

Final Draft of the Cobourg Marina Expansion - Operations and Facilities Study Stakeholder Meeting April 21, 10:00am Victoria Hall

Note: This is the original submission with images added from the slide show presented at the same time. New information discovered at and since the Stakeholder meeting has not been added to this document. That information will be posted as it becomes available. – Rob MacLeod 23 April 2015

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Cobourg Yacht Club: A bit of history and background

Good morning my name is Rob MacLeod. I am a Senior member of the Cobourg Yacht Club. I keep my sailboat the Cobourg Marina.

My volunteer position at the CYC is Executive Officer responsible for the Learn to Sail program. I am a Sail Canada Certified sailing instructor and have taught sailing since 1975 – working across Canada, the United States, the Bahamas and the Caribbean. My wife and I chose to move to Cobourg in 2010, partly because it has one finest boating facilities I have taught sailing in and the marina that is one of most boater and neighbourhood friendly that I have encountered.

The rest of my bio:

- In the mid 1980's I taught Small Boat and Marina Technology at Humber College –including Yacht Club and Marina design and management
- Founding publisher of Boating Industry Canada magazine
- Currently a Senior Writer with Canadian Yachting magazine
- I manage projects for a living and teach project management for one of the provinces professional planning organizations.

All that is to say, “I understand and appreciate the effort it takes to consider a proposal such as the one we are talking about today and what is required to take on a project of this scope..”

As many of you are aware, The Cobourg Yacht Club is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary this year. CYC received its official charter on September 17, 1965. We consider ourselves, along with the Cobourg Marina, to be the ‘Southern Gateway to the town of Cobourg’.



[Recommended Reading: History of Cobourg Harbour](#)



CYC's first clubhouse, erected in 1967, is now our *Learn to Sail* Clubhouse and centreboard compound. In 1985 we built our present day clubhouse. Once constructed, ownership of the yacht club member-funded facility was transferred to the town and we rent our clubhouse back from the town for a nominal annual fee. In addition to paying property tax on both the new clubhouse and the compound area, Cobourg Yacht Club is responsible for 100% of the maintenance and repairs on both facilities.



We employ seasonal part-time staff in the kitchen & bar areas and we employ Sail Canada certified sailing instructors in both our Junior and Adult learn to sail programs.

The Cobourg Yacht Club is a self-help club. That means it is through the hard work and support of our volunteer members that we run club activities, including weekly race nights for both keelboat and centre boards, cruises to neighbouring yacht clubs on the lake and a wide range of social events. We host winter seminars, boat safety

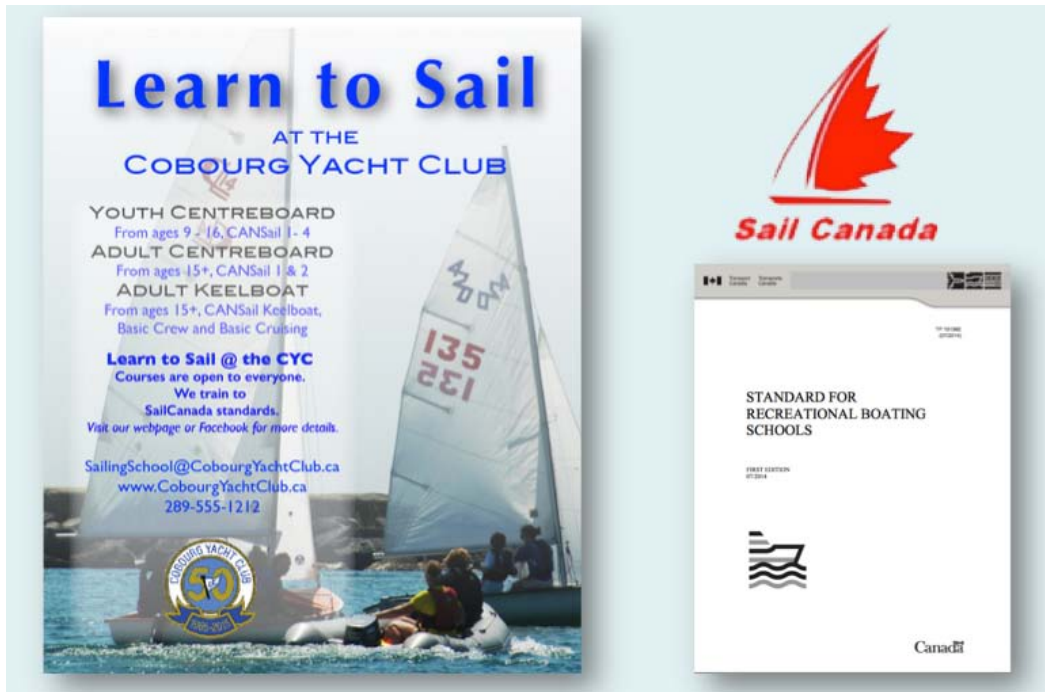
courses – including the Canadian Sail and Power Squadron and invite guest speakers throughout the year.

I would like to take a moment and differentiate the Cobourg Yacht Club from the Cobourg Marina. The marina is owned by the town and operates all of the facilities in the marina – the slips, boat storage and marina office and washrooms.

The Cobourg Yacht Club owns no slips and the yacht club members with boats rent slips and storage from the marina. We are tenants of the marina.

Under both Canada Revenue Agency rules and our own charter, CYC is a private, not-for-profit club. That means we can only offer our licensed dining room and bar services to members and registered guests. We extend temporary associate member privileges as part of our [Adult and Junior Learn to Sail programs](#). Membership is open to **anyone**, with or without a boat. The various types of membership are on our website.

Under Transport Canada regulations, our learn to sail programs are considered commercial enterprises. It also requires that all of our boats that operate under power – our two coach boats and the schools new 24-foot auxiliary sailboat – must be Transport Canada, Recreational Boating School compliant, along with anyone who uses these boats. We will be fully compliant by the time our programs commence.



Our not-for-profit status requires that any surpluses be re-invested in the club and facilities. This year alone, we have invested over \$20,000 of that surplus in new boats and equipment for the Learn to Sail programs – programs that are also open to **anyone** who wishes to learn to sail – whether they are members or not.

Submission

The CYC was asked to provide this meeting with three (3) of our main items for discussion to assist the Town in developing the meeting agenda. They are as follows:

1. Partial Endorsement of Layout Option 1 for Marina Support Facilities
2. Boat Handling and Winter Storage
3. Endorsement of expanded boat slip availability

1. Partial Endorsement of Layout Option 1 for Marina Support Facilities

The retention of CYC's Storage Compound in area, configuration and proximity to the harbour launch ramp as detailed in Option 1 (Figure 3.8) is essential to the needs of CYC and is endorsed.

CYC has a number of comments relative to the proposed provisions for winter storage facilities.

1. CYC does not agree with the proposal to establish winter storage facilities and transport boats away from the immediate harbour area. This proposal specifically mentions the West Works Yard. Boat cradles used for supporting boats over the winter are not designed for road transport and present a potential safety concern while in transit. In addition moving boats along
2. King Street to any offsite storage will cause major disruptions in traffic
3. Moving the boats along King Street will also substantially increase the cost of boat handling and storage

Although CYC endorses the establishment of expanded winter storage facilities in close proximity to the harbour, the proposed use of the parking lot between the club and the compound, presents a major concern with respect to the provision of adequate temporary fencing and security systems as well as water and electrical supply required for boat servicing.



From an overall community perspective, having the winter boat storage located between the harbour and the condominium development will present a significant visual concern not only to condominium residents but will negatively impact the enjoyment that many Cobourg residents have in visiting the inner harbour over the winter months.

From CYC's perspective, provided verified environmental concerns can be thoroughly investigated and addressed, expansion of the existing winter storage compound north-westerly into the area noted as proposed for "optional west beach parking" (Figure 3.8) is the most reasonable option for the provision of additional winter boat storage to accommodate the marina requirements and should be implemented. Since this area will be cleared of boats in the spring, the property will be available for parking for the busy tourist and festival season.

2. Boat Handling and Winter Storage

CYC endorses the implementation of a self-propelled Marine Travel Lift and hydraulic trailer for boat handling. For those not familiar with this type of equipment, images illustrate a boat being lifted.

The self propelled travel lift places the boat on it's storage cradle and then a hydraulic trailer moves the boat and cradle to the storage area. Currently we use a stationary crane and a hydraulic trailer combination.



A positive result of using a travel lift – rather than the current mobile crane – will mean boat lift out can be scheduled more effectively, removing the need to block off the East Pier twice each year.



If a Travel Lift is used without a hydraulic trailer, launching, hauling and storing boats cannot be as tightly packed when stored – requiring even more storage area. Use of a travel lift / hydraulic trailer will result in less overall storage space being required. Provisions to accommodate mast stepping and un-stepping are not mentioned in the Report and need to be further detailed.

Introducing the use of a Travel Lift for marina operations will take away significant revenue from the Yacht Club. Our members currently handle the lift-in/lift-out process on behalf of the marina and retain the lifting fees collected from the boaters. Out of that, the Yacht Club pays for both the crane and the boat moving services. The marina retains the storage fees for boats stored on marina / town property.

The Yacht Club feels we can find other sources of income to replace the approximately 15% of our operating budget the lift in and out revenue represents.

3. Endorsement of expanded boat slip availability

As expressed by the other users at this table, the CYC is concerned about the lack solid financial information offered with this proposal:

- Statement of Requirements
- Feasibility Report
- Investment Analysis Report
- Business Case
- Risk Assessment

We have attempted to do our due diligence before expressing our opinion. Having reviewed the financial documents available to the public, we found the following.

Town of Cobourg Marina Summary Income / Expenses							
7310912 Profit (Loss)							
Transfer to (from) Reserve Funds	69,631.00	99,785.62	63,188.96	49,117.32	80,918.82	79,374.54	70,916.87
6408 91. Marina development reserve							

According to Ian Davey, Cobourg’s Town Treasurer, the marina has not only been self-sustaining financially but over the past five years has generated a surplus of between \$49K and \$99K each year. It was through these surpluses the move of F dock and the addition of G dock was possible.

Some of the club’s members with a strong financial background reviewed the available financial numbers and extrapolated them out over the next 10 to 15 years.

CYC supports well documented, properly planned and executed marina expansion

CYC does not support the slip layout presented in this proposal

In addition CYC has 7 recommendations to improve the current operation of the marina and future viability of Cobourg Harbour

“The Cobourg Yacht Club believes the goals of the proposal can be met within the existing footprint of the current marina operation.” That means we **are not** recommending expansion beyond the center pier **at this time** and have the following recommendations.

1. Town Council, through the marina management, budget and operate in a manner that will continue to generate a surplus of at least \$70,000 per year for the next 10 – 15 years.

2. Town Council amend the visiting boater / transient ratio to 10% of available slips to reduce the waiting list and to ensure a predictable flow of revenue to the marina operation and reduce the vagaries of relying on weather-dependant and economic-constrained transient docking to generate the needed cash flow.

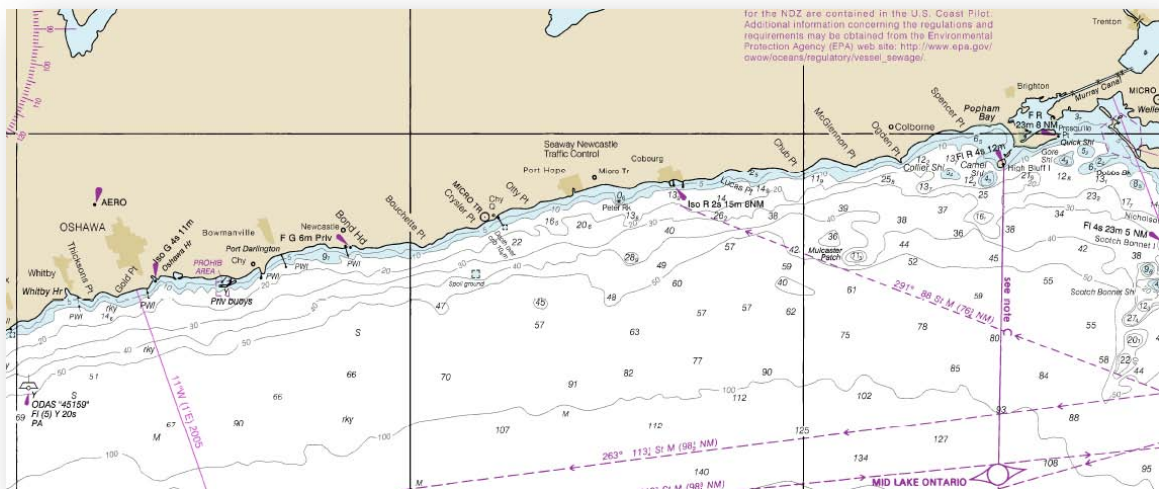
For those not familiar with the term transient – it is simply a visiting boater. Just as a traveller to Cobourg might book a hotel room for overnight accommodation, a



transient – or visiting boater – books a vacant slip in the marina to tie up for the night, or in some cases – for a week or two. The visiting boater rate for the slip is significantly higher than the season rate charged for the same slip on a per day basis. The break even point on a transient slip versus a seasonal boater’s fee is approximately 35 days.

3. Town Council direct and approve an updated marina management system that would ensure that ‘away boats’ (seasonal boats that are away cruising) be registered with the marina office so that their slips can be rented out to visiting boaters – this is standard practice in marina operations

4. Town Council direct the marina manager to institute a reservation system for up to 50% of the available slips (including away boats) so that slower travelling boats are assured of a proper slip before setting out from Whitby and points west and south. Most sailboat and trawlers travel at 5 – 7 knots or 10 – 13 kmh.



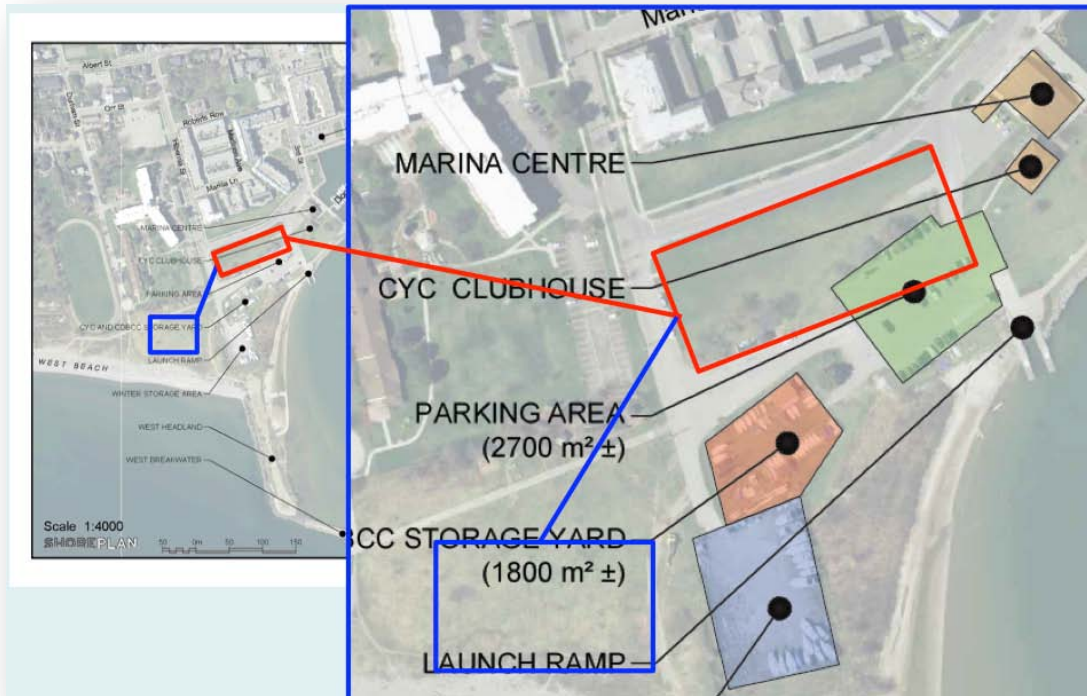
Cobourg is strategically located as the only safe and viable harbour between Whitby and Brighton. The smaller harbours of Bowmanville, Newcastle and Port Hope are not suitable for many boats and Cobourg is the best harbour of refuge in the area – distance of 60 NM or 110 km.

5. Town Council direct and approve immediate improvement to water and electrical hook-up on the west side of the centre pier to ensure the comfort of visiting boaters using this pier – the use of the pier is a current practice and one that is necessary to ensure that no boat is turned away from this harbour.

6. Our sixth recommendation is that, with the exception of the changes noted in this submission, the town place a moratorium on any changes to the use of the harbour without full consultation with the user groups – a user advisory committee.

We ask for this moratorium to be backdated to January 1, 2015 to reverse any changes that were made to the marina land use, including council’s recent decision to move the overflow and festival parking from the area west of the current storage

compound to the green space North of the marina parking lot. As a result of this decision, this green space will be turned into a campground for the vendors during the Canada celebrations.



This will be a major visual distraction for the Condominium owners, will destroy the grass beside the yacht club and marina and would facilitate the unintended over use of the marina’s washroom and shower facilities.

7. The Cobourg Yacht Club asks Town Council to introduce **Fair and Equitable** fee structure for the harbour use.

Currently, marina operations occupy approximately 28% of the harbour including the launch ramp and the storage compound. We agree that the marina operation must be fully funded by the boaters who use the marina. The balance of the harbour expense – dredging, pier maintenance and re-construction, etc - should be funded by the people who use the balance of the harbour.



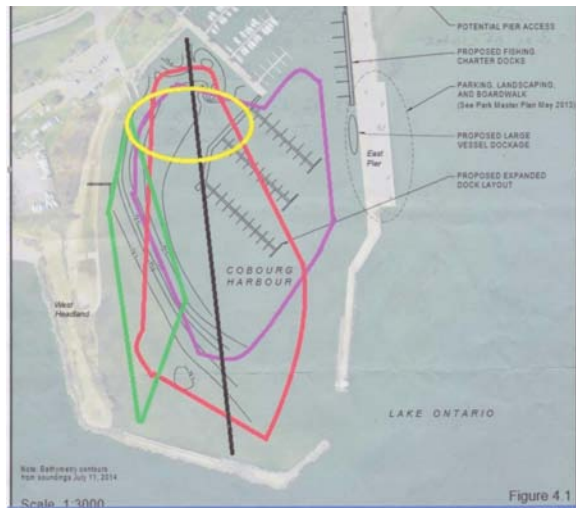
The users of the outer harbour include:

- The Coast Guard
- The boaters – who use the outer harbour for entrance and egress
- The CYC sailing school – who use the outer harbour for lessons
- The Survivor Thrivers who use the outer harbour for practice
- The Cobourg Dragon Boat & Canoe club, who use the outer harbour for lessons, practice and competition
- The Willow Beach Field Naturalists who use the outer harbour for naturalist activities

So there are six groups (seven if you include the general public) using the harbour. We see the user's contribution to the cost of the marina as follows.

- The Coast Guard is exempt by virtue of the agreement that saw the harbour be transferred from the federal government to the town as a Small Craft Harbour
- The boaters already pay for their share in their fees. And for the record, those fees currently cover 99% of the entire harbour costs - including trash pickup on the east beach and, under the current operating model, the much needed repairs to the east pier - something that should have been undertaken when the pier was transferred to the town and the Federal Government transferred the funds to affect those repairs.
- The Survivor Thrivers is a charitable organization. Because of the incredible fundraising and charitable work they do, we feel they should remain exempt from paying for the upkeep of the outer harbour
- CYC sailing school under Transport Canada and the CRA is a commercial enterprise with a not-for-profit status. The sailing school pays property taxes on the junior club house and compound and pays fees for the slip used by the learn to sail program's keelboat
- The Cobourg Dragon Boat & Canoe Club is also a commercial enterprise with a not-for-profit status with the CRA; it pays no property taxes on its storage compound but does pay a nominal fee to the marina. The dragon boats that are not part of the Survivor Thrivers and are part of this commercial enterprise pay ~~nothing~~ a discounted rate for the slips they occupy in the marina. We would like to see this corrected.

Especially considering that as recently as last week the Cobourg Dragon Boat & Canoe Club indicated that this (slide) is how much of the harbour they required for their various activities, and it is the opinion of the Cobourg Yacht Club that the limitations and requirements quoted by the club in their communications and submissions are for international level



competitions, none of which can be run in Cobourg Harbour, because the harbour is completely unsuitable for international events.

It would be like our sailing school asking for an Olympic length racecourse within Cobourg harbour confines to teach a learn-to-sail course. It could not physically be done.

Finally The Willow Beach Field Naturalists is a not-for-profit organization and is acting like an environmental lobby group petitioning councilors and requesting changes to marina land use without input from the other users.

This group is the architect of moving the overflow parking for an entirely suitable and environmentally acceptable area west of the current storage compound into an area normally used for overflow parking. The naturalists pay no property taxes or marina fees and raise no money for charitable groups. We feel they should pay their share of maintaining the harbour if they want to remain at the table.

Summary

Everyone in this room has valid concerns about the use of this our harbour, and those concerns can only be resolved by sitting down at the table as we are now. In fact, with the increased use of the harbour by many diverse groups, we strongly feel a more formal user's group should be formed.

One of the duties of this new group would be to resolve conflicts in the use of the harbour, such as scheduling of events to ensure maximize enjoyment of our harbour and minimize scheduling conflicts.

This group would also ensure that the information about harbour use and policies was accurate and verifiable. Again, something that has seemed to be lacking in the lead up to this meeting.

The Cobourg Yacht Club, largely silent on this subject up to now, will be a more active partner in guiding the future of Cobourg Harbour.

We feel our request to stop the current conversation on Marina Expansion will allow the town's staff, council and the user advisory group to gather and communicate the facts (something that has been in short supply) and that will result in informed decisions based on what is right for the town and the people who pay for the services provided - both tax payers and the users of the harbour.

In summary, the Cobourg Yacht Club:

- Supports well documented, properly planned and executed marina expansion
- Does not support the slip layout presented in this proposal
- Offers 7 recommendations to improve the current operation of the marina and future viability of Cobourg Harbour

We have been here since the beginning. We will be here and supportive of the Cobourg Marina for decades to come.

Thank you.

Rob MacLeod

On behalf of the members of the Cobourg Yacht Club

info@cobourgyachtclub.ca