	Accessibility Sub-Committee Public Meeting January 23, 2013, 1:30 to 3:30 pm State Coastal Conservancy Meeting Notes

Present:
Ann Buell [Notes in brackets were added by Ann while assembling this summary document.]
Wendy Proctor
Galli Basson [Thanks to Galli for taking the majority of the notes.]
Bill Curry
Jonathon Goldman
Ellen Miramontes
Ariel Ambruster
Laura Thompson
David Fazio
Gilda Puente-Peters
Ed Frye
Joy Dryden

Welcome , Agenda Review, Ground Rules:
Ann welcomed the group and everyone introduced themselves and expressed their interest in the Water Trail and in non-motorized small boat use. Ariel reviewed the same ground rules used by the Advisory Committee and Project Management Team (PMT) for the Water Trail.

Review of Purpose of Assembling the Accessibility Sub-Committee:
Ann reviewed a purpose statement she drafted for discussion and asked if anyone felt it needed any changes. [Statement provided here for convenience]:

> *The Accessibility Sub-Committee will provide insights and ideas to the Water Trail Advisory Committee on the subject of the accessibility of landing and launching sites and the Water Trail Program as a whole, based on personal experiences using non-motorized small boats on the Bay or assisting persons with disabilities who are using non-motorized small boats on the Bay. A key task is providing input on the development of the Water Trail Accessibility Plan.*

Jonathon Goldman wanted to delete "based on personal experiences using non-motorized small boats on the Bay or assisting persons with disabilities who are using non-motorized small

boats on the Bay" because these words limited who could be on the sub-committee and did not include potential users of non-motorized small boats. Ann explained that the sub-committee was formed specifically to include only those persons who meet the description in the purpose statement because Water Trail managers do not have that specific knowledge that comes from personal experience and they need to learn from those who do. David Fazio agreed with Jonathon and emphasized talking about "inclusion" instead of "accessibility," since "access" has a physical connotation. Joy Dryden pointed out that the term "accessibility" is a common term and widely understood in a way that "inclusion" is not necessarily understood and encouraged the use of "accessibility." Bill suggested keeping sentence length to 25 words or less. Ann agreed to draft some changes to the statement and re-present to the group.

Role of Accessibility Sub-Committee and Who is a Sub-Committee Member:
Ann briefly explained the governance structure of the Water Trail program and the relationship of the Advisory Committee (advisory) to the Project Management Team (decision-makers). The Accessibility Sub-Committee is a sub-group to the Accessibility interest group of the Advisory Committee [Bill Curry, Richard Skaff; Jonathon Goldman is Richard's alternate]. The Sub-Committee meetings are not a parallel process [they are in support of the Advisory Committee]. Recommendations from the sub-committee meetings will be passed on to the Advisory Committee through the Accessibility interest group.

Suggestions for Additional Sub-Committee Members:
Further explaining the purpose statement, Ann clarified that Joy, Wendy, David, and if he were present, Greg Milano, were the only actual members of the sub-committee. Everyone else was an Advisory Committee Member, PMT member, Water Trail Staff, or consultant. Ann also mentioned who else she had invited to join the committee and explained that some people could not make daytime meetings, or needed to be paid, and so on. She asked the group to provide suggestions for others to invite. Two names related to South Beach Harbor were suggested: Ed Genoa [Gallagher?]and Christine Rubke (current commodore). Ann pointed out that it would be helpful to get input from someone with a visual impairment. Wendy suggested contacting "Far West" (Disabled Sports). Ellen suggested Lighthouse for the Blind. David suggested Center for Independent Living and said he would follow up with a suggestion. Ed suggested the Roberts Center in Berkeley, a Universal Design Center. Liz Padro? Runner of Olympic torch?

Frequency of Sub-Committee Meetings:
Ann stated that she thought they might meet two times in person this year, but that there could be additional communication by email or phone. Gilda encouraged getting input from the group sooner rather than later. Would like to see a questionnaire created and circulated.

Accessibility Plan Contents and Need for Input on Certain Topics:
Input needed for the chapter on Water Trail Accessibility Challenges. Need to consider boat types, launch types, and types of disabilities (mobility, vision, cognitive) and how they all interact – what works best? Input desired on what pieces of information will be most useful in

the site descriptions on the Water Trail website, regarding accessibility of sites. Input also desired on assistive equipment.

Ann and Ariel introduced a discussion on the boat types and launch types and disabilities question, suggesting that the group could start with a boat type, and then list which launch types could work and what needs to be considered for each disability type (as generalized as mobility, vision, or cognitive). Joy did not think that the suggested approach of considering each boat type under a variety of scenarios (launch types, disability category) would be helpful. She felt it depends on site conditions (that is, sites differ from one another in many ways that are hard to generalize). The suggested categories are too narrow. Wendy suggested looking at each site around the Bay and evaluating (first cut); survey each site and then give to committee for comments; collect data on high and low tides.

David continued in this same vein, saying that sites are unique and people are unique – no size fits all. There was general agreement that it is hard to generalize and that having basic criteria to consider would be needed. [WT staff has done this.] Bill suggested that launch and landing features need to be looked at first and in his experience at the Dept of Boating and Waterways, 6" freeboard works for most people. It solves many problems. Best to keep it simple. Ellen pointed out that it makes sense to match boat types to places, as geology and conditions may exclude certain boat types. David thought simple yet flexible made sense. Bill added that a good design can include both high freeboard and low freeboard with a landing in between (high: 16-18" for power boats and low: 6 – 10").

Ann informed the group that as Water Trail staff revisits all the sites to collect additional information, they are considering path of travel from the arrival point (ex., parking lot or bus stop), bathroom, and whatever is available to get to the water (gangway and float, beach, etc.) as the main points to consider. [Other site features and their accessibility are noted as well, such as drinking fountains, picnic tables, for example.] Wendy brought up wave action and how important it is to consider it. EZ Dock has been evaluated by the Port; will not work in areas with wave/wind action.

Ann briefly explained the concept of program-level accessibility – that the Water Trail is striving to include in the network of sites many sites that work for everyone. Wendy thought it would be useful to identify which sites would benefit from ETC-type groups. Sites could be looked at somewhat like in a transition plan, with a suggested first (best) set of sites, then next set, and so on.

David said that attendants can assist, or there can be passive tools to use, to help with things like traversing beaches. Partnerships with organizations are good and make it more possible for full enjoyment and full participation. Don't need to rely solely on physical mechanisms and tools.

Jonathon Goldman emphasized identifying barriers. Provide facts so people can find out what is at a site and decide for themselves before going there. Is there ability to provide assistance at sites? Accessibility Plan does not need to prioritize. Instead, develop a stakeholder group who can make a decision to try out an area [of the Bay] and then priorities will develop.

Joy – Not every site will be fully accessible. The goal should be to have an accessible site within a reasonable distance of another accessible site. Website identification of every site on the Water Trail is important. Should include tides, wind, type of launch, whether there are accessible bathrooms. Not every site needs to have everything, but need to know which do, and need to be geographically dispersed.

Gilda talked about the process of collecting data about sites in order to sift through and try to prioritize. Bill noted that in his experience, different counties interpret the laws differently, even within a single county. David talked about technology and how it can help make sites accessible through the availability of information. "Apple-licious" is a mobile app that was created. SF Rec and Parks created one. Apps can make information about hazards and navigation more available, with real-time information.

Joy – three areas of disabilities – mobility, vision, cognitive. Look at each of these in relation to launch and landing site types. Personally, Joy prefers beaches to low freeboard because beaches are stationary vs. floating; more stable for mobility disability. Not rocky. It depends on beach length, whether the sand is soft, though. Maybe distribute a questionnaire, asking "what is your criteria with your disability for these types of launches?" That way we can get input from those not able to make these meetings.

Questionnaire suggestions:
1. What have you experienced that worked?
2. What doesn't work, biggest barriers?
3. What's your "dream" equipment?
4. What kind of adaptive equipment do you find helpful and would you prefer?
5. What are your criteria with your disability for all these kinds of launches? (Add on what boat type.)
6. What's your favorite site and why?
7. For each landing/launch – what is your criteria?

Other questions raised by Ann during the meeting:
Is low freeboard better?
Are marinas workable?

Questionnaire Distribution: Go to organizations and ask them to distribute. Could send a press release. Ask ETC/BORP if they have a mailing list that could be used.

Ann noted that there can be problems with privacy. Asked what the group thought about the matter of self-identification. Joy said that by keeping things general with the three categories (mobility, vision, cognitive) it can work. Jonathon suggested doing a press release. Don't need to limit distribution to persons with disabilities or those that work with persons with disabilities. Can be anonymous or not. Joy thought it was important for the respondent to identify whether he/she has a disability or not. People can be given the option of whether they want to identify who they are or not. Ed said to reach people with recreational interest – not necessarily water-based. Joy added that we can use the questionnaire as a way to let people know about ETC, BORP, etc.

Contact List: Ann said that it would be helpful to have a list of people who could be contacted by those who are designing launch sites and who want input on the launch site features from persons with disabilities. Ann will follow up with an email.

Gilda talked about the difference between accessibility and real usability of a site. What is code compliant is not always usable by persons with disabilities. Wants information along these lines to be part of WT Accessibility Plan.

Next Steps:
1) Questionnaire will be drafted and sent to sub-committee for review and input.
2) Ann will consider comments made about sub-committee purpose statement and respond.
3) Sub-committee members and others present will send Ann suggestions for others to contact about joining the sub-committee.
4) Ann will email the group about the idea of a contact list to see who would like to be on it.
5) Ann and Gilda to look at compliance with code vs workable solutions.

Meeting adjourned.