

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation

October 5, 2006

**LOS ANGELES MARITIME INSTITUTE  
TOPSAIL YOUTH PROGRAM *SWIFT OF IPSWICH* RESTORATION**

File No. 06-079

Project Manager: Neal Fishman/Carol Arnold

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to disburse up to \$200,000 to the Los Angeles Maritime Institute to repair the tall ship *Swift of Ipswich* for use as a waterfront attraction and a sailing classroom

**LOCATION:** The *Swift of Ipswich* is docked at Berth 84, foot of 6<sup>th</sup> St., Los Angeles Harbor, San Pedro (Exhibit 1: project Location and Map).

**PROGRAM CATEGORY:** Urban Waterfront Restoration and Education

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**EXHIBITS**

Exhibit 1: Project Location and Site Map

Exhibit 2: Photographs

Exhibit 3: News Article

Exhibit 4: Letters of Support

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**RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:**

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31000 *et seq.* of the Public Resources Code:

“The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes disbursement of an amount not to exceed two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) to the Los Angeles Maritime Institute to repair the tall ship *Swift of Ipswich*, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to the disbursement of any Conservancy funds, the Association shall submit for review and approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy (“Executive Officer”) a budget, schedule, final designs and plans, and any contractors and subcontractors to be employed;
2. The Los Angeles Maritime Institute shall identify the Coastal Conservancy as a sponsor of the *Swift of Ipswich* on educational materials, advertisements, and publications, in a manner that shall be approved by the Executive Officer of the Conservancy.”

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

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“Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the State Coastal Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed project is consistent with Section 31119 (regarding education projects) and Chapter 7 (regarding urban waterfronts) of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines adopted by the Conservancy on January 24, 2001.
3. The Los Angeles Maritime Institute is a private nonprofit organization existing under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, and whose purposes are consistent with Division 21 of the California Public Resources Code.”

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**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

This project will result in the restoration of the historic 70’ topsail schooner *Swift of Ipswich* to provide a waterfront attraction in the Los Angeles Harbor and an educational and character-building experience for disadvantaged Southern California youth through the Los Angeles Maritime Institute’s (“Institute”) TopSail Youth Program (Exhibit 2: Photographs). Built in 1938, the *Swift* was purchased by the Institute in 1992 to serve as one of the TopSail Youth Program’s sailing and training vessels. It has been in service most of that time, but was recently retired due to the effects of aging and disrepair.

The TopSail Youth Program (“Program”) is geared to serve young adolescents who have been impacted by poverty, addiction and/or dysfunctional home environments. Often dropping out of school, these “at-risk” youth are in desperate need of positive experiences and relationships that can help them transition out of adolescence into a productive adulthood (Exhibit 3: News Article).

The Program has provided a quality learning experience for over 45,000 young people who have sailed on its vessels over the past 14 years. Many of these children had never even seen the ocean, let alone sailed upon it. Program volunteers who crew and teach aboard the ships, have helped many students overcome negative patterns of behavior by treating them with dignity, respect and confidence, and encouraging them to work in a collaborative manner. In addition to sailing duties, participants become the fire department, plumbers, engineers and cooks. In this environment, every person aboard is challenged physically, mentally, and emotionally. Courses are offered as both single-day experiences, as well as longer, multi-day programs.

The *Irving Johnson* and *Exy Johnson*, both 111’ brigantines, are the tall ships currently being used by the Program. Sailing aboard one of these larger ships is most appropriate for older students within the seventh to ninth grade range.. The smaller *Swift of Ipswich* is well suited for smaller and younger groups within the fourth to seventh grades.

Unfortunately, the *Swift’s* age of 67 years and many years of service have taken a toll and she is no longer suitable for use by the Program in her present condition. By upgrading the *Swift*, she will become available at least 200 days a year for the next 20 years to help fulfill the Program’s growing demand from teachers, counselors and parents of younger aged children. The restoration of the *Swift* will be about one-fifth the cost and substantially faster than the three-year time frame required to construct a new vessel. An experienced crew of volunteers will assist with the reconstruction.

In addition to providing the means for a quality educational experience, the restoration of the Swift will enhance the scenic and historic resources of the Los Angeles Harbor waterfront.

Restoration tasks on the *Swift* will include the renewal of all deck planking, the existing water tank, a major portion of the electrical system, and the cap rail. Once the decking is removed, more work will likely be required on the underlying structures. In addition, the port diesel oil tank will be removed and scraped, the chain plate will be repaired, and surveys will be conducted to determine possible future work.

The Los Angeles Maritime Institute is highly qualified to take the lead on this restoration effort. It has operated the TopSail Youth Program for 14 years, including overseeing the construction and maintenance of the two brigantines currently in use. During the summer of 2005, with the help of a Conservancy grant, the Institute organized the Los Angeles Tall Ships Festival in cooperation with two other nonprofit organizations coordinating festivals in San Diego and San Francisco. The 2005 Tall Ships Festivals were highly successful, attracting over one million visitors to the three waterfronts.

#### **Site Description:**

The Los Angeles Maritime Institute is headquartered in the Los Angeles Harbor in San Pedro. The TopSail Youth Program works out of the Institute's office at the end of Berth 84. The ships currently used for the program are the two 111' brigantines, the *Irving Johnson* and *Exy Johnson*. The 70' *Swift of Ipswich* has been in service to the Program for many years but has fallen into disrepair. Designed to replicate a tall ship of the 1770's, she is a beautiful ship with nine sails set on 14 spars and a figurehead bow. All three ships used by the Program are kept at the Los Angeles Harbor, providing a scenic attraction for visitors to the waterfront, and educational and public access opportunities during tall ship festivals.

**Project History:** In 1938, William Albert Robinson ordered the construction of the 70' topsail schooner, the *Swift of Ipswich*, to be built along the lines of an earlier *Swift*, an American made brig first noted by the British Admiralty in 1778 when it sailed into the Deptford Dock in London. Robinson had sailed around the world in a 32-foot Alden ketch, and later had sailed from New York out to the Galapagos Islands. In 1937, he established a building yard at Ipswich, Massachusetts, to construct traditional craft, not out of sentiment, but because he believed they would make the best cruising vessels.

Robinson made few changes to the design of the original *Swift*, other than to scale it down to a somewhat smaller and simpler version. The *Swift of Ipswich* was built by experienced Essex County shipwrights, men who had worked on famous Gloucester racing and fishing vessels. Satisfied with his creation, Robinson wrote that the *Swift* proved under sail to be "all that her famous predecessors were – fast, able, comfortable and...safe."

Some years later, Anderson sold the *Swift* to the actor James Cagney and his brother, setting off its movie career as an historic ship in Hollywood films. She was later put on display in a Southern California lagoon, then spent some years as a U.S. Coast Guard certified charter boat.

In 1992, Captain Jim Gladson, a retired science teacher, realized a life-long dream by leading the effort to found the Los Angeles Maritime Institute. Captain Gladson envisioned a youth sailing program designed to meet the needs of a large community of under-served youth in Southern California. Shortly after, the Institute purchased the *Swift of Ipswich* with the help of a loan from a local foundation. Operating as the Topsail Youth Program, the group quickly became

known throughout Southern California as a sponsor of quality sailing and learning adventures for youth. The loan was paid back in only three and a half years through the generosity of hundreds of local supporters. The *Swift* was in service with the Program for 14 years, but was recently retired because of needed repairs.

Due to the success of the Program and increased demand from local youth agencies, the Institute oversaw the construction of two 111' brigantines designed and built specifically for the Program, an estimated eight million dollar project using funds raised from local foundations, individuals and the Port of Los Angeles. During the 14 years since its founding, the Program has provided over 40,000 youth with sailing and educational adventures. During the 2004-2005 school year alone, over 5,000 youth sailing days were accrued by students from 67 different schools and youth organizations.

In 2005, The Conservancy provided a grant to the Los Angeles Maritime Institute to help coordinate the 2005 Summer Tall Ships Festival, as part of a three-city effort to educate the public about tall ships and maritime history. The festivals were highly successful, attracting over one million visitors to the waterfronts of San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego.

**PROJECT FINANCING:**

|                                   |               |                  |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Coastal Conservancy               |               | \$200,000        |
| Other:                            |               |                  |
| Confidence Foundation             | 50,000        |                  |
| Weingart Foundation               | 100,000       |                  |
| Small Foundations and Fundraising | 76,566        |                  |
| Income from Ship Lease            | <u>50,000</u> | 276,566          |
| In-Kind:                          |               |                  |
| Shipyard Donation of Labor        |               | <u>200,000</u>   |
| <b>Total Project Cost:</b>        |               | <b>\$676,566</b> |

The anticipated source of Conservancy funds is an appropriation to the Conservancy from the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Fund (Proposition 40). Proposition 40 allows funds to be used for restoring land and water resources in accordance with Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, the Conservancy's enabling legislation. As described below, the proposed project will help restore the Los Angeles waterfront by rehabilitating the *Swift of Ipswich* to enhance its scenic value as a waterfront attraction, and to function as an interpretive and educational resource for visitors. In addition, the project is appropriate for funding under Proposition 40, since the Conservancy grant will be matched by monies from other sources.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:**

This project is consistent with Section 31119 (regarding education projects) and Chapter 7 (regarding urban waterfront projects) of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, in the following respects:

Under Section 31119(a)(1), the Conservancy may “undertake educational projects for pupils in kindergarten to grade 12, inclusive, relating to the preservation, protection, enhancement and maintenance of coastal resources,” and to “award grants to nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and public agencies for those purposes...”

Under Section 31307, the Conservancy may award grants to public agencies and nonprofit organizations for the restoration of urban waterfront areas. Under Section 31308, the Conservancy may provide up to the total cost of any urban waterfront project.

The tall ship *Swift of Ipswich* is an integral part of the Los Angeles Maritime Institute waterfront location as are its other historic ships, the *Irving Johnson* and *Exy Johnson*. The ships enhance the scenic resources of the Los Angeles Harbor waterfront, and, serve as outdoor museums.

Additionally, the restoration of the *Swift of Ipswich* will enable the vessel to sail safely and to provide a public access and quality learning experience for thousands of at-risk youth. Its visibility and usefulness will have a positive impact on efforts to restore other waterfronts on the Coast and to attract tourists to these areas.

This project is also consistent with Section 31305, in that it exhibits “innovation in sensitively integrating man-made features into the natural coastal environment.” The Los Angeles Maritime Institute, the owner of the *Swift of Ipswich*, uses ships in addition to buildings to display maritime history. Scenic as well as historic, the ships blend well into the land and water environment of the Los Angeles waterfront.

Under Section 31316, the Conservancy may undertake projects and award grants for activities that facilitate environmental education related to ocean resource education or maritime history, including the development related amenities and infrastructure.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S  
STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) AND OBJECTIVE(S):**

The project is consistent with **Goal 3, Objective A** of the Conservancy’s Strategic Plan, in that the presence of tall ships in a waterfront location promotes tourism, and the renovation of the *Swift of Ipswich* will protect and restore an important cultural and historic resource.

Additionally, the project will seek to restore a waterfront facility while leveraging other funds. Finally, the project will increase public use and enjoyment of the Los Angeles waterfront.

**CONSISTENCY WITH  
CONSERVANCY’S  
PROJECT SELECTION  
CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:**

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines adopted January 24, 2001, in the following respects:

**Required Criteria**

**Promotion of the Conservancy's statutory programs and purposes:** See the "Consistency with Conservancy's Enabling Legislation" section above.

**Consistency with purposes of the funding source:** See "Project Financing" section above.

**Support of the public:** The project is supported by Senator Alan Lowenthal and Assemblymember Betty Karnette, as well as numerous educational and youth advocacy groups (Exhibit 4: Letters of Support).

**Location:** The *Swift of Ipswich* is permanently docked along the Los Angeles waterfront near the Los Angeles Maritime Museum.

**Need:** The *Swift of Ipswich* has not had a major overhaul since the Program began using it in 1992. Due to its age of 67 years, it is in need of repairs in order to maintain it as a safe and active sailing vessel. The Institute does not have sufficient funds to complete this work.

**Greater-than-local interest:** The Los Angeles Maritime Institute, home of the *Swift of Ipswich* and two other tall ships, is a prominent institution in Los Angeles and is visited by tourists from a wide area. The Institute operations the TopSail Youth Program for the benefit of school children from throughout the Southern California area.

**Additional Criteria**

**Innovation:** The Swift of Ipswich and its two partner tall ships are part of an innovative educational program to promote not only an understanding of maritime history, but a sense of pride and cooperation in students who partake in its educational sailing trips. Restoring the ship will contribute to the appreciation of waterfronts and ocean environments.

**Leverage:** Conservancy funds will provide less than one-third of project costs. Foundations, private donations, lease income and in-kind services will complete the funding package.

**Readiness:** The restoration of the *Swift of Ipswich* is ready to begin and will be completed by Fall of 2007.

**CONSISTENCY WITH  
LOCAL COASTAL  
PROGRAM POLICIES:**

The Local Coastal Program of Los Angeles County contains policies to develop its waterfront to serve open space and park functions, and to make it both physically and visually accessible to the public. In Section I (Land Use: Relationship to Port of Los Angeles) of the City of Los Angeles' San Pedro Coastal Land Use Plan (certified by the Coastal Commission on May 8, 1991), the Port of Los Angeles is recognized as "the predominate influence on the economic well-being of

the [San Pedro] community”, with a specific objective to “promote the development of the Port to meet the needs of...recreational users.” Restoration of the *Swift of Ipswich* will provide increased public access and recreational use on the part of students participating in the TopSail Youth Program. It will also preserve an historic and scenic resource that will contribute to the economic well being of the San Pedro community by providing a draw for tourists visiting the waterfront.

**COMPLIANCE**

**WITH CEQA:** Repair of the *Swift of Ipswich* is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under 14 Cal. Code of Regulations Section 15301 because it involves the repair of an existing facility, structure, or mechanical equipment not involving significant expansion of existing use.