



**Submission to the Peter J. Smith & Company Inc.**

**THE COBOURG YACHT CLUB'S (CYC) COMMENTS ON  
THE PARKS MASTER PLAN (released August 2012)**

**Purpose;** To provide a corporate response to the draft Parks Master Plan concentrating on aspects of 'The Waterfront Master Plan' that affect the CYC.

**Club Profile:** Since gaining its charter in 1965, the CYC has been an active partner in Cobourg's waterfront activities and plays an integral role within the harbour – together with the Cobourg Marina, it is the southern gateway to the Town. Currently, the club has 178 Members consisting of Senior, Associate, Honourary, Maintenance and Life Members. Senior members own power boats and sailboats that are docked at the Marina and dry sail dinghies that are stored in the CYC sailing compound.

The CYC has been active in supporting community events, providing a venue for people of all ages to learn to sail and in promoting boating safety. The club supports the United Way Dragon Boat races every year and we are partners with the Northumberland YMCA in summer Learn to Sail programs.

The club has an active yacht racing and dinghy racing program and hosts regattas with other yacht clubs.

The club offers all the amenities of a modern yacht club with restaurant, bar, lounges and washroom facilities. Members and the Public are able to rent the club for private functions.

The club works with the Marina in the planning and provision of personnel for Lift-In (launching) and Lift-Out (hauling) for all marina boats in the spring and fall. It also makes its committee boat available to the Marina as required.

### **General Observations on the Parks Master Plan:**

One of our members is quoted - "an important part of developing a successful Parks Master Plan is to understand the community and its existing conditions"

With respect to the Master Plan, the document needs to properly recognize existing Marina and Yacht Club facilities.

The CYC applauds and supports many of the positive elements that are captured in the Plan including:

- The detailed system for parks and the recommendations for land acquisitions to improve connectivity;
- The new system for classifying parks;
- The improvement in the linkages in the east/west direction and the north/south direction between downtown and the waterfront;
- The improvements in the Town Commons such as redeveloping the buildings along Albert Street , the walkway on the east side of Rotary Park and the walkway extending First Street to the waterfront;
- The general improvements in boardwalks and overlooks on the East and West Pier and along the waterfront are welcome - the citizens of Cobourg love their waterfront and walk, jog and visit by car in large numbers and on a daily basis.

The comments in this document will be restricted to the aspects of the Waterfront Master Plan that affect the CYC and its members directly or indirectly.

### **Comments and Concerns:**

**The Harbour:** The East Pier of the harbour was completed in 1832, the Centre Pier in 1839 and the Langevin Pier or West Pier in 1874. Subsequent improvements have been made over the years. The harbour was built to provide a safe refuge for vessels from the elements of Lake Ontario.

The Town agreed to and received a small craft designation for the harbour in 1981. Historically, the harbour has contributed significantly to the economic prosperity of the Town and will continue to do so.

***We believe that the entire harbour should be devoted to recreational boating – this includes the west side of the harbour.***

We understand from senior Town officials that there is a plan for an additional 150 slips – not 50 as stated in the plan.

***The revised plan should show the 150 slips.***

With the anticipated expansion of docks off the West Wall of the Centre Pier, the basin in the western part of the harbour will be seriously constricted. Future anchoring in the western basin will be very limited.

***Planning for keeping the Western part of the harbour at depth will be important.***

The Marina expansion will have a dramatic impact on all recreational activity within the harbour. The CYC Sailing School, the canoes, the kayaks and the dragon boaters will have less space to practice within the safety of the harbour limits. Activity in this area has experienced a dramatic increase over the last few years.

***Planning for future docks off the West Wall of the Centre Pier should take into consideration the recreational uses of the harbour.***

**The Marina:** CYC members occupy in excess of 40 % of the seasonal slips and use the Marina on a daily basis in season. So, the following comments are warranted.

The Cobourg Marina is well run and has an excellent reputation with boaters around the lake. This year the Marina had visiting boats for a total of 3,693 'Boat Nights' until the end of August. This represents a significant economic contribution to the Marina and the downtown merchants and restaurants.

Currently, the Marina has 190 slips. It issued 191 seasonal parking passes and 247 temporary parking passes this year. The Marina has a boat storage compound with a capacity of 65 boats and a designated, secure mast storage area. It also has a fenced in compound for garbage disposal.

The expansion of the Marina will result in almost double the demand for parking, boat storage and mast storage.

Any viable modern marina operation must provide essential services to its users. These include adequate launching and hauling facilities, boat storage, mast storage, a functional mast crane, fuel and pump out services, parking and garbage disposal. The Parks Master Plan addresses none of these services with the exception of the boat launch and Gantry. We are unclear as to what a Gantry refers to – is it a travel lift or is it a crane for launching and hauling dry sail boats?

***The Plan should allow for adequate winter boat storage (130 boats) in close proximity to the harbour and a secure area for storing masts. These are not addressed in the Plan.***

***The Plan should include a mast crane for the removal of masts.***

***The plan should allow for an expanded garbage disposal area close to the Marina and the yacht club (the club uses this disposal area as well).***

There have been rumours of moving the boat storage to other parts of the Town. Moving boats to a remote location across Town would be time consuming, more expensive, intrusive to the Town and dangerous! Some of these boats are in excess of 40 feet and weigh 20 tons or more. Some of these loads would be considered oversized and require a special permit under the *Highway Traffic Act*.

***The Plan should allow for adequate parking for up to 300 vehicles in proximity to the Marina for users of the Marina and yacht club members.***

On any given day during the boating season, there could be 5 to 10 boat launches using the launch ramp. The trailers and trucks need a place to park adjacent to the ramp.

We support the plan for including a boat launch with gantry, the double boat launch and the canoe/kayak launch with floating dock.

***The Plan should also include a ramp for launching dinghies, kayaks and canoes on the west side of the harbour.***

The Port Whitby Marina is another example of well run Marina that is operated by the Town of Whitby. It offers excellent facilities for hauling and launching boats of any size and features excellent boat storage and parking amenities.

**Launching and Hauling of Boats:** Currently, the Marina launches and hauls boats using a crane in the spring and fall. The East Pier is used as a platform for this activity.

For hauling, boats are lifted by crane and placed into cradles. There could be up to 70 boats lined up on the pier. Then these boats in cradles are transported to the boat storage yard over two or three days. Launching is a reverse process.

The Plan shows board walks and overlooks on the east pier. This means that another location will have to be selected within the harbour. A travel lift operation is one solution but this will definitely require the boat storage area to be within proximity of the boat launch ramp.

***It is important to note that launching and hauling boats requires the protection of the harbour. The Plan should include the provision for the alternate launching and hauling of boats.***

**The Natural Waterfront:** The Natural Waterfront and West Beach are valued by most citizens in Cobourg. However, there must be a balance between the natural waterfront and the needs of the harbour for recreational boating.

***The Plan should consider developing the West Beach immediately west of the harbour as a natural habitat.***

This area could be planted with natural grasses and beach vegetation.

Placing the Eco-Centre where the existing storage compounds for keelboats, kayaks, canoes, masts and dinghies are situated does not make sense. These facilities are essential for the support of recreational boating

***The Plan should consider an alternate location for the Eco-Centre as an iconic feature and visitor destination. The Ecology Garden or the foot of Durham Street might be better choices.***

***The area between Hibernia Street and the Marina should be designated as the Harbour Service Area.***

***CYC supports the extension of the boardwalk to connect with the Cobourg Creek and Peace Park.***

**The Cobourg Yacht Club:** The CYC is not even mentioned in the Plan!

Every viable yacht club around Lake Ontario requires a storage area for dry sail dinghies and dry sail boats. This facility is also essential to support the operation of a 'Learn to Sail' program. Secure storage of dinghies, sails, masts, support boats and outboard motors is required.

***The Plan should include a provision for a secure dry sail compound that is located in close proximity to the launch ramp in the western part of the harbour.***

The Plan currently shows a Marina Restaurant at the present location of the CYC. This is misleading and needs to be clarified. The club has recently renewed its long-term lease and is not interested in relocating at this time.

***The Town could consider incorporating a restaurant as part of the Marina Facility.***

**The Parkway:** There will be a number of opinions on the inclusion of the 'Parkway' to increase west/east connectivity between Ontario Street and Church Street.

There already exists a transportation corridor connecting west and east using Albert and Queen Streets.

***It is our opinion that the 'Parkway' should be a 'Pathway' with provision for a biking lane adjacent to the boardwalk. This could be part of the Trails Plan.***

Having a roadway in the West Beach area is contrary to the concept of a Natural Waterfront Experience. Having a roadway through Victoria Park will also meet with some resistance.

The existing road infrastructure along the waterfront works well at this time.

**General Parking:** The Plan depicts an alarming reduction in parking on the waterfront and in downtown areas. This is considered essential for maintaining the vitality and growth of the downtown and waterfront areas. Some of the missing lots include the Marina Lot, the two parking areas on

the Esplanade, the lot on the NW corner of Queen and McGill Street, the lot south of the LCBO and the lot south of Victoria Hall.

*The Consultants should re-evaluate parking in the downtown and waterfront areas.*

**Implementation Plan (page 63):** We agree with recommendation #1 that proposes that a more detailed study of the Waterfront Master Plan be undertaken.

*The CYC would like to participate in the study either through focus groups or through direct input.*

We also agree with recommendation #2 that proposes a detailed study of pedestrian trails and cycling links should be undertaken. A hiking and biking trail along the entire waterfront would be consistent with what is happening in other Lake Ontario jurisdictions.

Respectfully Submitted:

The CYC Executive Committee