

Ventura County Harbor Department

Complaint

A complaint was received that stated the Channel Islands Harbor (CIH) was not being administered properly. It was alleged that the facilities renting space there were not maintained, to the point of shabbiness. Some slips were submerged, it was stated. Plans to encourage tourists are being promulgated to the detriment of the boating population. These plans are deemed unrealistic by the complainant. Figure 1 shows the current development pattern.

Investigations

The complainant was interviewed. The Harbor Commission was visited while it was in session. An interview with the Harbor Department Director was completed. Samples of rental agreements, both current and proposed were read. The CIH master plan draft was digested and discussed. The area was inspected physically. The City of Oxnard (City) Coastal Planner was interviewed.

Findings

- F-1 The tour of the physical property did not turn up any slips in great disrepair or sunk.
- F-2 The condo/rental area looked to be in reasonable condition.
- F-3 Tourist stores and restaurants looked reasonably well maintained, but facilities exceed current customer usage.
- F-4 The boatyards and slips appear well used and have about 75% occupancy rate.
- F-5 The leases currently in force lack adequate enforcement of the terms. The new Master Plan corrects this. Figure 1 is an excerpt from a development draft indicating the intended direction to be taken on leases.
- F-6 The new Master Plan is well presented and has been offered to the public and the City for their suggestions. It includes such things as water taxis, pedestrian walks with street crossings and bike paths (figure 2).

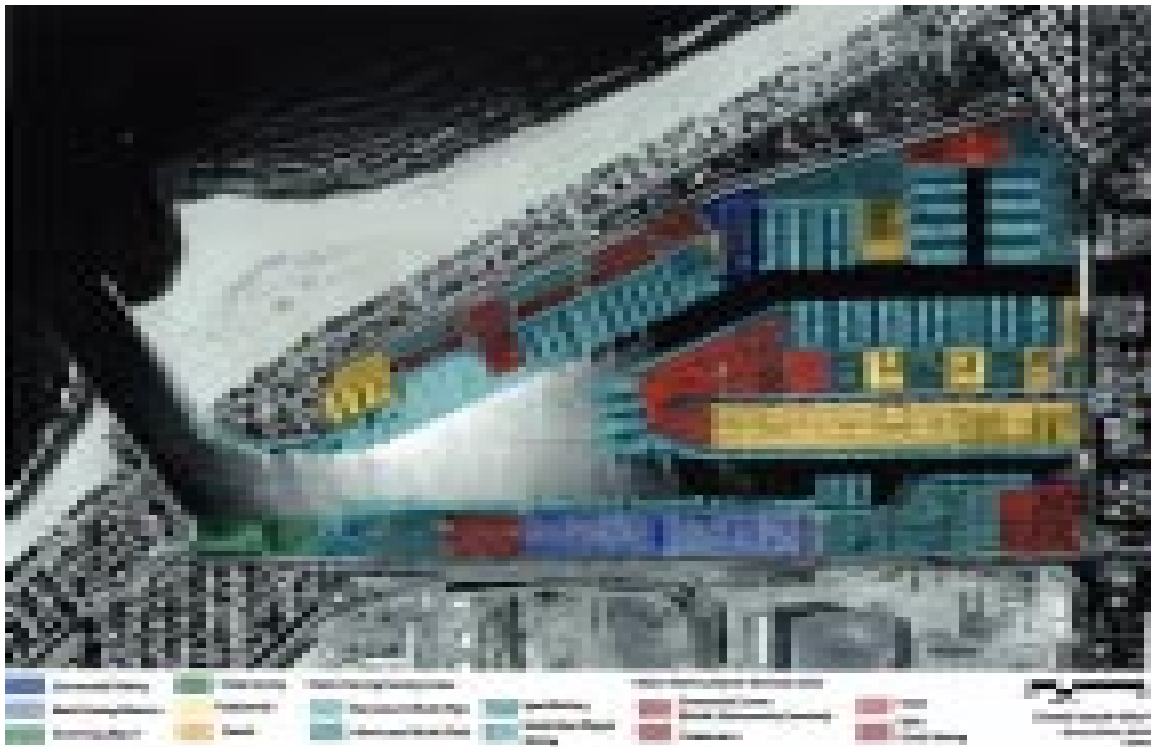


Figure 1 -Existing land and water uses by parcel



Figure 2 - Pedestrian Paths

Conclusions

- C-1 An economic downturn in California was reflected in the amount of business enjoyed by the lessees of CIH. This resulted in closure of one restaurant and the near closure of another. Slip maintenance was deferred. One slip lease changed management to the benefit of those involved. We conclude this was the reason for the “submerged” complaint. It is no longer a reality. (F1, F-3)
- C-2 The California Coastal Commission of the State of California required some responses in order to rule on acceptance of future endeavors at CIH. The County owns the water area and controls its administration; this is unincorporated area. The County owns land in the City that surrounds this water. The City controls the administration within its boundaries. The two entities came into conflict after a plan from the County was submitted to the Coastal Commission that was not discussed with the City. When the Master Plan draft was instituted, both parties were involved with a resultant easing of conflict. This change in attitude is being cultivated by both the County and the City, as it should be. (F-6)
- C-3 Public hearings on this plan have been attended by numbers of 42 to 54 or so. This is considered a good public turn-out by the Harbor District. Some of those attending represented as many as 217 other people. (F-6)
- C-4 The “eviction or nothing” type of enforcement is corrected by the new Master Plan. Leases due for modification will be brought up to the standards described in the Master Plan. Lease renewals and new leases will conform with the new Master Plan. (F-5)
- C-5 Compliance with City codes, maintenance of stormwater, drinking water, sewerage, roads and fire protection are under mutual agreement of the County and City as before. The cooperation of the two is more equally divided through better relationships. (F-2, F-6)
- C-6 Promotion of the Harbor is underway. Funds are being appropriated and spent to get professionals to structure this. The new Master Plan explains this in detail. Its application is proceeding properly. Chart 1 (F-4) is an indication of the normal course of lease expirations. Early buyouts may shorten this period of time.

Recommendations

- R-1** Approve the appropriate sections of the Master Plan. Promote more public awareness in the area around CIH.
- R-2** Continue the effort for mutual cooperation between the County and the City. Increased business for both will certainly be the result.
- R-3** The proposed weekend and weeklong packages with other Ventura County attractions certainly should be continued.
- R-4** Continue boating enhancement through appropriate boatyards, chandlers and berths.

Responses

Ventura County Harbor Department

Ground Lease Expirations

	Year of Ground Lease Expiration					
	1998-2010	2011-2015	2016-2020	2021-2025	2026-2030	2031+
No. of Leaseholds	5	2	5	5	3	3
% of Total Leases	22%	8%	22%	22%	13%	13%
Cum. % of Total Leases (based on 1998 dollars)	22%	30%	52%	74%	87%	100%

Chart 1 - Expiration of Ground Leases at the Channel Islands Harbor by year