

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

SOUTH COAST DISTRICT OFFICE
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W14a

5-19-0971 (Dana Point Harbor Partners, LLC)

June 10, 2026

CORRESPONDENCE 2



June 8, 2026

California Coastal Commission

Re: The CDP Amendment No. 5-19-0971-A1 Dana Point Harbor Revitalization Project Agenda Item W14a

Chairwomen Harmon and Commissioners,

The revitalization of the Marina at Dana Point is the largest recreational marina project in California. The size of the project adds to its complexity and its duration. The docks alone is a five-year construction project. A project of this size will always have some opposition. Dana Point Harbor Partners has worked diligently with the California Coastal Commission staff to ensure that we are in compliance with our coastal permit. Through this process we are not only clarifying items, we have been working with staff to make improvements to the project.

A few of the people who oppose the project assert that we are building something different than what was permitted. When it comes to the construction plans for the recreational slips, we have had Bellingham Marine, the builder, and Anchor QEA, an independent consultant, both demonstrate to DPHP and California Coastal Commission staff that the Approved Plans and the Building Plans are the same. The drawings have not changed.

A few items have arisen that required clarification. The first is regarding thirty-seven 15-foot slips in front of the affordable hotel and the commercial core. The construction design of the marina put security gates on the docks so that these slips on the head walk could be accessible to the public on a free daily use. It was actually a signature item in the marina that we believe raises the bar as it relates to public access in marinas. The contention was that we were required by LCP and our permit to rent these slips to boaters on a monthly basis and not offer them free to the general public. We have marketed these slips as monthly rentals, but we have found that slips that are not protected by a security gate are not desired or marketable for long-term tenancy. All other slips for long-term tenants are protected by security gates. Working with staff to find a solution that addressed both items, we have identified head walks behind gates that could be rented out to 15ft boats on a monthly basis. This amendment adds forty five 15 ft slips to the recreational pool, designates the thirty-seven slips to be provided to the public for free, and does not require modification of the actual docks.

Another assertion was that DPHP was out of compliance due to the marina management utilizing the preexisting practice of renting an end tie (two slips) to a single tenant was not compliant with our permit for in many cases they utilize the end ties for a larger vessel. The assertion that we are kicking tenants out of the harbor by this policy is not true. It allows us to retain existing tenants that have been renting their slips in this fashion for many years. The assertion that we remove smaller tenants in order accommodate a larger vessel is also false. Our wait list policy in our lease with the County does not permit it. We had discussions with CCC staff during the initial permit process regarding the end-ties and we were requested to create a plan that illustrates single vessels on a majority of the end ties to demonstrate this practice, which was first submitted in the November 13, 2019 plan set in Appendix 5A Sheet eDP1.

Opposition also asserts that the 2,275 slips count is difficult to verify. It is actually pretty straight forward. Working with California Coastal Commission staff, we illustrate where the new eighty two 15ft slips are located. We count all the slips in the 15 phases excluding the end-ties and non-recreation slips (commercial fishing and work boats). Lastly, to address the argument, we then count 24 end-ties as one slip and 14 end-ties as two-slips for illustrative purposes to show compliance. If every end-tie was considered a single slip, which it is not, the project still exceeds the minimum recreational slip requirement as well as the average slip length requirement of 32 ft in the LCP. In the New Slip Mix Chart, we have removed the thirty seven 15 ft slips in the East Cove from the recreational boats slips, so the assertion that we are double counting is not correct.

The opposition also states that the new facility and its security is worse than the existing facility and that there is a mass exodus occurring in the harbor. In Exhibit A we have provided a picture of an existing dock and its security gate and a picture of a new dock and its security gate. As the largest dock builder in the United States, I can assure you that there has not been a better dock system built in California. As it relates to an exodus of boaters, we have completed 11 phases, and they are all full. The vacancy we have is to accommodate boats during the last four phases of construction as per the conditions in our CCC permit. Our waiting lists remains the largest in the state.

We have not started the outer basin. In this area, this amendment does modify the Sport Fishing and Whale Watching docks and reduces the scope of the guest facilities. The modification to the Sport Fishing and Whale Watching docks is solely to accommodate ADA access, which is required by the Orange County building department and desperately needed for organizations like Fish for Life and our Social Justice Program. As it relates to the reduction of the guest slips, it is to address navigational issues. The design still far exceeds the requirements in the LCP.

Lastly, the opposition insinuates a lack of diligence on the part of the California Coastal Commission staff, thus suggesting further review. Such a representation has no basis. We have been working with staff from different departments for almost two years, and they have been nothing but diligent and thorough throughout this process in order to ensure it is the proper outcome.

Respectfully,



Joe Ueberroth
Founder and President
A Managing Member, Dana Point Harbor Partners

Exhibit A

Image of Old/Existing Gate, Railing, and Dock



Image of New Gate, Railing, and Dock

