

June 22, 2020

Darin Calderwood, President and Elizabeth Segal, Past President  
Vancouver Rowing Club  
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Via email: [president@vancouverrowingclub.ca](mailto:president@vancouverrowingclub.ca)  
[bsegal@telus.net](mailto:bsegal@telus.net)

Dear Mr. Calderwood and Ms. Segal:

**Re: Royal Vancouver Yacht Club: Coal Harbour Marina Expansion Project (PER No. 17-113)**

Thank you for your letter of June 9, 2020 regarding the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club's proposed Coal Harbour Marina Expansion project.

**Stakeholder engagement and public consultation**

Communication regarding the port authority's stakeholder and engagement process for the proposed project was addressed in correspondence sent by Regan Elley on Friday, June 12 (attached for your convenience). Given the initial delay of receipt of the stakeholder notification letter, the port authority has provided an extension of two weeks for the Vancouver Rowing Club to submit formal comments for consideration in the review process. Please ensure all comments are received by **July 17, 2020**.

**To address comments in your email dated June 17, 2020.**

Regarding VRC access to the June 16 webinar, it is important to note that webinar links sent by the applicant were meant only for the individual recipient and not meant to be shared. Each person attending the webinar needed to receive their own link.

It would be appreciated if the Club could clarify access issues faced by their members so the applicant can be made aware prior to the June 24 webinar.

The technical difficulties faced by the applicant were unfortunate. A notice was posted during the delay, but due to the format of the platform, was small and therefore likely unnoticed by all attendees. The GoToWebinar platform used by the applicant captures data pertaining to participation. As such, the applicant will follow up with all attendees who left the webinar prior to the start and invite them to either join the June 24 webinar or to discuss the project on the telephone.

The webinar itself did run for the prescribed duration of time, 1.5 hours, as noted in the various communication materials, and ended later than planned to accommodate the late start. Due to prior commitments of members of both the applicant's and the port authority's teams, the webinar was unable to proceed longer than the allotted 1.5 hours.

The applicant chose to run the webinar with all participants in mute mode to ensure the technology worked efficiently and effectively for all. This practice is in line with other engagement processes currently run by the port authority and external organizations such as municipalities and others. It is standard for written questions to be submitted prior to or during an event.

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While we acknowledge the frustration felt by attendees, the port authority would like to reiterate that the applicant has set up a dedicated telephone number and email address to receive feedback on the proposed project. Members of the public can request to speak to the applicant directly and all calls and emails form part of the engagement summary and consideration reports, which will be reviewed as part of the PER process prior to a decision being made.

The port authority has confirmed with the applicant that GoToWebinar does not have the ability for participants to view submitted questions. We are working with the applicant to see how or if a solution can be found for the attendees to see the questions.

In a traditional face-to-face engagement process, the questions received, themes, and general feedback are summarized by subject matter experts at the end of the session. One of the positive aspects of a purely digital process is that all questions submitted are recorded (as written) and will form part of the engagement process.

In the interest of time and ensure as many questions were answered as possible, the applicant's moderator combined and paraphrased similar questions. This technique is widely used in facilitation and helps with the fluidity of the event by ensuring non-repetition. Due to the comments raised by participants during the event, the moderator amended her approach and read questions in full. However, as there were numerous questions raised by different attendees that were essentially the same question, these were not re-answered.

The applicant committed publicly to answering all questions submitted during the event. Attendees with unique questions that were not addressed during the webinar will receive an answer by email. A question and answer document detailing all the questions asked during the event is also being prepared. Once complete (with both applicant and port authority answers), the document will be:

- Emailed to all participants of the June 16 webinar
- Posted on the applicant's engagement website page
- Posted on the port authority's project permit website page
- Emailed to all participants signed up to join the June 24 webinar for reference and review

Additionally, we have reviewed your comments and have informed the applicant of your concerns with the engagement format and provided some recommendations to assist in modifying their approach for their next digital public engagement on June 24, 2020.

### **Safety standards and the channel design**

The Coal Harbour area is a multiuse waterway in which recreational powerboats and sailboats, small cruise ships and recreational rowers co-exist. Under the *Canada Marine Act*, the port authority is responsible for maintaining the safe and efficient movement of marine traffic within our jurisdiction for all port users.

In order to review the proposed expansion and increase the water lot lease, an administrative channel was designed for two functions: provide a visual representation of how all activities could be fit into Coal Harbour safely, and to help the port authority to determine areas for safe navigation and assist in considering proposed lease boundary amendments.

In November 2017, the port authority confirmed that the channel meets the 2014 PIANC Harbour Approach Channel Design Guidelines, as well as the 2010 International Federation of Rowing Associations (FISA) guidelines. The port authority's assessment of it against these standards is a technical administrative exercise to assess safety only.

During the port authority's review of the accepted channel, the strength of prevailing cross winds and tidal currents were taken into account. A waterside visual review of the channel was also undertaken, which reinforced the perspective that the channel, as re-designed, is both safe and suitable for the intended use.

Subsequently, since the port authority accepted the channel, new guidelines from Rowing Canada Aviron - 2018 "Rules of Racing" - have been issued. The channel also aligns with these guidelines.

While the channel is not a part of the RVYC application, there have been some discrepancies between the applicant's and the port authority's understanding of the channel. The port authority deems the channel to be 63.4 m.

The port authority has met with the Vancouver Rowing Club on numerous occasions, providing the opportunity for the Club to submit standards or guidelines that determine required lane width for rowing in addition to those defined by FISA and Rowing Canada Aviron. The Club has not submitted any standards for a re-evaluation of the accepted channel.

The Project and Environmental Review (PER) process defines stakeholders as adjacent tenants, municipalities', and regional and federal authorities. As such, Rowing Canada and Rowing BC are not identified as stakeholders within the PER process. We invite the Vancouver Rowing Club to reach out to these organizations for comment and incorporate any feedback received into your response, should these organizations wish to participate.

Based on industry standards, site-specific analysis, and information received to date, the port authority has determined that the channel is adequate and safe for all users. The port authority reiterates that the accepted channel design is separate from a determination of the applicants proposed marina expansion project.

#### **Elected officials**

Stakeholder notification letters were sent to the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver Parks Board on May 28, 2020, requesting feedback. Notification regarding the public engagement process was sent to Ms. Hedy Fry, M.P., Mr. Spencer Chandra Herbert, M.L.A and Mr. Johnathan Wilkinson, M.P., who had all shown interest in the permitting process on behalf of their constituents.

While the port authority has notified these stakeholders, the port authority is ultimately the federal agency responsible for the lands and waters with its jurisdiction. The PER process is how the port authority reviews and considers potential effects for all proposed project development on federal lands and waters. All feedback received during the stakeholder and public engagement process is considered as part of the PER review process prior to a decision being made.

#### **Vancouver Parks Board**

For clarity, a name change to the document labeled "Appendix D Vancouver Parks Board approval letter" on the applicant's submission package on the port authority website has been renamed "Appendix D City of Vancouver Parks Board Letter regarding boat shed design (2011)". The name change reflects that the content of the letter is limited to the Vancouver Parks Board approval for boat shed designs provided in 2011, and is the proposed boat shed design for the project. The port authority has determined that this clarification identifies that the Vancouver Parks Board approval is for boat shed design, not overall project approval. The applicant has been requested to make edits to their materials too.

#### **Consultation facilitator**

The port authority has clearly defined [public engagement](#) requirements for PER projects, supplemented with online engagement requirements during [COVID-19](#). The port authority guidelines are based on industry best practices and are used for PER, as well a number of non-PER related public engagement activities.

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The port authority does not run the engagement process undertaken by applicants. The port authority oversees public engagement to confirm it meets our requirements as outlined in our guidelines, and the materials are clear, concise and aligned with the proposed project. Port authority staff attend the in-person engagement sessions (or online digital sessions during COVID-19) to ensure they are being run as per our guidelines, to represent the port authority and answer any PER or port related questions.

Public engagement is a defined skill; the port authority often recommends that applicants hire engagement specialists to help facilitate and run PER required public engagement sessions. These facilitators are professionals, trained in engagement techniques to ensure the applicant runs a meaningful engagement process. This provides opportunities for input from the community and results in an engagement summary and consideration report to a professional standard.

As noted above, the PER process, including the public and stakeholder engagement guidelines, provides the port authority with the means by which to review and assess all proposed projects within our jurisdiction. It is a thorough process and ensures no project can proceed if it is likely to result in significant adverse environmental effects. Should a project be approved, conditions are included in the permit to avoid or mitigate significant adverse environmental and other effects.

We look forward to receiving comments from the Vancouver Rowing Club during the stakeholder engagement process and we thank you again for your letter.

Yours truly,

VANCOUVER FRASER PORT AUTHORITY



Chris Bishop  
Manager, Planning & Development

Cc Robin Silvester, President and CEO, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority  
Peter Xotta, Vice President, Vice President, Planning & Operations  
Greg Yeomans, Director, Planning & Development, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority  
Shri Madiwal, Director Operations & Security, Harbour Master, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority  
The Honourable Ms. Bernadette Jordan, P.C., Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Coast Guard  
Ms. Hedy Fry, M.P., House of Commons, Ottawa  
The Honourable Lisa Beare, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture  
Asha Bhat, Assistant Deputy Minister, Creative, Multiculturalism & Sport  
Spencer Chandra Herbert, M.L.A  
City of Vancouver Mayor and Council  
City of Vancouver Park Board

Enc. Email from Regan Elley, June 12, 2020 regarding stakeholder and engagement process