

3. Moving these structures eliminates the need for the dedicated boater parking within the interior of the commercial core, as specified within the current redesign. Instead, and this is a significant benefit to boaters; the existing waterside slip boater parking will be retained at the ground level elevation of the repositioned parking structure. Note that the current design calls for this waterside parking to be repurposed to commercial uses.

Waterside parking is a much more boater-friendly as it eliminates the need for slip renting boaters to traverse the commercial core with carts full of boat supplies, food, luggage, etc. This is especially significant because of the multiple trips which are typically necessary to ferry provisions from/to the parking lot, both before departure by boat and following return.

Further, this existing boater parking will now be "dedicated" once again, rather than being shared with the Catalina Flyer customers, restaurant valet parking and certain tenant employees as has been the last several years. Note that on busy summer season weekends today, both Catalina Flyer customers and recreational boaters sometimes contend for the same parking spaces.

4. Moving these structures avoids encroachment from new commercial uses into the existing boat launch ramp area. As a result, redesign of the boat launch ramp area will be less problematic, and the negative impact upon existing boater level of service will be reduced.

Plus the area taken from dedicated boater parking and repurposed for tenant employee parking some years ago will be restored, to be as it was when the harbor was built originally.

Most important, the outstanding boater-friendly functionality inherent in the existing boat dry storage and launch ramp services areas will be left intact.

5. In the current design, traffic constriction and congestion internal and external to the boat launch facility, would create safety concerns on weekends, for both trailer boaters and marine products retail store customers.

Moving these structures eliminates the requirement to introduce a dysfunctional traffic flow *within* the proposed boat storage and launch facilities. The many tight and sharp turns the current design features won't work.

Moving these structures, specifically the marine product retail store, also eliminates the requirement for a dysfunctional mixed purpose traffic flow *external* to the proposed facilities, both on Puerto Place and within the Puerto Place-Harbor Drive intersection.

6. The currently proposed parking structure location creates commercial encroachment into existing boat launch lanes. The result is congestion and a restriction on the length of the boat trailers and tow vehicles that today are using the lanes at the south end of the boat lanes ramp.

Moving the parking structure location will somewhat reduce commercial encroachment. As a result of the proposed new commercial development there will then be somewhat less congestion at the entry to the south end lanes of the boat launch ramp and somewhat less restriction upon the length of boat tow vehicles and trailers able to use these lanes.

There will still be some negative impact upon trailer boating due to this encroachment. Perhaps this can be addressed during the detailed design phase of the project.

7. Moving these structures eliminates the requirement to severely disrupt existing dry boat storage and boat launch ramp operations for an extended period while the proposed commercial development is constructed and the existing facilities are reconstructed.

8. As mentioned elsewhere above, the large increase in available commercial parking spaces that will result from moving the parking structure location allows restoration of several large dedicated boater parking take-aways that have occurred over the years. These take-aways include:

- Restaurant customer valet parking and tenant employee parking in the "dedicated" boater parking lot fronting East Basin Cove docks I to J.
- Tenant employee parking in the "dedicated" boater parking lot fronting East Basin Cove docks I to J.
- Up to 120 parking spaces in the "dedicated" boater parking lot fronting East Basin Cove docks E to J, currently allocated on demand for Catalina Flyer customer paid parking.

- Tenant employee parking lot built some years ago on land originally designed and built as dedicated launch ramp trailer and tow vehicle parking.

These give-backs will resonate loudly with Dana Point boaters who are today adversely impacted. They will also resonate loudly with the Dana Point Harbor boating community at large.

Benefits from a Non Boating Perspective

In summary, the new parking structure location, when successfully factored into the existing commercial core redesign, will result in a more viable commercial core. Visitor serving value will be enhanced and increased commercial core sales volume and rental yields will result:

1. Moving these structures means there will be more parking spaces available for all commercial uses due to an increase in available surface area on which the two story parking structure will be built. The increase in parking spaces is the equivalent to adding a third level to the currently proposed parking structure.
2. Moving these structures results in improved separation/segregation of commercial and boater parking uses to the benefit of commercial customers and well as boaters. The benefit of moving these two structures is that the design for commercial purposes will be unencumbered by boater related issues and design limitations.
3. The increase in the number of available commercial parking spaces and rentable commercial square footage means that auto traffic created by the general public can/will increase.

It follows that restaurants and retail businesses within the rebuilt commercial core will see increased traffic and increased business. Yet, auto congestion within the interior of the commercial core itself will actually *decrease*. The reason is that the access points for the parking structure will be to somewhat farther away from the interior of commercial core itself, and in an in a somewhat more free flowing and less congested flow pattern.

4. As previously discussed in boater benefits, the surface area designated as dedicated boater parking in the current design (within the two level deck planned northwest of Dana Wharf) can readily be repurposed for additional commercial uses, for example dedicated VIP and restaurant valet parking.
5. The close proximity of parking structure and surface parking within the current design also encourages “cruising” for the best available parking place, prior to entering the parking structure. Thereby adding to street congestion.

Moving the parking structure discourages cruising because there will a large supply of conveniently available parking right at the commercial core entrance. In turn many/most visitors will just park and walk. The result is that more visitors to the commercial core will flow through the entire commercial core as pedestrians, therefore becoming potential customers.

These benefits are important, especially during peak activity periods. Much of the commercial core traffic occurs during these same peak periods.

6. As just discussed, with auto traffic created by the general public going into a parking structure immediately upon entry to the commercial core so there will be less of this traffic at the interior of the commercial core and nearer the water. Therefore, the surface area otherwise committed to the needs of auto traffic may perhaps be reduced. Potential opportunities include dedication of less space and signage for traffic control, plus safer, more pedestrian-friendly walkways approaching the commercial core.

7. Increasing the total number of commercial parking spaces available would provide the opportunity to increase total commercial square footage by adding an additional commercial building (where the Brig restaurant, liquor store, West Marina and small restaurants are now), while still maintaining a proper ratio of commercial space versus available parking. The increase in commercial space translates into increases in total commercial core sales and total rental yield.

Were this additional building built as a two story structure, with service to the general public on the upper level (with direct access to these businesses from the upper level of the parking structure) then rentable retail square footage would increase even more. Plus the lower level could be allocated to providing space for those tenants amenable to a less visible and therefore slightly less desirable location, but tenants still wishing to be located within the harbor commercial core. We believe that there are many potential tenants falling into this category, assuming rental rates set are somewhat lower than on the upper level. Examples of good fit lower level tenants include food takeout stores, convenience stores, marine product and services providers such as sail makers, canvas services, marine sales brokers, marine insurance brokers, fishing and sailing charter operators.

Our vision for this additional building is for it to serve a slightly less “regional visitor serving” and slightly more “local citizen serving” function than the rest of the commercial core.

With two levels, enough space will be created for an anchor tenant, a critical success factor for a more traditional retail operation. The logical choice for one anchor tenant is West Marine of course. A second anchor tenant possibility is a relatively large convenience store, with a boater suppliers/provisioning specialty.

Our vision is that the West Marine would be located within a two level 15,000-20,000 square feet footprint. A logical location may be the north-east corner of the new parking lot, thereby to be as far away from the new Brig restaurant and the commercial core as possible. But from a boaters’ perspective, it is highly desirable to have a primary anchor tenant, preferably the West Marine store, close to the water, thereby to encourage boater foot traffic from dinghy docks and boat slips.

The result of above our vision is a building titled and promoted as “The Dana Point Harbor Marine Services Center”. This center will draw very well with 3,000 boaters within the harbor. It will also attract many other boaters residing throughout Southern Orange County and North San Diego County who wish to avoid the extremely heavy traffic in both Newport Beach and Shelter Island.

A Marine Services Center, featuring a large enough West Marine store to stock merchandise now only available in Newport Beach and San Diego, will be viewed as a big win by the local boating community. Indeed, when considered along with preservation of existing the dry storage spaces and retention of existing excellent launch ramp functionality, it will likely tip the scales of boater opinion in favor of the entire commercial core proposal.

8. Due to factors already noted, moving the location of the parking structure will increase parking lot capacity and efficiency, thereby improving overall visitor handling capacity. This will translate into more commercial core visitors and more repeat visits per visitor over the long run.
9. Moving the location will increase the number of boaters visiting the Marine Services visiting on foot and thereby reduce street traffic within the harbor.

Increased commercial core foot traffic, especially associated with fishing / whale watching charters and Catalina Flyer customers, will then pass through the main commercial core when departing and returning from these transportation oriented events. These passages will increase merchant sales revenue. Note that because these customers, especially transportation oriented customers are not shopping oriented and are typically parked for extended periods, it is not a requirement to provide highly convenient parking. After all, these customers are typically already committed before arrival, do not have available sources of service elsewhere in the immediate area and their park-and-walk time is a relatively trivial percentage of the time versus the time which the vehicle is parked. Therefore, it may be appropriate to designate the upper level of the parking structure above the waterside dedicated boater parking for these purposes. This would seem also to be the logical location for commercial core tenant and employee parking.

10. The existing surface area on the southwest side of Golden Lantern is already dedicated to commercial uses, including parking. While today there is less parking available than desired, this location has worked very well. That is of course why it was the first proposal considered during the original commercial core redevelopment discussions, begun some years ago.

We understand that the currently proposed design of commercial core provides a smooth commercial core reconstruction path, with minimum disruption to current tenants. We also appreciate that this translates into important public use and financial benefits.

We do not propose that this consideration should be ignored or reduced in planning importance. Instead we believe that the parking structure can be built in stages to provide a similarly smooth reconstruction path.

Here's an example of one potential approach:

- The first of several two-level sections of the new parking structure is built adjacent to Golden Lantern, immediately following completion of sewer construction and rerouting of Golden Lantern. This would be during the same time frame as construction of the new Brig Restaurant.
- Once both of these parking structure levels are completed, there would be sufficient parking available to then reclaim the middle section of the existing surface parking to the southwest for construction of the middle section of the parking structure.
- Once these two parking structure segments are completed there would be about the equivalent amount of parking as in the current design.
- Construction of the final segments of the structure (the section closest to the Marine Services Center and the section near the water edge) would then yield net parking gains over the current design.

11. We ask you to give these arguments careful thought. We believe net financial benefit will be realized from:

- increase in the Revitalization Project's ongoing financial return on investment, realized by having more visitor serving parking available and more rental commercial square footage than otherwise (the Marine Services Center building)
- increase in the project's ongoing financial return on investment, realized by retaining more rentable boating related ground surface area than otherwise (many existing dry spaces would not have to be eliminated)

- reduced engineering design and construction costs per square foot, realized by an inherently simpler parking structure design (fewer ramps, etc.) and elimination of the requirement to design and build for the possibility of adding a third parking level later
- the relatively lower density character of the existing commercial core is retained in more significant part than otherwise (moving the parking structure away from the interior of the commercial core reduces auto traffic and building footprint density) and enhances the nautical visitor serving theme.

This is true when compared with the currently proposed design (avoids “urban” feel, to further differentiate Dana Point Harbor from Newport Beach and San Diego, etc.), as well as when compared with the existing construction (adding the Marine Services Center is a major nautical theme benefit supported within the Dana Point Tidelands Trust and California Coastal Act)

- net improvements in surface area utilization, functionality (as well as aesthetics just discussed), to the significant benefit of the general public, as well as commercial and boating interests
- more rapid, streamlined and cost effective project design approval process will result, as resistance from the boating community will be substantially reduced, perhaps even becoming project support.

In conclusion, we believe that moving the location of parking structure and marine retail store produces a clear win-win-win-win result:

- a win for the general public, who will benefit from the improved design
- a win for commercial tenants, who will see increased traffic and revenue
- a win for the County of Orange, who will benefit from increased constituency acceptance of the project, as well as greater investment yield / lower ongoing cost of governance
- a win for boaters, who are the purpose for the existence of the harbor, as defined within the Dana Point Tidelands Trust and California Coastal act.

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