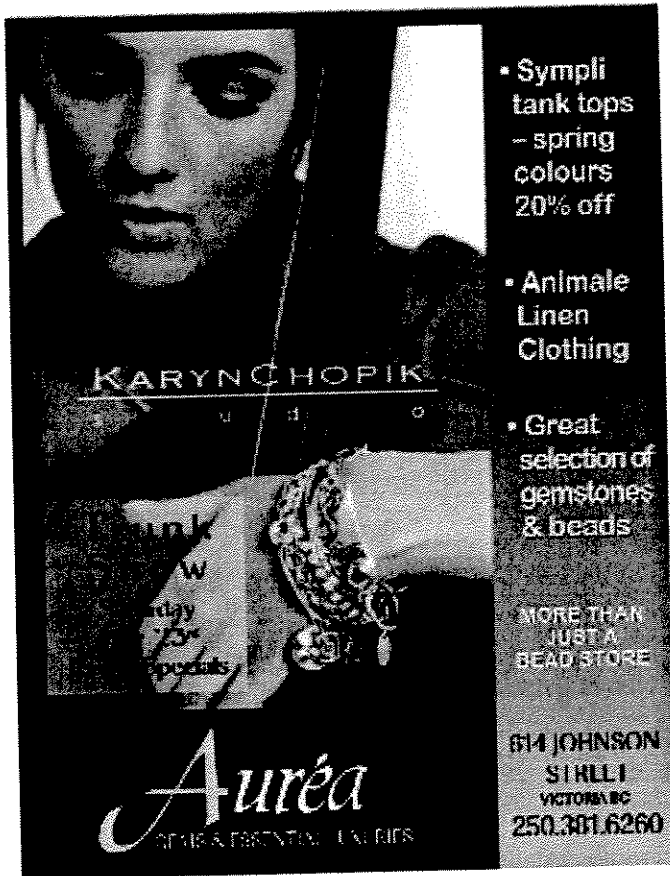


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KARYN CHOPIK

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re An argument for proportional representation

Katherine Palmer Gordon glosses over many of the flaws of STV and what we will sacrifice if we adopt it as an alternative voting system.

Since Victoria will be part of the Capital District which stretches from Port Renfrew to Greater Victoria to Salt Spring Island, local representation and accountability will be lost. The district will elect seven MLAs from among as many as 30 candidates on a single ballot. Voters cannot possibly be familiar with so many candidates and will vote the party, not the person. Furthermore, with such large electoral districts, local political associations are likely to cede candidate selection to central parties, further diluting local representation.

Proponents of STV want a portion of their vote to go to their second, third or even fourth choice until they finally get their way. In our electoral district, this is achieved by establishing an electoral quota that will require winning candidates to receive only 12.5 percent of the votes. How is that democratic?

Under STV, minority governments will be the rule rather than the exception, resulting in more frequent elections, or worse, in the formation of mid-term coalitions that citizens will have no say in choosing. Instead, these coalition governments will be brokered by politicians through backroom deals which will result in minority candidates and splinter parties exerting undue influence in shaping government policy and direction.

It's too bad that the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform didn't recommend a majoritarian system whereby successful candidates need to achieve more than 50 percent of the votes to be elected. This can easily be achieved with refinements to the current voting system.

Instead, the Assembly opted for STV, the most esoteric system possible. Even how ballots are counted under STV takes three pages of diagrams and text to explain how electoral quotas are established, how votes are proportioned, subsequently transferred and ultimately "exhausted."

While our current system may be flawed, it honours the basic principle of local representation. Each person gets one vote which is counted only once. It is easily explainable and understood; the person who gets the most votes is elected. And it works. First past the post is far from perfect but it is clearly preferable to the alternative being proposed.

John Amon

Harbour about to be WAMed?

Sam Williams solved one puzzle for me: I live on Dallas Rd and have seen these ships come in loaded with mega yachts and I thought they were being manufactured somewhere else and being brought here to sell. I thought this was strange since we already have a pretty strong boat manufacturing segment out in the Keating area and at the airport in Sidney. So he solved that question for me.

But another puzzle popped up the last time I saw one of these ships come in. I noticed that two of the boats that were unloaded headed over to the US. Port Angeles, I am assuming. I thought it might be a tax thing—it being cheaper to unload in Canada and then cruise over to the US. I guess they just hopped a ride and had a different destination. This does not support Evans' theory, though, of there being all these mega yachts wanting to be in Canada.

Turning to the idea of work/job creation, etc, in regards to his project, if you go to any marina, especially out in Sidney at Van Isle or Port Sidney, you will notice some fairly large boats. One of the other things that you might note, if you are there a lot, is how little they move. They usually just sit there. On average, I would estimate that most of these boats might go out for two weeks a year. I think I might be

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overly generous here. Having been in the boating world myself for a while now, I have always wondered at this largesse and how little recreation and pleasure is truly achieved by owning one of these behemoths.

They usually have someone hired to “care-take” their charges. A kind of security, maintenance, boat cleaning outfit—some bill themselves as yacht management companies. These, in my opinion, would be the main benefactors of such an endeavour as Mr Evans’ has in mind. I am assuming there might be spill-over work, but again generally these boats are fairly new—and not used much—so they need little work.

Personally, if they were going to build a marina, I would say build one for smaller boats, in the 27-foot to 40-foot range. There is always a need for moorage in the Greater Victoria area. And the people on boats this size use them. They are out a lot of the time, year round. They spend their money locally on anything from boat repair and maintenance to food, booze, fuel, entertainment etc. To me, *they* are the heart and soul of the boating community—not some guy who flies in from wherever for a week, jumps on his boat, powers over to Port Angeles, loads up on cheap food, booze, and fuel and then cruises back through the lower Gulf Islands for a couple of days. If you have ever been anchored in a harbour when one of these “yachts” comes in, it can be an interesting experience. I’d say 90 percent of the time nobody gets off the boat. If they do, it is often when they unload one of those annoying seadoo things that then roars around the bay and surrounding area. That’s a real contribution to the local economy and peace of mind. Meanwhile, the rest of us have rowed ashore, hiked, walked, beach-combed, chatted with each other when we meet, and if in a community, go to a local restaurant, buy food, gifts and anything else that catches our fancy.

Patrick Isaac

It’s the people, stupid

Yule Heibel looks to Europe (as does Aaren Madden’s story re VPD’s Bill Naughton) for better ways of doing things here. Good idea. I was born in Europe and have travelled and lived there many times. However, promoting businesses to encourage an active nightlife after the government workers go home is the opposite of what Europeans are generally about.

During dinner one night in a restaurant on the Champs-Elysees, the waiter descended on

our table unexpectedly and whisked everything away. Only then did we notice the restaurant emptying out quickly. (It was only 5:40pm.) The explanation: they had made their quota. Apparently, most French restaurants, as well as other businesses, operate on quota systems; once they make their daily financial goal, they go home. Granted, some days it takes longer, but if they reach the quota even as early as noon, they take the rest of the day off.

Begrudgingly, as this was overtime, the waiter put our unfinished meals into poodlebags and off we went to eat in a rather deserted Bois de Boulogne. The Parisian evening was fabulous; not a single unsavoury character in sight.

Life is different in Europe. It’s richer precisely because businesses shut down. While some governments have caved in to pressure from certain sectors to be more competitive, the populace is trying to hold onto that which gives fulfilment to life: time off. In Italy, they siesta. In the Czech Republic, all stores close before noon on Saturdays and there’s no Sunday shopping. The French and Germans have no intention of giving up their annual four-to-six-week vacations. Paris and Prague are devoid of locals all summer.

After-hours or 24-hour businesses are not the answer to any vagrancy woes. No one really needs to be downtown at all hours of the night, on any day of the week. No one really needs to eat at 3am or shop on Sundays. Such activities (read: distractions) promote neither community nor social well-being. It’s not the people, stupid. It’s the family, and that’s exactly what the Europeans are about.

Jana Kalina

Overdoing the security thing

As a dual US/Canadian citizen, I am grateful for Trudy Duivenvoorden Mitic’s stirring personal account of encountering so-called security measures while travelling. The article incisively reveals the contradictions, inconsistencies and hypocritical applications consequent to the sanctimonious “war on terror.”

The talented and honest journalists Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzales at DemocracyNow! have an excellent interview that highlights the hidden imperatives behind the “war on terror” at www.democracynow.org/2004/10/22/the_oil_factor_behind_the_war.

Frances Pierson

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A11 COMMENT

Article rank 11 Jun 2009 Times Colonist

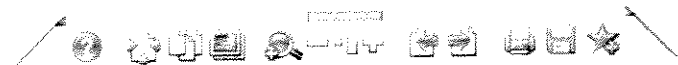
Industry hijacked World Oceans Day

From your story and prominent picture, ("Ocean and marine sector vital to B.C., June 9) it would appear that World Oceans Day in Victoria was, in large part, hijacked by local industry to promote the proposed Victoria International Marina. Fortunately this was not the only World Oceans Day event in town.

Here at our Fisherman's Wharf floathome community, one of our residents is a marine biologist and she donned a wetsuit to scour our foreshore and bring to the surface living examples of undersea specimens for children and adults to identify, touch and discuss. We distributed material on a sustainable fishing industry and the disastrous effects of plastics to marine life. We gathered detritus from a 15-square-metre patch of local beach and displayed it for locals and out of town visitors to see the reality of using our oceans as garbage dumps.

The children's favourite from the deep was the sea squirt. This invertebrate, soon after birth, crushes and digests its own brain. Let us not do the same and allow the phoniness and pomp of the proposed marina to litter our Songhees shoreline. Dunstan Chicanot Victoria

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Monday Mag

magic teeth gareth gaudin



Magic Teeth by Gareth Gaudin

Letters - April 30

Posted By: Monday Magazine Staff
 04/29/2009 8:00 AM

Time for a change

Re: "Golden for Whom?" April 23-29

The most important issue facing this region is being almost totally neglected in this campaign. In eight years, the Campbell Liberals have built no subsidized housing for families—even though the dire need grows daily. On the south Island, thousands of people—most of them children—are waiting for safe, healthy housing that is subsidized so that parents aren't spending 80 percent of their income on shelter. Thousands are living in mouldy, rat-infested units that compromise health and safety; thousands are living in crowded conditions, in run-down homes with electrical and plumbing problems; thousands go hungry to keep an inadequate roof over their heads.

How do children grow and what do they learn when society leaves them in these shameful conditions? The private market can't help these children; this is the job of government and if we weren't wasting money on mega-projects, we would easily be able to care for the vulnerable folks among us.

I don't know about you, but I expect my taxes to be used to keep my fellow citizens healthy and safe. The real scandal isn't speeding tickets and drunk driving. The real scandal is the "let them eat cake" attitude of the ignorant, arrogant Campbell Liberals.

Sue Stroud, Brentwood Bay

The only person Gordon Campbell listens to is himself. He cries when in trouble but the rest is all good, as long as his needs are being met. He basically took jobs away and gave some of it back to poor people without jobs who are willing to work harder with less pay—and, after all those programs for childcare and welfare were taken away and reduced by his government, we elected him again.

This time, Campbell has taken away more jobs and given big payout cheques to the top dogs so more people can lose their jobs. How lucky are we to have him ruling over us!

Let's work together for a healthy government that looks after all of us with a healthy planet. Many jobs can be created in this field.

Noreen, via mondaymag.com

Voting against change

Re: "To STV or not STV?," April 16-22

I intend to vote no to STV, in part because I reject the pernicious notion that if you don't vote for the winning candidate, your vote is wasted. Nonsense. Votes for the non-winners are extremely useful, as an MLA who wins by only a few votes is likely to be much more attentive to the needs and views of their constituents than one elected with a margin of thousands.

Furthermore, we don't vote for someone to represent us, personally; we vote for someone to represent our constituency—which is not the same thing. And no matter how many candidates are elected, the views of some voters will not be represented and their votes, according to PR thinking, will still be "wasted."

Jason Youmans states that, "The 10 percent of CRD voters who backed a Green candidate in 2005 have no one in the legislature to look to for accountability." More nonsense. MLAs are accountable to all voters in their constituency, not just to those who voted for them.

Reducing 85 constituencies to 20 voting districts will create enormous areas, campaigning in which will favour those with the most money. On the south end of Vancouver Island, we would have a district stretching from Jordan River in the west to the Southern Gulf Islands in the east. The idea that STV will somehow lessen the parties' influence and make it easier for small parties or independent candidates to gain seats is ludicrous, given the geographic and financial challenges.

Youmans concludes by saying, "And if the steadily declining voter turnout tells us anything, it's that the time for change has come." Perhaps, but not necessarily this change. Rather than the voting system, the decline in voter turnout is more likely due to the increasing trivialization and the relentless negativity of most political debate, reporting, and comment. Proponents of STV claim it will force politicians to cooperate. I doubt it; changing the voting system won't change human nature and politics will continue to be conducted as a high-stakes game among professional males.

In short, STV's alleged benefits do not make up for its myriad drawbacks.

Elizabeth Woods, Victoria

Mega-yachts don't float

Re: Letters, March-April

Overlooked in the recent debate on the mega-yacht marina is the incredible pollution these vessels create.

A Google search on fuel efficiency of yachts shows that a modern 75-foot powerboat burns about 450 litres (99 gallons) of diesel fuel per hour, producing 2,200 pounds of carbon dioxide. A six-hour cruise will consume 594 gallons of fossil fuels and create 13,200 pounds of carbon dioxide—more than an average car in a year. Multiply this by dozens of boats coming and going all summer and you have a massive and extremely serious environmental impact. And this doesn't even consider the vast resources used, waste produced and pollution created in the initial construction of these fiberglass behemoths. Their ecological footprint is staggering.

Mega-yachts are the Hummers of the sea. Nothing says "I don't give a damn about the environment!" more than one of these garish boats. Instead of setting an example of resource conservation and frugality in this age of ecological crises, the extraordinarily wealthy parade around in hyper-polluting floating palaces.

As the Earth struggles with the crisis of climate change, it is inappropriate to encourage mega-yachts with a giant private parking lot in our publicly owned harbour. Victoria is still a beautiful, charming city precisely because we have resisted this type of development.

Richard Brunt, Victoria

Would you rather we went broke?

First it was full-page ads for cigarettes and now a sprawling ode to consumerism brought to us by Walmart, the purveyors of disposable crap. What's next for Monday Mag revenue generation—ads for companies manufacturing landmines? Geez folks, have you lost your moral compass in these times of economic uncertainty? Shame, shame.

M. Swallow, Saanich

Wow—Walmart and cigarette ads, all in one issue! But why stop there? I hear Monsanto has a massive ad budget as well. Are you enjoying this, just pissing on the hearts and souls of all the people like me who've supported you all these years? Are you proud of pushing cancer sticks and the worst of globalization? Do you tell your kids what you're doing?

I remember when we could laugh at the biased inanities of the Times Colonist, and we could write to good-old Monday in awareness and solidarity to mock their often-shallow approach to the important issues of the day. But as the cynic once said, everything has a price—all hail the mighty greenback.

How many hundred people around the world died of cancer today, seduced by that oh-so-glamorous advertising to take up smoking? But don't let it bother you, you're just doing your job. Good luck with that whole karma thing.

If I sound angry, I'm more just sad—kind of like finding out David Suzuki actually drives a Hummer. Because these weren't "just" ads and you didn't used to be "just" a newspaper.

Jonathan Blake, Victoria

Habitually reading the magazine back to front (by the way, kudos for the excellent Wildwood feature), I finally arrive at page 4. What cheerfully greets my eye? A full-page colour ad for Walmart, promoting, of all things, Killlex and Weed & Feed at bargain rates—in your Earth Week issue, no less.

Thanks Monday for a splendid example of the irony of our times. Too bad this wasn't your April Fool's joke. It certainly was good for a laugh—with just a hint of bitterness.

Christina Nikolic, Victoria

We like Campbell

A11 Comment

Article rank 9 Apr 2009 Times Colonist

A few questions on the marina

Re: "Marina meeting welcome," editorial, April 7.

Your editorial understates the impact on non-motorized craft. Kayaks, dragon boats, outriggers and canoes are a frequent sight in the area. I am not a paddler, but know that they launch from the Gorge and from the bay at the Delta hotel, paddle through Songhees water, to West Bay, sometimes out the main channel and then back again, making for a very long run.

What's stopping the developer from building a waterfront restaurant on the two waterfront lots he already owns, if he wants to bring jobs to the area? The view from a waterfront restaurant in that location would be of a beautiful harbour, rather than a wall of fibreglass yachts.

If the developer says dredging the seabed would bring back sea life, what sea life would return in an area inhabited by a large marina? Where are they dumping the contaminant dredging?

Nowhere in print has it appeared that the slips are to be sold. I was told by a rep at the developer's open house that this is how the marina is expected to succeed. This shocked me because I thought the "sell" was for visiting mega-yachts bringing lots of tourist dollars to Victoria. Nana Spence Victoria

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A11 Comment

Article rank 9 Apr 2009 Times Colonist

Marina plans are far from finalized

Re: Marina meeting welcome," editorial, April 7.

While the editorial is a fair assessment of the problems surrounding the megayacht marina proposal, it is also superficial in a number of areas. The developer keeps saying that the dredging will be good for the harbour environment, although no proper environmental study has been completed. This marina would require the paddlers and small boaters to pass around it by travelling through dangerous air and seaborne harbour traffic, although the developer states they can be accommodated. Also, in the promotional material there is a statement that the project is "currently under construction" when no such thing is happening.

Yes, the penultimate sentence in your article, "requiring a complete airing of this project" injects that note of fairness for which your support is gratefully acknowledged. Peter Chance Sidney

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Letters for April 8

Published: April 07, 2009 8:00 AM
Updated: April 07, 2009 8:11 PM

0 Comments

Used-up containers could help house homeless

Homelessness is a growing problem in Victoria.

Sustainable living downtown is all but impossible for the destitute, who often are forced to seek shelter in doorways or other cubbyholes. It's unhealthy for them and a shameful blight on the 'Garden City.' For many heading west across Canada or south down Vancouver Island, this city is the end of the road.

Another problem we face in our consumer society is recycling or disposing the myriad products or their wrappings for which there is no longer any use.

An example of these items, railway companies tell us, are metal shipping containers. These end up as scrap metal, after a lot of cutting and moving about – a process that creates a lot of air pollution.

Now, do you see a connection between homelessness and containers? Well, I do.

With some chopping, welding, insulating and lining, these destined-for-scrap containers could be transmogrified into quite attractive and suitable housing units for one or two persons – including bicycle racks welded onto the rear. They could become either a single or a T-shaped unit, with a mini-garden or trees.

With planning and training, candidates for such houses could be participants in the creation of their new homes. On a more ambitious scale, and if a suitable location could be found, this could become an easily exportable, manufactured product for Victoria and give our current homeless population a real leg up.

The money for such a venture is there: it's called welfare. Trade this for a new working class – and a positive inspiration for the rest of our fine country.

Surely, politicians of all stripes can fine-tune this idea into an action plan before 2009 turns into another blustery winter. Who will be the first to move on this?

Redner Jones

Victoria

Mega-yacht marina inappropriate

Building a marina for mega-yachts in one of the last public spaces in Victoria's harbour is the wrong idea.

I was on Victoria city council in 1993, when water lots in this area were down-zoned to prevent

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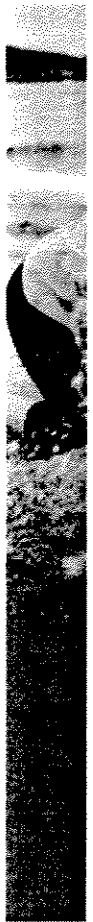
Victoria News

- Letters for April 29
- Letters for April 10
- Letters for April 15
- Letters for April 24
- Letters for May 8

Vancouver Island South

- Letters
- Letters - 4 in response to Michael Friedman's piece of April 15
- Letters to the editor - April 15

Text  



construction of buildings up to three storeys high. Comments on this down-zoning emphasized complaints from Songhees residents, but there was a more important general reason for doing this. That particular council placed great emphasis on the public interest and in maximizing public benefits from the development.

The Songhees waterfront walkway and park were important development benefits gained, in line with city policies, to allow the public to enjoy the waterfront and the views across the harbour. It was considered worthwhile to protect this amenity by down-zoning the water lots so buildings would not block the viewscape of a view-oriented amenity. Council did this in full awareness of the likelihood of having to pay compensation to the developer. The city down-zoned the water lots and compensation to the developer was eventually paid, not directly for the down-zoning, but for the work done to provide public amenities, including the coastal walkway.

The current proposal to accommodate mega motor-yachts in the same area means vessels up to 135 feet long, typically three or four decks high, or about the same as a three-storey building. So, it seems that we have come full circle, except that the city has already paid, through compensation, for an unobstructed Songhees walkway, which has proven to be just as popular as expected.

I am concerned that in the current approvals process there appears to be no evaluation of how the proposal will affect the public interest and the city's investment in this. Cutting off views from public spaces intended for the public's enjoyment devalues these amenities. The fact that the city has already determined this to be inappropriate and has paid compensation to protect this public amenity should carry sufficient weight to ensure that this proposal is rejected.

Alastair Craighead

Victoria

Party position clarified by Green candidate

In Keith Vass's latest article covering the BC Greens (News, March 20), he mentioned that I desired a Liberal minority government.

But it should be clarified that the focus is to have Greens hold the balance of power. In today's B.C. politics, our government is extremely polarized and divided. In a truly responsible government, parties will recognize the legitimacy of each other's place in the Legislature and work together to find compromise, and that's the last thing British Columbians can expect to see with either the Liberals or the NDP as government.

The only hope for responsible government in B.C. is to elect Greens to hold the balance of power, no matter who holds government. In a truly responsible government, the governing party is a symbolic gesture of stability where all parties and independents can work in an atmosphere of respect and co-operation.

Adam Saab

Green Party B.C. candidate, Victoria-Beacon Hill

Save the company, lose the industry

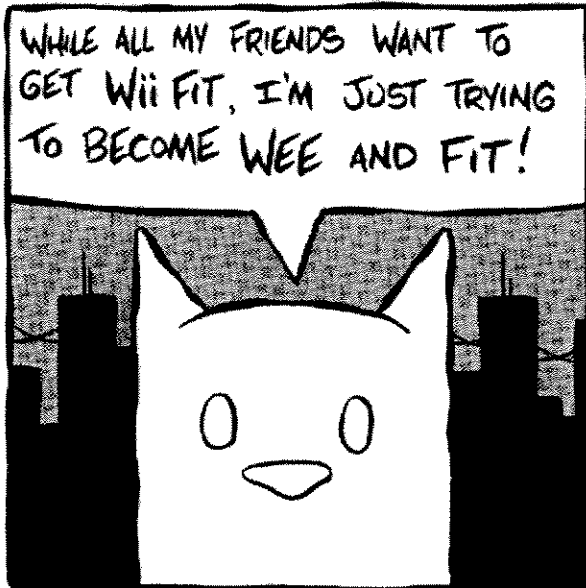
Although 373 names were dropped from Forbes' list of billionaires, there was a new name: Wang Chuanfu of China — his company produces electric cars. Ten years ago GM developed the EV1 using inexpensive NiMH batteries. It had a 240 km range without recharging, but they sold control of the battery patents to the oil cartel. Now GM is facing bankruptcy.

With the Harper economy, the mismanaged GM will be given taxpayer's money, which will give GM an unfair advantage over the better-managed carmakers, resulting in a weaker industry.

Dennis Kerr

Monday Mag

magic teeth



gareth gaudin

Magic Teeth by Gareth Gaudin

Letters - April 2

Posted By: Monday Magazine Staff
04/01/2009 8:00 AM

Likes her landlord

Re: "Renovictims No More," March 26-April 1

I am a tenant of Dr. Domovitch and have lived in his Yates Street building for three years. I, for one, want to say that the improvements his new manager has brought are more than welcome. The place was a mess before and, I'm sorry to say, some of the tenants were scary: I had one guy who smelled like he hadn't taken a bath in years on one side and another who smoked pot day in and day out on the other side. The hallways and the lobby looked like hell, and the maintenance people did nothing. In the last six months the place has been completely turned around; all the sordid tenants are gone, the place looks amazing and I am happy to come home after a hard day's work. And, most importantly, I now feel safe here.

Please don't stop your improvements, Dr. Domovitch. I know some of my friends wish their landlords would make such an effort.

Michele Clement, Victoria

Hates the sound

Re: "Sound Salvation," March 19-25

Ah, the mind-expanding listening experience that is university radio . . . or, at least that's the way I remember it. I grew up in Vancouver listening to UBC's CITR in the '80s with its consistently varied and otherwise unheard music: reggae (with a genuine Jamaican DJ!), African, Latin American, electronic, etc. This was also back when alt-music was in full force and the Sub Pop/ Seattle scene was just getting going.

Then I moved to Victoria and assumed I would hear the same eccentric blend and did . . . occasionally. Otherwise, all I ever hear are the same tired old formats: bluegrass, hot jazz, blah, blah—boring. Sorry to burst your bubble, but for any great shows that may have existed on CFUV, there are presently none that I've heard that I can tolerate. And this is not because music was better in those days; the programming was better.

Geoff Abel, via mondaymag.com

Smokin' mad

Re: recent cigarette ads

Nothing undermines the supposed counter-culture stance of Monday Magazine like a full-page, full-colour cigarette ad. It's hard to take Monday's editorials and articles railing against things like Big Oil and Big Pharma seriously when it seems so ready and willing to sell out to Big Tobacco.

I know times are tough, but a full-page ad for cigarettes in Monday is not only hypocritical, it's disgusting. I can only hope that the large-print warning at the bottom of the page was meant as ironic commentary on the ad being there at all.

JoAnn Dionne, Victoria

How did you come up with the bright idea to sell out Monday with cigarette advertising? Your credibility is now worth whatever B&H pays for a full-page ad. Next time you have something to say in the way of ethics, don't bother—it'll sound like a joke.

Rob Thompson, Victoria

The art of conversation

Re: "Controversial Creations," March 5-11

In a recent newspaper article by Robert Fulford about a new book on renowned artist David Hockney by Lawrence Weschler and his previous book on Robert Irwin, Fulford notes that, "They shift the reader several levels above the peevish bickering that often deadens cultural discussion and remind us that contemporary art, on some of its best days, draws us into the midst of debates that are wonderfully creative and crucially important while nevertheless irresolvable—and also, like a Hockney drawing, deeply and seriously charming." I long for that level of debate and public criticism in Victoria.

Legitimate artists are people that make works of art primarily because they have to. They are compelled by a sometimes visible but more often invisible and inexplicable muse. One can argue that this impetus to simply do, or make art, is the highest achievement of our species.

When we verbalize or write thoughts about art that bend the arc of cultural conversation from that concerning, say, the emotive aspect of the play of shadow across a sculpture, or the delight or sorrow induced by a combination of colour and shape in a painting, to the “peevish bickering” exemplified in parts of a recent article and in some letters in your magazine, we tragically miss the point and the benefit of art.

Franc D'Ambrosio, Victoria

Punchline: April 1

Re: “The Price of Now,” March 26-April 1

I thought we had plenty of exposure and dedication to “now” in the new Design District with its most modern(ist) stores, the magazine racks at any book store and the advertising that pervades many activities that we seem to participate in.

Let's hope that despite its “upbeat/Entertainment Tonight/interesting and important” promotion, NOW proves itself to be a museum of “contemporary and modern art and design,” for which many cities is a wonderful asset to showcase and promote what is innovative and visionary.

Rosie Kapust via mondaymag.com

Paddling mad

Re: “TC mails VIM invites,” March 19-25

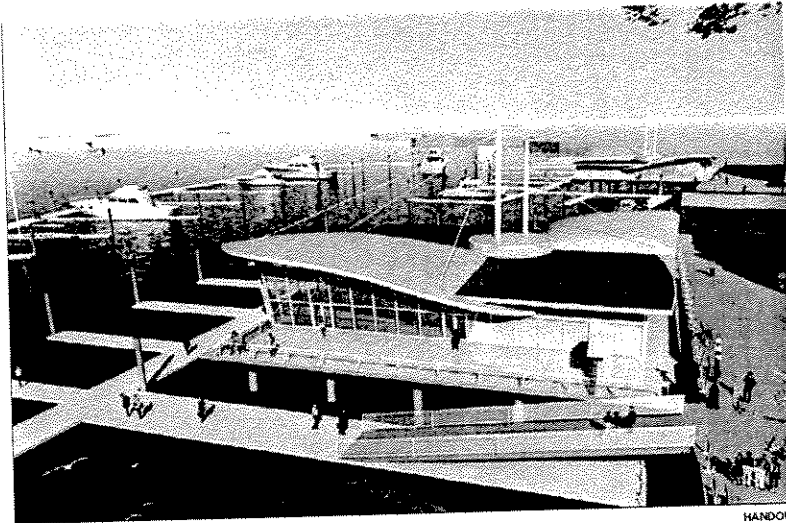
We strongly oppose the application for a water lease along the shoreline of Lime Bay Park for the proposed Victoria International Marina. This stretch of waterfront along Lime Bay Park was never in any marina plans, so how can it be now? When we bought our waterfront condo in Ocean Park Towers we were not told that a marina was proposed there—because it wasn't.

It is unacceptable that this public area has been absorbed into the marina plans and suddenly transformed into commercial property. We specifically bought this condo because the shoreline was designated a public park and therefore posed no risk of being developed. Granted, the Victoria International Marina was okayed in front of Royal Quays—but it was never supposed to be built west of Cooperage Place. This change in the plans for the proposed marina has left us, along with many of our fellow residents, outraged and unified to vigorously pursue whatever means we have to speak out against this application.

Not only does this project undermine the public's right to enjoy this public space, it also threatens a property owner's way of life that they have worked very hard to achieve.

Janet & Ross Shortreed, Victoria

Visit savevictoriaharbour.com to find out more about opposing the marina development.



HANDOUT
An artist's rendering shows the proposed marina for mega-yachts at the Songhees. The project conflicts with Victoria's personality and comes at a time when many here have seen their savings plunge, a letter-writer says.

Marina wrong for city's image

Branding a city has a simple rule: You have to go for authenticity. You can't pretend to be what you are not. Victoria's authentic and defining richness is the juxtaposition of a human-scale lifestyle in harmony with its dramatic natural setting, above all the sea.

Human-scale marinas for the community's recreational craft are handsome additions. But the proposal

to build a gated marina for mega-yachts for outsiders in the city's central asset, the harbour, could not be more wrong for Victoria, nor less opportune. Many here have seen their life savings plunge.

Last month, upwards of 700,000 North Americans lost their jobs. The tragic meltdown didn't just happen. It was caused by people playing the system

recklessly and greedily, and they have escaped with outlandish profits. Their favourite toys are mega-yachts.

Victoria is going to try to change its personality to build a facility on its priceless urban shoreline to attract these people? For whose benefit? The notion their tiny and occasional numbers would bring financial benefit to Victoria

beyond the benefits from more than 400,000 visitors from cruise ships a year is without merit.

I expect that municipal councils will send the project packing.

*Jeremy Kinsman
Victoria*

T/C JUNE 14/08

Mega-yachts the Hummers of the sea

Overlooked in the debate about a marina for mega-yachts is the incredible pollution these large power vessels create.

The Environmental Protection Agency in the U.S. is worried about the proliferation of these massive vessels, stating that operating them just a few hours creates more pollution and green house gases than driving an average car for a year.

Author Andre Mele calculates in *Polluting for Pleasure* that the only vehicle polluting more per passenger is a fighter jet. This is on top of the vast amount of fossil fuels used and pollution created in the construction of these fibreglass behemoths.

Mega-yachts are the Hummers of the sea. Instead of setting an example of resource conservation and frugality in this age of ecological crises, the extraordinarily wealthy parade around in hyper-polluting floating palaces.

Richard Brunt
Victoria

Songhees marina seabed tests finished

Seabed testing for a proposed 48-berth luxury marina in Victoria harbour was completed yesterday.

The seabed was deeper than expected in some areas, where pilings went to depths of 90 and 100 feet, said developer Bob Evans, a partner in a planned \$20 million marina targeting large yachts. He hopes to open the marina in front of the Songhees this time next year.

Crews were on a barge in the water this week putting in test pilings and taking samples. Those samples will be analyzed over the next couple of weeks and the next month will be focused on design work for the project, Evans said.

To proceed, the development needs municipal, provincial and federal approvals. A development permit application for two buildings that would be built on the water is at city hall. — Carla Wilson

COMM



The once-admired Mou

LETTERS

Industry hijacked World Oceans Day

From your story and prominent picture, ("Ocean and marine sector vital to B.C., June 9) it would appear that World Oceans Day in Victoria was, in large part, hijacked by local industry to promote the proposed Victoria International Marina. Fortunately this was not the only World Oceans Day event in town.

Here at our Fisherman's Wharf float-home community, one of our residents is a marine biologist and she donned a wet-suit to scour our foreshore and bring to the surface living examples of undersea specimens for children and adults to identify, touch and discuss. We distributed material on a sustainable fishing industry and the disastrous effects of plastics to marine life. We gathered detritus from a 15-square-metre patch of local beach and displayed it for locals and out of town visitors to see the reality of using our oceans as garbage dumps.

The children's favourite from the deep was the sea squirt. This invertebrate, soon after birth, crushes and digests its own brain. Let us not do the same and allow the phoniness and pomp of the proposed marina to litter our Songhees shoreline.

*Dunstan Chicanot
Victoria*

72
SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2009

Marina is really just moorage

I believe we are being sold a bill of goods regarding the new marina for mega-yachts in the harbour. Victoria is not a destination port for mega-yachts, beautiful city though it is. It is a stopover on the way to Alaska and the northern passages. We will not get a parade of these yachts visiting us and spending bags of money.

The real reason for building it is because Seattle and other ports in this region have no room, so the combination of cheaper moorage and access to the north coast is appealing to Americans living in the Pacific Northwest. This marina will simply be a parking lot for big white tubs that may or may not go out for a few days or weeks a few times a year.

They won't spend much money here. They have everything they need on board, and they certainly won't buy our expensive fuel when they can fill up in Anacortes for half the price. The only income stream will be moorage fees to

Marina would add to city's appeal

I am in full support of the proposed marina for the Inner Harbour.

I live in a condo on the outer harbour area and am able to watch the various vessels and planes come and go throughout the day. The proposed marina would be a welcome addition to our beautiful harbour.

While the economy has tanked, it will come back and those individuals who own these vessels will flock to our harbour not only because of the beauty, but also because we live in a safe and stable country. The additional money spent in our city will carry us through for a long time to come.

In addition, more people will start walking along Westsong Way to enjoy looking at these vessels and perhaps stop in at the proposed restaurant for a meal. We have such a beautiful city full of treasures, this proposed marina will be a welcome addition.

Shirley Waldon
Victoria

May 6 2009

We don't want to encourage mega yachts

Re: "Turbulent seas" (*News*,
April 24)

Overlooked in the recent article discussing a marina for mega yachts is the incredible pollution these vessels create.

A Google search on fuel efficiency of yachts shows that a modern 23-metre power boat burns about 450 litres of diesel fuel per hour, producing 2,200 pounds of carbon dioxide.

A six-hour cruise will consume 594 gallons of fossil fuels and create 13,200 pounds of carbon dioxide – more than an average car in a year. Multiply this by dozens of boats coming and going all summer and you have a massive and extremely serious

*"Mega yachts are the
Hummer of the sea."*

– Richard Brunt

environmental impact.

This does not even consider the vast resources used, waste produced and pollution created in the initial construction of these fiberglass behemoths. Their ecological footprint is staggering.

Mega yachts are the Hummer of the sea. Nothing says "I don't give a damn about the environment" more than one of these garish boats.

Instead of setting an example of resource conservation and frugality in this age of ecological crises, the extraordinarily wealthy parade around in hyper-polluting floating palaces.

As the Earth struggles with the crisis of climate change, it is inappropriate to encourage mega yachts with a giant private parking lot in our publicly owned harbour.

Victoria is still a beautiful, charming city precisely because we have resisted this type of development.

Richard Brunt
Victoria

Lunn adrift?

Re: Letters, March-April

I applaud MP Denise Savoie's efforts to gain concessions from the minister of transport and a reprieve on the approval of permits for the Victoria International Marina development until there is more public discussion. A paddling group, of which I am a member, notified me that MP Keith Martin has agreed to meet with paddlers to discuss the impacts of this development on our right to navigate the waters in our harbour.

As a constituent in MP Gary Lunn's electoral riding, I am wondering why he has been silent about his position on this mega-yacht

proposal. As a paddler, I find it odd that, as minister of state for sport, Mr. Lunn has not come out publicly in support of those involved in paddle-sports, particularly those who rely on transiting the harbour waters in order to train for national and international outrigger competitions.

Where are you, Mr. Lunn?

Roger Patterson, Victoria

TC-4.9.09

Marina plans are far from finalized

Re: Marina meeting welcome," editorial, April 7.

While the editorial is a fair assessment of the problems surrounding the mega-yacht marina proposal, it is also superficial in a number of areas. The developer keeps saying that the dredging will be good for the harbour environment, although no proper environmental study has been completed. This marina would require the paddlers and small boaters to pass around it by travelling through dangerous air and seaborne harbour traffic, although the developer states they can be accommodated. Also, in the promotional material there is a statement that the project is "currently under construction" when no such thing is happening.

Yes, the penultimate sentence in your article, "requiring a complete airing of this project" injects that note of fairness for which your support is gratefully acknowledged.

*Peter Chance
Sidney*

A few questions on the marina

Re: "Marina meeting welcome," editorial, April 7.

Your editorial understates the impact on non-motorized craft. Kayaks, dragon boats, outriggers and canoes are a frequent sight in the area. I am not a paddler, but know that they launch from the Gorge and from the bay at the Delta hotel, paddle through Songhees water, to West Bay, sometimes out the main channel and then back again, making for a very long run.

What's stopping the developer from building a waterfront restaurant on the two waterfront lots he already owns, if he wants to bring jobs to the area? The view from a waterfront restaurant in that location would be of a beautiful harbour, rather than a wall of fibreglass yachts.

If the developer says dredging the seabed would bring back sea life, what sea life would return in an area inhabited by a large marina? Where are they dump-

ing the contaminant dredging?

Nowhere in print has it appeared that the slips are to be sold. I was told by a rep at the developer's open house that this is how the marina is expected to succeed. This shocked me because I thought the "sell" was for visiting mega-yachts bringing lots of tourist dollars to Victoria.

*Nana Spence
Victoria*

Mega-yacht marina inappropriate

Building a marina for mega-yachts in one of the last public spaces in Victoria's harbour is the wrong idea.

I was on Victoria city council in 1993, when water lots in this area were down-zoned to prevent construction of buildings up to three storeys high. Comments on this down-zoning emphasized complaints from Songhees residents, but there was a more important general reason for doing this. That particular council placed great emphasis on the public interest and in maximizing public benefits from the development.

The Songhees waterfront walkway and park were important development benefits gained, in line with city policies, to allow the public to enjoy the waterfront and the views across the harbour. It was considered worthwhile to protect this amenity by down-zoning the water lots so buildings would not block the viewscape of a view-oriented amenity. Council did this in full awareness of

the likelihood of having to pay compensation to the developer. The city down-zoned the water lots and compensation to the developer was eventually paid, not directly for the down-zoning, but for the work done to provide public amenities, including the coastal walkway.

The current proposal to accommodate mega motor-yachts in the same area means vessels up to 135 feet long, typically three or four decks high, or about the same as a three-storey building. So, it seems that we have come full circle, except that the city has already paid, through compensation, for an unobstructed Songhees walkway, which has proven to be just as popular as expected.

I am concerned that in the current approvals process there appears to be no evaluation of how the proposal will affect the public interest and the city's investment in this. Cutting off viewscales from public spaces intended for the public's enjoyment devalues these amenities. The fact that the city has already determined this to

be inappropriate and has paid compensation to protect this public amenity should carry sufficient weight to ensure that this proposal is rejected.

*Alastair Craighead
Victoria*

VIC NEWS

04/08/09

TC
04/05/09

Second thoughts on mega-yachts

The current slick and confusing promotion of a huge mega-yacht facility in the Inner Harbour deserves a great deal more assessment than it has been given. For example, the promoter's "handout" that your paper was kind enough to print with Jeremy Kinsman's letter protesting the mega-marina concept is a blatant misrepresentation of what the proposed marina for fifty mega-yachts would look like. Where is a picture of fifty mega-yachts together? The handout shows only a few small boats.

The promoter must buy the water for his proposed marina. And strangely, the federal government controls this bit of harbour and refuses to have a public hearing on its sale. They say they helped promote the promoter's meeting; and that is enough.

We as a community have tried diligently over the years to keep the Inner Harbour open for marine traffic and general public enjoyment. Phone, write, fax or e-mail MP Gary Lunn; he can stop this impending tragedy.

*Peter Pollen
Victoria*

Marina would bring benefits

I fully support the building of the proposed marina to accommodate "super-yachts" in the harbour. These yachts require constant maintenance, and our local marine industry employs world-class tradespeople who could benefit from all the extra work the presence of these vessels would bring. The small sacrifice that kayakers and the local NIMBYs will make — after all, the possibility that the marina would be developed has been known for years — is insignificant compared to the economic spinoffs that it will bring.

*Malcolm Berry
North Saanich*

Marina offers little benefit

A kayaker writes that he would not mind paddling around the proposed Victoria harbour yacht marina. The trouble is that during the marina dredging and construction phase, and afterwards, the small boats and kayaks that now safely use the waterway close to the north shore would be pushed out into the busy aircraft and shipping lanes, adding to the problems he suggests already exist.

I don't believe the marina will be a financial bonanza for Victoria. To be viable the marina might have to sell or lease permanent year-round moorage to absentee mega-yacht owners keen to park their vessels at cheap Canadian rates. This will mean a steady profit for the marina, but little financial spinoff for others.

Victorians will have given up a traditional waterway and a sizable portion of their harbour and waterfront mainly to enrich a developer.

*Terry Milne
Victoria*

Paddlers deserve a voice

As a paddler, I cherish my right to safe, unimpeded access to our beautiful harbour. As part of the bargain, I adhere to traffic rules and do my part to keep the harbour clean and safe.

Victoria's paddling community organizes programs that provide health and recreation opportunities to thousands, including children, seniors and persons with disabilities. These activities generate hundreds of thousands of dollars that support charities, events and dozens of businesses.

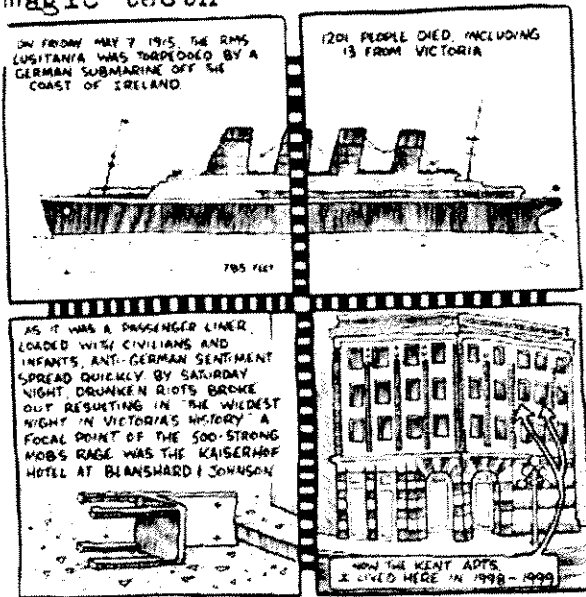
As a result, I do not consider my access rights subordinate to any other user in the harbour. All user groups have equal rights to this public space and, with a proven traffic plan from our harbour master, we have enjoyed years of remarkably safe and respectful co-existence in our busy harbour.

Personally, I oppose the proposed Inner Harbour marina because its intrusive design at the harbour's narrowest point threatens paddlers' access, rights and the above mentioned balance.

All user groups, including paddlers, deserve an equal voice in debating this marina proposal.

*Kris Terauds
Esquimalt*

magic teeth



gareth gaudin

Magic Teeth by Gareth Gaudin

Letters - March 26

Posted By: Monday Magazine Staff
03/25/2009 8:00 AM

Either oar

Re: "TC mails VIM invites," March 19-25

I am one of the paddlers who received an invite to the developer's open house promoting the mega-yacht marina proposal. The invite, urging me to "join in the energy and excitement" of the marina project, was e-mailed to me by the Transport Canada review officer whose mandate under the Navigable Waters Protection Program includes protecting the right of non-powered vessels (paddlers) to access these waters.

According to government guidelines, the officers handling the developer's application for Transport Canada are required to carry out an unbiased review and approval process that includes public consultation with stakeholders. How could Transport Canada possibly consider it appropriate for their staff to mail out this slick promotional material on behalf of the developer—especially when Transport Canada had declined to send a representative to an earlier public town hall forum to hear stakeholders' concerns? As a paddler and taxpayer, I find this appearance of bias on the part

of the decision-maker appalling. The government must be held accountable for a fair, open and transparent review process. We owe this to our children and grandchildren when the future of our precious natural resources are at stake.

Urge readers to express their views on this marina approval process to Michael Henderson, director general, Transport Canada, Pacific Region (michael.henderson@tc.gc.ca) and to John Baird, minister of transport in Ottawa (john.baird@tc.gc.ca).

Robbie Taylor, Esquimalt

Cashing in

Re: "Bragging Rights," March 19-25

I called the Cash Store to get my partner, with her permission, off their targeted promotional mailing list. They admitted that they send their ad to the postal codes around their stores, according to Sandy McMullen, who was helpful and polite.

I mentioned that must not include the Uplands, where people make at least \$50,000-plus per year, because there is no store there. She asked me how I got that information, and I said it was in the Census. She said we must call the post office and tell them to stop delivering promotional fliers (1-800-267-1177). Anybody interested in telling the Cash Store what you think of their predatory mailers can call them at 780-408-5110, and ask for Michael Thompson, investor relations and government affairs vice president. Leave a voice message if he's not there. Be polite—remember, you'll catch more bees with honey.

Larry Wartel, Victoria

Speaking of "unequivocally false statements," I am fed up with the Cash Store's junk mail that includes a fake cheque made out to "Current Occupant" and says I have been pre-approved for a loan because I am a "preferred customer."

I have complained by telephone to the company's Quadra Street store and by e-mail to the company with a copy to the British Columbia Payday Loan Association. If I get another of those preferred-customer spiels, I will send a formal complaint to the provincial and federal governments as well as Advertising Standards Canada.

Can we make this a class action?

Z. Alexandra Plaskin, Victoria

Do the math

Re: "An Education in Learning," March 19-25

School budgets on the South Island are to be reduced yet again. Services to our children will be reduced, yet again. Security costs alone for the Winter Olympics have increased from \$175 million

Yachts would add to harbour

I bought a condo many years ago in the Songhees as it promised a marina and restaurant.

It never happened even though it was approved. I sold.

Times have changed. I now kayak myself, but we the kayakers are but a small percentage of the voices to have a marina. In these tough economic times for our business community I cannot fathom not proceeding with this project. I'm sure I'll manoeuvre my kayak around this marina.

I get excited seeing these large, wondrous yachts that I can only dream about. I'm afraid the sight of kayaks going by doesn't turn me on.

We are sometimes referred to as "speed bumps" on the busy Inner Harbour and are more problematic than we are worth sometimes. Other than buying the kayak, we bring no further business to the community. The marina will.

*Fred Miller
Victoria*

TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2009

Marina missing its market

Re: "Marina wrong for
city's image," letter,
March 30.

I certainly agree with the writer against the proposed Inner Harbour marina who says that Victoria "can't pretend to be what [it] is not," and that "you have to go for authenticity."

The developers and supporters of a world-class marina for Victoria's Inner Harbour seem to be focusing on the hope that the proposed project would attract those so-called mega-yachts whose owners' extremely deep pockets would markedly boost Victoria's economy. What seems to be lacking in that vision is the fact that Victoria isn't a playground for the idle rich and what they purportedly seek. We have no Rodeo Drive or Fifth Avenue shopping, we have no vibrant night life with casinos and high-profile entertainment, and while we have good restaurants, we have little, if any, world-class dining. Does it escape the proponents of the marina project that it would most likely end up being a very expensive, little-used, obtrusive white elephant?

R. Bruce Dutton
Victoria

TC-3-13.09

TIMES COLONIST | timescoloni

COM

“ The Taser is |

Marina is inappropriate

Re: “A harbour for all,” letter, March 8.

The letter incorrectly stated that the Victoria West Community Association forwarded a motion to the city requesting that it buy the site for a public park. The association has not made that request of the city.

In 2006, following a community meeting about the Harbour Implementation Plan attended by 200 people, the association wrote a letter to the minister of agriculture and lands requesting that the provincial water lot and adjacent land be designated as a park.

The idea that this marina has been planned for years implies that the current marina proposal is what was envisaged for the original Songhees development. It is not. The marina proposed as part of the original development was a fraction of the size of the current one.

It is the position of the Victoria West Community Association that an exclusive development of this magnitude in this location is an inappropriate use of a premier public asset.

*Jo-Ann Youmans
President Victoria West
Community Association*

Marina worries paddlers

As a kayaker, perhaps I can help to clarify the paddling community's concerns with the planned harbour marina, which are focused on continued safe access to public waterways.

Paddlers are not anti-marina. However, we are concerned about this proposed location.

If successful, this development proposal would greatly constrict an already busy harbour and will effectively block the established channel for non-motorized vessels through the harbour.

The paddling community is faced with a serious limitation of its existing rights of access to a public resource.

As paddlers, we are incredibly privileged — we're lucky enough to live in Victoria and be able to paddle in the harbour. We love to share our harbour with newcomers, but we definitely will not forfeit our right to paddle there.

*Alex Matthews
Victoria*

Marina would be great asset

The addition of the proposed marina in Victoria's harbour will be a wonderful asset for the city. The vessels that will visit this facility are outstanding examples of marine technology.

Collectively, these ships will bring a significant economic benefit to the city.

Owners and their guests will shop and utilize Victoria's many attractions and amenities. The vessels will require provisions and maintenance services which will be supplied by local businesses. Residents and tourist alike will be attracted to the harbour to admire these beautiful ships.

Victoria, as a marine centre, should be encouraging the creation of this world-class facility.

*Bev Highton
Victoria*

Too much traffic in harbour

There is too much traffic in the Inner Harbour and it is scary taking my boat there at times. It is becoming an accident waiting to happen.

I have experienced seaplanes with spinning propellers almost tailgating my charter boat while they taxi! Kayakers, harbour ferries swarming around, cutting in and out of lanes, the Coho, whale watching boats, air traffic landing and taking off, and on and on. The noise and fumes do not help either.

The city and governing authorities alike must not wait until there is some deadly accident, collision or tragic loss of life to take bold and immediate action to regulate and control the amount of traffic in our crowded harbour.

*David Carlos
Victoria*

TC- 3.11.09

Marina means jobs

I understand well-intentioned dialogue regarding the proposed marina; concerns should be addressed. But, having worked within the large yacht industry, I can tell you they are powered by high-tech engines that are more fuel efficient than most boats in our harbour, including mine.

They bring a trail of money in their wakes. The food, liquor, fuel, repairs, entertainment and services they pay for enhance our tourism economy and tax base. Government can't address our problems if there is limited tax revenue.

The project would bring jobs and tax money to Victoria.

*Samuel L. Livingstone
Cordova Bay*

Marina is too big

As a resident of Victoria West, I have been involved with community developments for many years. This has included the 1980s discussions around the proposal of a marina.

The Songhees development area did allow for a marina development, but the City of Victoria's published design guidelines show the marina area to include the proponent's Lot 3 just east of Cooperage Road and including the area out from the small artificial bay just to the east of this lot. The current marina proposal is four times larger than what the city guidelines recommended in 1985. At the time the citizens of Victoria West saw this as a small community-based marina.

*Grant Keddie
Victoria*

T.C

TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2009

Harbour too crowded

Everyone in favour of the marina development should visit Seattle to see the several hundred megayachts permanently parked from the locks into Lake Union due to the cost of fuel and the dire economy.

I know firsthand how difficult skippering a big boat in congested harbours can be with planes, paddlers, kayakers and rowers — all of whom have right of way and all of whom are difficult to see from a pilothouse or bridge.

The congestion in our Victoria harbour is an accident waiting to happen. Efforts should be made to lessen, not increase this congestion.

*Marilyn Copland
Skipper
Selene pilothouse trawler*

70 1/2/10

A harbour for all: What's more natural than a marina?

I think the proposed Victoria International Marina, which was part of the original planning for the Songhees development and was shown on official planning documents long before the first resident moved into the Songhees, will be a wonderful addition to our community.

Our harbour is a treasure that is for the benefit of all. We enjoy float planes, kayaking, tour boats, paddling, dragon boat racing, foot paths, scenic views, historic markers, yachting and multiple ferries to transport people to destinations minutes or hours away.

Let's not suddenly become selective and exclude some activities just because some privileged groups will now have to share this special space

with newcomers. After all, what is more natural for a harbour than a marina? Nor should we forget that the last time the city arbitrarily rezoned these private water lots, to placate residents in adjoining condos who were upset that they would lose their water views, it cost the taxpayers millions of dollars in financial settlements and legal fees.

In response to recent opposition, the Vic West Community Association forwarded a motion to the city requesting it to buy the site for a public park.

How many more millions of dollars will that cost?

*John Amon
Victoria*

Mega-yachts, mega-waste

Bob Evans, developer of the proposed mega-yacht marina, claims "these vessels use up-to-date technology and are fuel-efficient."

A Google search on fuel efficiency of yachts shows that a modern 75-foot power boat burns about 450 litres (99 gallons) of diesel fuel per hour, producing 2,200 pounds of carbon dioxide.

A six-hour cruise will consume 594 gallons of fossil fuels and create 13,200 pounds of carbon dioxide — more than an average car in a year.

Multiply this by dozens of boats coming and going all summer and you have a massive and extremely serious environmental impact.

Mega-yachts represent the squandering of vast, non-renewable resources in their construction and use. As the Earth struggles with the crisis of climate change, it is inappropriate to encourage them with a giant parking lot in our harbour.

*Richard Brunt
Victoria*

FL 02 27 09

No to marina

I live at Fisherman's Wharf and the other evening paddled over to the proposed site for the International Marina. The developers tell us that it will cover the same area as Fisherman's Wharf, which is extensive. The proposed site is not tucked neatly into a bay; it would thrust itself into an active waterway heavily used by floatplanes, the Coho, the Clipper, Harbour Ferries, barges from the cement plant, kayakers and numerous others.

Environmentally, it is dubious. Wave attenuation is an unanswered question and the winds down here can be fierce. Esthetically, it resembles a floating Wal-Mart, or as I see it, a Hummer parking lot for the super rich.

It is the wrong facility, in the wrong location in the wrong city.

*Dunstan Chicanot
Victoria*

No mega-yachts

I was one of the more than 300 "skeptical" citizens you reported were present at the proposed marina meeting Feb. 17. We were told that the mega-yacht owners had few places to go with their super toys. I find it offensive that our city might approve this plan to support the richest class of the world's people when there are so many in Victoria without a home, let alone a boat that requires upward of \$2 million in annual maintenance costs.

My advice to the yacht owners: Float your boat to Dubai where I'm sure you'll find others who worship at the altar of excess. Leave our harbour out of your travel plans.

*Robert M.J. Thompson
Victoria*

Water lot history

Regarding recent stories about water lots in the Inner Harbor:

On May 1, 1988, Pacific National Investments Ltd. purchased about 13 acres of land from the provincial government. The land fronted on Victoria's outer harbor and had been used by a variety of industrial and commercial users.

PNI has fulfilled all of its obligations under the original development agreement, as evidenced by the city's release of a performance bond and acceptance of the improvements. It should be emphasized that the financial burden and risk of this project was borne entirely by PNI, at no cost to the city, the province or, more important, the taxpayer.

The application by Pacific National Investments to develop two water lots, in accordance with permitted zoning, is a normal consequence of these earlier events. The city agreed with the creation of these lots, has assessed them, and is collecting significant property taxes from them. This expense, along with PNI's investment in the property, is the force driving development.

Preliminary plans given to the city in 1989 showed a total of 32 residential units plus commercial space. Because parking requirements were mandatory, and with the approval of the city, PNI requested the developer of the Royal Quays condominiums to construct 48 parking stalls within the two Royal Quays structures for the residents of the planned three-storey buildings. Pacific National Investments still holds these parking stalls for this purpose.

Residents of Royal Quays pleading ignorance of the intended development of lots 3 and 4 have no grounds for their case. Information was always made available and in particular, the disclosure statement and exhibit D, which every purchaser was given, clearly shows what the future plans were.

The large sign erected at the site also clearly indicated the planned development on lots 3 and 4. This sign has been at the site since 1989.

J.M. Lyle,
Chief executive officer,
Pacific National Investments.

Harbor threatened

Victoria's planning department has received tentative plans for the development of two water lots in Victoria Harbor, lots known as Royal Quays 3 and 4. The proposal is to build two three-storey condominium buildings, each containing 14 units.

This proposal seems in conflict with a working harbor that is not overly large and is very busy. There is land still available on Vancouver Island for condos. There is little water in Victoria's harbor for marine interests.

Perhaps the city could be persuaded to at least wait for implementation of a harbor commission for consultation, before setting a precedent that would restrict marine use of one of the world's great harbors.

May 26/93 Dallas Rogers,
Victoria.

Water condo options

Your front-page report, "Harbor condo idea rattles council" (May 22), has rattled more than council. As a matter of fact, it has rattled almost every ambler, jogger and pram-pusher along Westsong Walkway; it has rattled bird-watchers, environmentalists, property owners, and it certainly must have rattled those concerned with water traffic safety.

Why is it, then, with all this rattled citizenry, there remains even the remotest possibility of these condominiums being built? Could it be, as your article suggests, Mayor David Turner feels zoning decisions made by preceding councils are as holy writ?

It is not unheard of, surely, for rulings to be overturned and situations reassessed; there are compensatory and legal avenues that can be explored for reparation.

The incumbent council has the responsibility to plan with intelligent foresight for the future, as well as to act in the public interest as it presents itself in 1993.

Let us hope that Mayor Turner and his council will have wisdom enough not to compound others' errors into their own irretrievable mistake.

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