



TREASURE ISLAND SAILING CENTER
Launching Point for New Horizons

July 28, 2015

V. Fei Tsen, Chair
TIDA Board of Directors
One Avenue of the Palms, Suite 241
San Francisco, CA 94130

Dear Madame Chair,

I am the President of the Treasure Island Sailing Center (also known as TISC or "the Sailing Center"). The Sailing Center has engaged for years with TIDA staff and the Marina developers. We (the TISC Board of Directors) are extremely concerned that the scale of the Marina, as most recently proposed, with an elongated wave attenuator and its footprint extended to the East of the Cove, will significantly reduce and negatively impact youth sailing and community recreation in the Cove. We want to work with you and all the parties involved to preserve the Cove as a unique and valuable public resource while accommodating reasonable commercial goals.

Clipper Cove is a unique gem in the Bay. It offers a safe and protected Cove for public recreation that is not found elsewhere in the Bay. Once the Marina is built, Clipper Cove will be impacted forever and the scope of Community access to the Cove for safe sailing, kayaking and paddle boarding will be severely limited. We are in support of a Marina being built; we just cannot support the current planned size of the Marina. We attach a drawing that, based on our expertise and research of other similar Sailing Centers around the country, outlines the scope of the space the public needs and deserves to recreate safely in Clipper Cove.

HISTORY

We were told from the beginning that it had already been decided that the Marina would be in Clipper Cove and we needed to co-exist with the Marina. Essentially, they were at the table first. We were provided a drawing of the Marina (which extended the length of the cove to our current location) and negotiations started from there. We understood that we were an unknown venture and entity with little idea of what public demand would be for a community sailing center in San Francisco.

Over the years, concerns for long term inclusion in the Development Plan substantially influenced how hard we pushed this issue and we were still growing and developing as an organization. Yet, we have continually pushed over time trying, asking and pleading that the Marina be pushed as far to the West as possible to retain a protected area in the Cove for recreation and education. Starting 6 months ago, when we realized the Development Schedule was progressing, we had multiple meetings with Almar Representatives to discuss the scope of the Marina, but with minimal progress. We asked them to consider moving the Marina to the west while maximizing the space to the South. Instead, they moved slightly to the West, exaggerated the wave attenuator extension to the South but kept the slips far to the north inside the wave attenuator. The new plan cuts off the Southwest end of the cove to small sailboats (due to the long wave attenuator) and wastes space inside the Marina footprint while taking up valuable space in the Cove, pushing recreational and instructional boating into an area of current.

When we began our programs in 1999, we had no way of knowing how successful a Community Sailing Center in San Francisco would be. Fortunately, **time has allowed us to see what is possible.** Currently, we teach over 1800 kids per year, 89% who qualify for a partial or full scholarship. We also have public events that attract between 550 to 700 people in a day who want to recreate on the Cove. We expect the demand for public sailing and other water recreational opportunities on the Cove to rise dramatically over the next 10 years as Island development proceeds. We are piloting a program that provides low cost opportunities to the public so kids, adults and families alike can recreate in the Cove. We expect the demand to grow considerably as we develop the Sailing Center. Additionally, the shoreside space and facilities outlined in the development plan is perfect and will allow us to teach thousands more kids each year, if we have enough safe, protected water to do so.

Pier 12, Treasure Island, San Francisco
698 California Ave., Bldg. #112, San Francisco CA 94130
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RECENT FINDINGS

We have had various meetings this year with Almar and TIDA Staff where we have consistently presented the minimum water space required for an instructional sailing program of our size, an area based on other Sailing Centers that have similar scopes of programs. Even the minimum area (1600 foot diameter) would sacrifice a substantial portion of safe water in the Cove that is currently in use (see drawing). However, due to the Marina's foot print, the recreational area has been placed so far to the east of the Cove that a third of it is in strong current. This summer we laid out marks to test the feasibility of running our programs in the suggested location. We have learned that TISC will completely lose a critical safety zone, an area at the mouth of the Cove that allows us to help/rescue sailors before they drift into the Bay and the shipping channel. The 1600 foot diameter sailing circle is essentially 1100 feet since a third of it is in an area that is not suitable for beginners or for the community at large to recreate safely. **A sailing area of this size will require us to re-structure our programs in a way that will limit service offerings to our youth sailors, adaptive sailors (sailors with special needs) and the public at large.** The reduced space will limit the number of boats that can safely be on the water at the same time. This means that, in our opinion, a large scale community program cannot progress to meet the needs of our community. The summer programs, where we have the most number of boats on the water at once, will have to be re-organized and growth will be limited. Nor will Set Sail Learn be able to grow to meet the needs of the 91 San Francisco Public Elementary Schools, each have up to four 4th to 5th grade classes. The public recreational program (sailboats, kayaks, SUPs) that ensures public access to the Cove will be limited in scope to ensure safety.

SUMMARY

We believe this is a critical time for citizens, public officials and other constituents to fully review the scale of the marina project and ask you to initiate a public discussion on the scope and location/ position of the Marina in the Cove. It is our understanding that public comment, which informed the General Re-use for Treasure Island, took place in 1995 to 1996 before we were even in existence and that the public comment on the EIR took place a decade ago. Yet so much has changed since then. We have the opportunity to ensure that Clipper Cove remains accessible to *all* San Franciscans. There is only one Sailing Center in San Francisco and it ensures that any San Franciscan has the opportunity to enjoy and connect with the Cove; yet there are multiple Marinas each of which cater to a much smaller proportion of the population. We hope you will consider revisiting this critical topic. We look forward to supporting this process so a Marina and Sailing Center can be built in a way that provides a destination, safe recreation and public access to Clipper Cove. I am available at your convenience to discuss any questions that you or other Commissioners will have. I deeply appreciate your time and consideration.

Best Regards,

Carisa Harris Adamson, PhD
Treasure Island Sailing Center
Board of Directors, President
415-640-0563 cell
carisa.harris-adamson@tisailing.org
<http://www.tisailing.org>

cc: Larry Mazzola, Jr. Vice-President
Jean-Paul Samaha, Secretary
Mark Dunlop, Chief Financial Officer
Linda Fadeke Richardson
Jeff Kositsky
Supervisor Jane Kim- Ex- Officio
Karen Knowles-Pearce, Citizens Advisory Board, Chair

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Mission Statement

The Treasure Island Sailing Center (TISC) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to create opportunities for our community to learn and grow through sailing. Ultimately we envision every person having the chance to experience the water through sailing and other aquatic recreational activities.

Vision Statement

To share the experience of sailing, fostering a lifelong connection with the water surrounding us.

Values

Our guiding tenets that help us **RAISE** awareness and appreciation for the water, while offering opportunities for growth, self-reliance and stewardship for all in our community.

- **Respect**
- **Accessibility**
- **Inclusiveness**
- **Synergistic**
- **Empowerment**

The Problem

TISC was created to solve a problem- the lack of consistent access to the water. We are surrounded by oceans, lakes, bays and rivers and not enough people have a connection with them. Access to sailing on San Francisco Bay has been challenging, with barriers such as the high cost of boats, high cost of lessons, and membership requirements that often accompany access points to the water. The result is that the joys of sailing, and all that accompany it, are left to just a few, most of whom have substantial financial resources. And the awareness of the sustainable recreation offered by our waters is minimal. Additionally, there is an inequity of resources among our youth that cannot be ignored. The divide of quality education and recreational opportunities among socioeconomic classes is enormous and growing. All children deserve the opportunity to develop into confident, self-reliant, healthy and happy individuals.

The Solution

Like other sports, sailing has so many benefits to offer an individual and a community. It is a forum for the development of important life skills such as self-reliance, goal setting, and communication. It develops confidence and self-discipline. The multifaceted nature of sailing develops cause-effect analytic approaches to solving problems. These are skills that our youth need to care for themselves, their environment and their community. Additionally, the appreciation and stewardship of our environment can be impacted by creating a connection between communities and the water that surrounds them.

Community Sailing Centers are an important part of the solution. By providing affordable access to boats and education, we can facilitate change that connects communities with the water around them and change that leaves lasting imprints on the youth of our community.

What we do

TISC teaches life skills and respect for the environment through sailing. We provide facilities, boats, and sailing instruction for children and adults of all ages, skill levels, physical and mental abilities, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds. TISC students participate in positive, skill building experiences learning water safety, responsibility, respect, communication, teamwork, leadership, and appreciation for their environment. TISC is a large scale, multiuser year round sailing school on San Francisco Bay operated by dedicated staff and volunteers, emphasizing full community involvement by offering access to all, regardless of financial need.

Some of the programs offered by TISC include:

- Set Sail Learn, our largest and most impactful offering that began in 2013, is a free program offered to San Francisco Public School 4th & 5th grade classes that teaches Science & Math through Sailing. We will have 48 classes and close to 1400 participants this year

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- Scholarships that ensure that no child has ever been turned away. Kids who experience sailing through Set Sail Learn can always return for camp.
- Over 1800 individual kids per year, 89% who qualify for a partial or full scholarship
- Over 33 Community Partners in the Bay Area including Glide, Life Learning Academy, Shelter Network, Cameron House, and multiple YMCA and Boys & Girls Clubs
- A program for the Visually Impaired and a co-able program that accommodates kids with intellectual disabilities into our classes.

We've seen an incredible rise in public participation and interest in sailing and other water-based recreational events in the Cove over the past 16 years. Consider this:

- When I taught the first class in the summer of 1999, there were 10 girls from the Life Learning Academy. Participation in our Youth Programs grew exponentially from 1999 through 2009. We now serve more than 1800 students annually. We expect this number to more than triple once we build a new Sailing Center.
- Some of the most striking comments we hear from kids include:
 - "The trip here was so fun, I have never been on the Bay Bridge or on the Bay."
 - "Why is the dock moving?"
 - "That was the most fun field trip ever. I want to come back this summer for camp."
- Between 1999 to about 2005, we had to actively convince kids, their parents/guardians and local Youth Program Directors to participate in sailing. The perception was that sailing was for the financially elite.
- Now perceptions have changed. Our kids in San Francisco know that they can sail because they have access to boats, classes, and to the Bay. They can independently sail a boat in Clipper Cove.
- **The value of kids re-evaluating their self-perceived limits is invaluable and transferrable to other aspects of their life.** We hear about all of the time from Parents and Teachers of the kids we serve.
- For our Annual Opening Day on the Bay event in April, we have between 550 to 700 people who attend, enable over 350 people to get on the water for sailing or kayaking. **There is a line from our gate that forms at least an hour before the event starts!**

Please visit us on Facebook, Twitter, our Blog (onclippercove.com) and our website (www.tisailing.org) for more information and inspiring stories, photos and videos about our programs.

NOTE:
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NOT BE USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE..

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