



OUR VYC SEAWALL: First of regular reports.

I started working on this in July and took responsibility for it in December. I knew it would be a big job and that considerable help from fellow shipmates would be required. I underestimated the size of the job and the help that would be needed. It turns out there are many more ways for things to stall, go sideways, multiply into more subjobs, and cost more than I knew. That said, the news right now is very good.

The project chosen by the Board is the building of a new seawall to extend from the corner of the City marina to the concrete corner of the promenade to the South. It will be 1355' long and add 190,000 square feet to the harbor. Made of interlocking 40 and 50' steel panels with a cap channel, it will take about 4-6 weeks to install. Depending on regulatory demands, we at some point will also have to remove the old wall.

In order to build a project like this in the water here, we need five main things: Money, a Lease, Local permits, Downbay permits, and a Contractor. Since December, we have had the MONEY. We have a loan through Cathay Bank for up to \$2,000,000. About \$600,000 was spent to purchase most of the last half of the steel needed for the wall. Since last February, we have had the CONTRACTOR through Western Docks (Cooper Crane.)

The LEASE was a very difficult aspect of the project. We technically lease our land and harbor from the Redevelopment Agency that leases from the City. Many issues arose over the last year or two during which the negotiations have taken place. Installation of new docks, size of the new area, subleases, environmental responsibility, cost predictions, and other terms had to be resolved. Delays due to slow turnaround time on revisions given to the City were the biggest obstacle but eventually the VYC Board agreed with the Economic Development Department, the City Counsel's office and the Property Management people on wording. Final approval still has to come from the City Council sitting as the Redevelopment Board but we will have a strong endorsement from the staff.

LOCAL PERMITS require engineering, and environmental analysis before approval. Through the beginnings by Clausen Engineering up to the recent efforts of Scott Noble, PE we have now resolved these questions and have an appropriate design and drawings. The environmental analysis has been the sticking point. Since July, we have heard of pending contracts between Western Docks and four or five different consultants. Recently, the Yacht Club directly hired David Friedland, PE to do our City CEQA (Cal. Environments Quality Act) work. He will do a full presentation to the City including hydrological, biological, and other studies. This is the most promising development in the last three months. We are all very pleased to have David working for us.

The City can then require more in depth studies if needed. They can double check the work with experts of their choosing. Once satisfied they have adequate information, the

City can either require adjustments to the project or give a Negative Declaration saying the environmental effects are negligible. At that point they hand over the evaluation to the Downbay permitting agencies.

DOWNBAY PERMITTING agencies include BCDC, the Army Corps of Engineers, Water Quality Control, and State Fish and Game. We have received a “no interest” letter from the State Fish and Game (including the return of a \$4,000 check), and the State Lands Commission. BCDC has a reputation for requiring expensive and onerous = in exchange for permits however we do have the help of the Bay Planning Commission, a non-profit organization designed to help get jobs finished and to assist in keeping BCDC demands reasonable. The issues there are likely to be whether we have to put a \$400,000 epoxy coating on the steel, the timing of removal of the old seawall, and any other measures they feel are required. Other agencies should not pose any problem. They will not look seriously at these matters until the City approves the CEQA concerns.

Once we have reached agreement with BCDC, the project will come back to Vallejo for a formal permit with the City and formal acceptance of the lease agreement by the RDA. there are “Public comment “ periods of thirty days interspersed in at least two places in this whole process but at the end, the contractor goes to work.

There are other issues which I will explain in the future, but that brings us all up to date as of 2/23. If you have other questions, ask a Board Member or me.

Oh, one other thing... The way big things get done is to put many hands and contributions together. We can do this if we pull together. That means putting “would’ve / should’ve” behind us and acting from the place we are today. Why shouldn’t we have 100% member support of this project with all members contributing according to their own means? The seawall is vital to the continuing life of the club. No one disagrees with that. We have to get it done. It will take more than the loan. It will take help from each one of us.

Reflect for a minute on what good qualities you have enjoyed over the years at your yacht club. Reflect on how long you have been here and how long you will be here. Every person who is withholding a contribution to the seawall is voting with his or her wallet against the life of the club. Make the donation. Encourage others to make a donation. We all can do without naysayers, negative thinking and the false drama of a “parade of horrors.” Recognize “would’ve / could’ve” as what it is: irrelevant now.

I am excited now with our new consultant and the encouragement of the Senior City Planner and the BPC executive. This thing is going to move. It won’t be long (by permit standards) and we will be splashing steel!

Jack Vetter
Chair, Seawall Committee