

Operator's ideas for wharf picked apart by planners

New businesses on the night from the Capitola Wharf won a Planning Commission, but it tentative approval Monday looks as if owner-operator

Rick Karleen still has a long list of problems to solve.

The major stumbling blocks for Karleen before he wins final approval of his plans to operate several concessions on and around the wharf will be the number and location of boat mooring points off Capitola Beach and the mechanics of how Karleen and his partners will handle boat launchings from the wharf.

The commissioners gave Karleen a "punch" list of problems to solve before they give him final clearance on all of his plans.

The commissioners want answers on Karleen's plans to store and sell gasoline and oil to boat customers on the wharf, to repair and sell outboard motors, the public use of the boat landing underneath the wharf, operating hours for the wharf business, and boat rentals and charter boat operations.

Karleen still needs City Council approval and Coastal Commission approval of his proposals before he can start construction on three buildings.

City Manager Steve Burrell said current plans are for Karleen to deed the wharf over to the city later this month, clearing the way for the city to use federal, state and local money to rebuild it as a public fishing wharf. Karleen's agreement with the city includes his right to lease back the concessions.

The city is now awaiting approval from the state Wildlife Conservation Board

and the federal government before asking for contractor bids on the \$600,000 rebuilding project.

Commissioner Terre Thomas challenged Karleen's plans for handling boat launching traffic without conflict with other public, pedestrian uses of the public facility.

She and commissioner Dennis Norton also wanted a detailed offshore mooring plan from Karleen.

Karleen told the commission there are several plans for getting boats from their trailers onto the wharf, and then into the water.

The first scheme was to unhitch the boat trailers from the towing vehicle at the entrance to the wharf, and then use an electric cart to tow the trailers out on the wharf to the hoist.

The plan was scrapped because fishermen objected. The current plan is to drive the cars and boat-trailers onto the wharf, turn them around at the end of the wharf, offload the boats, store the trailers on the wharf, and park the cars or trucks in a parking area the city is leasing from the Southern Pacific on Cliff Drive.

"It's of no consequence to us," Karleen said. "We can stage 11-12 boats between 5 and 7 a.m. with no problems. There are a half dozen traffic patterns (around and through the wharf buildings) that we could use.

"I prefer to drive onto the

wharf," Karleen said, of the alternatives.

Karleen also told Mrs. Thomas that he could probably get by with only 500 gallons of gasoline in storage, an amount similar to that kept by former Wharf operator Tom Shanahan.

At that point, Commissioners Craig Rowell and Howard Dysle questioned the other commissioners on the necessity for being so detailed.

"Let the Coast Guard handle it," Rowell said in exasperation, referring to the gasoline storage issue.

"I'm at a loss," said Dysle, "to determine how far we go in telling him how to run his business."

"I brought it up because it wasn't mentioned before," Mrs. Thomas said defensively. "We have a catch-all plan with the uses not enumerated."

"I'll go along with that," said Dysle, "but I don't want to tell him how to conduct his business."

"The boat launching is the only part I would like to review at the end of the year," Dysle added.

Mrs. Thomas said she objected to the idea of repairing outboard motors on the wharf.

Karleen told the Commission that he wanted to set up to 50 boat moorings during the summer off the wharf.

"Fifty moorings are way too many," said Norton. "I can't approve a use permit for that."

"There have been far more than 50 in the past," Karleen said. "We picked 50 because it was a round number. We plan to reserve five or 10 for the weekend. The remaining 40 will be saved for the long term moorer."

Norton said he was worried that such an operation would become an exclusive operation, with many boaters being frozen out of the area.

"I see it as an extension of the Santa Cruz Yacht Harbor," Norton said. "No one has the right to lease the ocean land."

Karleen said boats would still be permitted to anchor in the area, if they wanted to.

Karleen's partner, Rocky Wilkerson, acknowledged that there are unanswered problems.

"We have to work it out as best we can. There are no simple solutions to cover these problems, but we are willing to work within the confines of your suggestions."

GREEN SHEET
June 18, 1980

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