



**San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail
Implementation Meeting #9
December 13 2013**

Meeting Summary – Final Draft

Attendees:

Project Management Team (PMT): Ann Buell, Laura Thompson, Kevin Atkinson (alternate to Steve Watanabe). [Ellen Miramontes was absent.]

Water Trail Staff: Galli Basson

Advisory Committee (AC): Penny Wells, Tom Boone (phone), Cecily Harris, Jennifer Heroux (phone), Paul Nixon, Brian Wiese, Cat Burns (phone), Carol Perry, Lynn Cullivan, Wendy Proctor, Joy Dryden, Laura Wilson (phone), Kevin Takei, East Bay Regional Park District alternate

Stakeholder Group and Guests: Tim Gilbert, MIG; Ashley Tomerlin, MIG; Anna Schneider, Coastal Conservancy; Nancy Peake, Marin County Parks; Francis Lo, T.Y.Lin International Group; Ralph Mihan; Amy Hutzler, Coastal Conservancy SF Bay Program Manager

Facilitation: Ariel Ambruster, Center for Collaborative Policy

Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

Buell welcomed the group. Introductions were made. Ambruster reviewed the agenda and ground rules.

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Updates and Announcements from Project Management Team, Water Trail Staff, and Advisory Committee Members

- Buell Welcomed Proctor and Dryden to the Advisory Committee as accessibility representatives. Welcomed Wilson , who has joined the Advisory Committee as the representative for California State Parks. Thanked Wiese, who is retiring from the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), and Bill Curry (not present), who is retiring from the Division of Boating and Waterways of CA State Parks, for their years of Advisory Committee service, much appreciated. Welcomed Kevin Takei as the new EBRPD representative.
- Basson Recently gave presentations about the Water Trail to San Leandro City Council, American Canyon working group, and Western Sea Kayakers. Actively working to get resolutions of support from local jurisdictions. So far, City of San Leandro, Napa County, Marin County and San Mateo County have passed resolutions supporting the Water Trail. Upcoming meetings include Foster City, American Canyon, and Suisun City.
- Wells Bay Access had its annual sojourn from Sausalito to downtown Petaluma. At Black Point it would be great to have overnight accommodations. In downtown Petaluma, it was clear that the improvements proposed are needed; the high dock is difficult to use. BASK [Bay Area Sea Kayakers] and Bay Access are working to develop a “Mud Map”: photographs of all sites taken at zero tide as a baseline to determine the tide level needed to launch a boat.
- Wiese Thanked the Committee for the Ferry Point kayak site provisional designation. Near the site, the City of Richmond has entered into negotiations with a Chinese firm to develop the Terminal One area for mixed-use commercial/residential development.
- Mihan Along the San Rafael Canal, the Beach Park Basin yacht club lease is nearing its term, and the San Rafael Park and Recreation Commission is working towards requiring a launch site for small boats. The San Rafael Canal does not currently have non-motorized boat access. The proposal still needs to be approved by City Council.
- Wells The lease states that the area could be designated in the future as a Water Trail site.

Presentation on Gateway Park (Oakland) as Potential Water Trail Site

Thompson Introduced Francis Lo of T.Y. Lin as the lead consultant for Gateway Park and the opportunities for landside and waterside recreation at this proposed destination.

Lo Introduced the Gateway Park project including its background and project objectives. The purpose of the project is to provide an entryway park to the East Bay at the base of the Bay Bridge. The project includes Bay Trail connections, an event space, active and passive recreation, a fishing pier, beach access and a new kayak launch at the beach. Parking for kayak access will be provided by the adjacent pier project as BCDC mitigation. A nearby visitor center will include restrooms. Using a piece of the Bay Bridge for access above the water is also under consideration. The project proposes to include bicycle/pedestrian access to Radio Beach on the north side of the bridge, an area with sensitive habitat. Windsurfing is currently occurring at Radio Beach. Vehicular access to the Radio Beach area would not change. The environmental process would wrap up in 2015. Comments should be sent to Peter Lee at MTC, plee@mtc.ca.gov

Looking for comments on navigational conflicts, connections to Water Trail sites, wildlife conflicts, impacts on non-motorized small boat use, accessibility, and reuse of the old Bay Bridge.

Harris Where is the next adjacent launch site?

Wells Berkeley Marina is an easy paddle away and Tidewater is not far, with Jack London Square in the middle.

Wiese There is also a planned site at the Middle Harbor Shoreline Park.

Buell California Canoe and Kayak, and Shoreline Park and Point Emery in Emeryville are also in the area.

Wells The walk from the parking lot is currently planned for 100 yards. What is needed in this plan is a turn-around so a car can be driven to the beach for drop off.

Nixon Is there any transit at all to the site?

Lo An AC Transbay bus can access the site. Coming from Oakland, you need to use the tunnel near the toll booth. There is no financial commitment, but there is discussion of running shuttles to the park from nearby BART stations. This is a public-private partnership proposal.

- Harris Great site proposal. How would you get there now?
- Lo Grand Avenue is the main access road to the park site at this time. Burma Road will be realigned and will become the main entrance to the park. Signs and large-scale artwork will help lead people to the new park.
- Proctor Is the Bay Trail connecting to the park?
- Lo Explained the plans for connecting bicycle/pedestrians, particularly from Mandela and Grand Avenue. In addition, trail improvements are in place in Emeryville to connect to the park and the bridge.
- Nixon Will there be kayak storage?
- Lo Yes, there will be kayak storage.
- Proctor Explain the details of the fishing pier.
- Lo The top of the bridge would be removed, it would be lowered closer to water, and an old Key System rail car would be installed as part of the pier to recognize the history of this use on the bridge.
- Perry From the visitor point of view, re-using the old Bay Bridge is a great story that could help us promote it. Would like to see a greening of the pier too. Likes the artist in residence and incorporating art into wayfinding materials.
- Tomerlin Suggests incorporating underwater habitat that could use the infrastructure of the bridge for support.
- Mihan Do you plan to fence the wildlife area from the public?
- Lo Yes, fencing and signs will be included.
- Ambruster Comments should be sent to Peter Lee at plee@mtc.ca.gov

Trailhead Designation and Grant Consideration: McNears Beach (Marin County)

- Basson Provided an overview of a site designation and grant improvement at McNears Beach in Marin County. The site includes a large parking lot, a fishing pier, restroom with showers, an accessible portable restroom, picnic tables, snack facilities and other park amenities. The official, proposed launch site is close to the parking lot and park activity. A paved path leads to the site. Marin County is submitting a grant proposal for a Mobi-Mat to

improve beach access for persons with disabilities. There are other beaches within this park that can also accommodate launching activities and there is a lot of space to spread out.

Marin County Parks applied for a \$5,600 grant to install a Mobi-Mat, a hard surface material that can be put over sand to allow for wheelchair access. McNears Beach has dedicated staff that can handle periodic maintenance of the mat.

Basson reviewed the EIR elements that relate to the site. The educational sign addresses all of these issues. In addition, signs will be placed on the Marin Islands informing boaters that they are not allowed to land there.

Designation conditions: Water Trail identification sign installed; Water Trail educational sign includes messages about hunting, navigational safety, avoiding clapper rails and heron/egret rookeries (with buffer distances), and directs users not to land in marshes; approval and completion of Water Trail grant.

Wells Duck hunting happens at the same time of the year, suggests that this be on the sign.

Basson Confirmed that it is included in the sign.

Nixon Voiced support for this site.

Harris Thinks it is a great project and is especially pleased about the Mobi-Mat proposal. It will be an opportunity for us to learn how it works in the bay environment.

Wells Pointed out the mud line near the launch site; the launch site is not accessible [usable] during low tides. Also identified another location with the park to the south that is accessible [usable] during all tides. Recommends signs informing the public that there are two places to launch.

Basson Will work with Marin County on this point.

Cullivan Can you extend the mat farther, past the high tide line?

Gilbert Yes, you can and people do. It does, however, require maintenance to remove algae build up.

Peake Beach is sandy and rocky. There is a demonstration Mobi-Mat on the beach now. Taking it to the high tide line is all that is needed because you cannot

access the water during low tide. Don't have an algae problem at that location.

Nixon Penny has a good point. The designated site should work at all tides. Thinks the designated site should be the southern access point.

Basson Expects this to be an issue that we face at many sites around the bay. Will work with Marin County to put the signs at both sites and inform the public on our website about restrictions to sites. This information has been very helpful.

Peake Aware that most kayakers launch from the southern point. The other site does not have an accessible path of travel or parking spot. Starting a master plan to review these issues.

Dryden The Mobi-Mats are portable, they are heavy, but if a group wanted to use the other site, they could move the mat. Disabled kayakers know that tide information is important.

Proctor If it's portable, is it possible to move it to the other site?

Nixon There is a difference in slope and it's rocky.

Dryden The Mobi-Mat is moved often at Schoonmaker Beach.

Buell Asked for clarity on whether the mat can work over the mud.

Peake At least another 50 feet of mud beyond the beach.

Basson It would be inaccessible to all people at low tide.

Wiese The beach is very popular and the parking lot is often full. Is there a spot where the boats can be dropped off?

Peake Yes, near the start of the trail.

Tomerlin Are there plans to upgrade the restrooms at McNears?

Peake Starting a master plan now, will do incidental upgrades, but are holding off on major changes until then.

Mihan Excellent site, thanked the county, complements McInnis. Loch Lomond Marina in San Rafael on the other side. Could two mats be purchased?

- Basson There is not an accessible path of travel at the second site.
- Wiese Could the other site be graded?
- Peake Could be included in the master plan.
- Basson One of the benefits of site designation is building the relationship with the owner and getting feedback.
- Wells The rangers at McNears Beach are very helpful; during sojourns they opened the park to overnight camping during that time. Praised County Parks.
- Peake Camping needs formal approval from the County.
- Buell The resolution of support from the Parks Commission also includes Black Point and Paradise Beach as potential sites. Thanked the County for its broad support. A second grant for an additional Mobi-Mat is an attractive idea. Interested in developing a plan for a second sign. Acceptable to move forward with designation of a site that cannot be used all the time [due to tidal/mud flat restrictions].
- Proctor Does the park have a website that gives conditions at the site?
- Peake Not currently, but County will consider a link to tidal information.
- Basson The Water Trail would include this information on the website. Palo Alto Sailing Station is also inaccessible during low tides. We could have similar language for McNears Beach.
- Buell The “Mud Map” will provide practical and useful information.

~BREAK~

- Buell A reasonable approach would be not to make it an additional condition, but Water Trail staff will work with Marin County Parks to develop a sign program making the public aware of a second site.
- Wiese An excellent project with a lot of bang for the buck including an opportunity for us to learn about Mobi-Mats as a site amenity. Concurs that it should be approved.
- Proctor Designation conditions should include information on the website that the site is not accessible to everyone at all times and the other site is not

accessible. Guide people to the website to learn about the tide information. Information before and/or while they are visiting. Thinks it is a great site.

- Dryden Not just high tide, but tide levels when the site is not accessible. For instance, three feet or below, as an example.
- Basson Educational sign includes website and QR code. Hesitate putting a specific tide level on the sign because tides can change. Work to balance providing information and relying on people to plan for their trips.
- Wells Supports this site for designation and grant.
- Proctor Wants language that informs the public that the site is most accessible within 3 hours of high tide.
- Dryden Suggested identifying the location of the Mobi-Mat.
- Proctor Pier 52 included a custom sign.
- Wells By the time Marin County completes the master plan, the “Mud Map” will be completed. This information will enable people to have specific information.
- Proctor As a condition of approval, wants a sign that states that Mobi-Mat goes to a certain level.
- Dryden Wants to rely on the website: Mobi-Mat reaches to a three-foot tide, for example.
- Buell Discuss whether we make additional signs that address tidal issues that could be a companion to education sign. An extra reminder at the site. PMT will discuss.

There was Advisory Committee consensus guidance supporting the site and the grant application.

The Project Management Team decided in favor of conditional designation and grant approval. Conditions of designation were unchanged from those presented by Basson [see above, p. 4]. An additional suggestion of linking the Water Trail website information to the Marin County website was made.

Water Trail Accessibility Plan Update

- Proctor Provided a recap of the Accessibility Subcommittee meeting. Described Pier 70/Crane Cove Park and the Port of San Francisco’s work on developing this new urban park. The subcommittee provided feedback to Port staff on water access. This project would potentially provide a beach and sandy launch for boaters, an aquatic center, Mobi-Mat access and possible new stabilized surface for launching. The project was well received by the sub-committee.
- Buell Provided an overview of the Water Trail Accessibility Plan survey. The purpose was to understand the kind of enhancements that could improve access. Twenty-eight responses were received, primarily through clubs and organizations. Windsurfers or kite boaters were not represented in the survey. Responses were from people ages 51 and over. Comments confirmed that accessibility is greatly increased through clubs and groups. A map was included [in presentation], showing the sites that survey respondents currently use most. Survey informed us that the proximity of a site to someone’s home or office is important, and boating conditions are important. Challenge of serving all launch site types, all boat types, and the broad range of disabilities was addressed. Accessible sites need to be distributed around the bay. Another map showed the distribution of sites at which respondents desired enhancements for accessibility. Geo-region concept in the Accessibility Plan is a mechanism addressing distribution of sites.
- Gilbert Shared guiding principles for the Accessibility Plan: 1) The Water Trail vision embraces accessibility, 2) Water Trail program expects site owners to make the sites as accessible as possible, 3) Water Trail will work with site owners to turn concept into reality, iterative process, 4) Water Trail Plan will provide owners with information that will help them implement accessibility improvements, technical solutions and obligations under the ADA, resources for getting more information on accessibility guidance, serve as a useful toolkit, 5) Recognition that there are a variety of disabilities, certain enhancements will not address all needs, 6) Acknowledge the specific needs of different boating types, not one size fits all, 7) Implementation of the Water Trail program for an entire range of users, 8) Programmatic accessibility – not all sites will be accessible to all boats and all people. Make sure sites are distributed through geo-regions and boat types, 9) Will not prescribe that certain sites are accessible, will not pre-determine what those sites will be, 10) Work with the Water Trail committee, sub-committee and owners over time. Accessibility will be a component of every designation without prescribing ahead of time.
- Perry Sounds in line with everything we have been working towards. Likes the formal structure, sounds reasonable.

- Gilbert Draft plan expected in January/February 2014.
- Mihan Will the plan have different classifications of accessibility? Not every site is premier accessibility. So that someone with a disability can use the plan to find a site that best suits them.
- Gilbert Will avoid classification system, but will definitely describe the improvement so that people can make decisions for themselves.
- Buell The website will be a key resource for dissemination of this kind of information.
- Dryden For visually impaired people who don't use website, have you considered an audio form?
- Gilbert Websites are accessible to people with visual impairments through speaking browsers. Captions and tags are used to convey information about images.
- Basson All pages on the website are accessible by running it through a program.
- Wiese Will the plan be able to designate any sites as accessible?
- Gilbert Concept of an accessibility stamp becomes very difficult. Stay away from words like compliant, but instead frame as accessibility improvements.
- Proctor Helpful if it is more specific, such as parking spaces, restrooms.
- Gilbert Can have a symbol on the map, but would need companion website language.
- Proctor Use pop-up boxes on a map that provides information right there. Has an example.
- Dryden There is an assumption that an accessibility symbol presumes a facility that is fully accessible. Agrees with the idea of not classifying.
- Basson A way to balance is to have guidance materials or a list of sites that have the most accessible features so people will not have to go through the entire list. Also include lists of best beaches, etc.
- Proctor Could be a tool that could help people plan their trip based on what type of experience they are looking for. Such as sites that work well for specific types of boats.

Annual Assessment of Designated Sites after All Conditions Met

Buell Annual assessment of all sites occurs to make sure that what was designated is still in operation. It's also an opportunity to have a site owner check-in. A site-specific review form was shared. Illustrated the annual assessment form and data collection through one site: Alviso.

Proctor Will there be an annual review of every site that is designated?

Buell Yes, the anniversary date would be the time when designation was formalized and conditions were met.

Wells Yes!

There was Advisory Committee and Project Management Team consensus for final designation of Alviso Marina County Park [i.e., all conditions have been met].

Public Comment

No comments.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.