

Suissevale Dock Survey Analysis – November 11, 2020

This analyzes the LoveSuissevale Dock Survey conducted in early September 2020. Respondents were asked if they would change the Suissevale Dock Policy, and, if they would, how would they change it. All respondents were asked to rank their top three amenities at Suissevale.

Background

The basic dock policy was established back in 1976. At that time, there were about 103 total homes with 60 docks. Docks, common property, were allocated on a first come, first served basis. The principle of having only dock holders pay for dock upkeep, was established to protect the 43 non-dock holders from paying for the docks.

In 2020, there are now over 425 homes, with a dock waiting list of 120 members. The time to obtain a dock has grown to over 20-30 years. There are over 40 docks whose holders have used them for at least 20 years and possibly 2 at 50 years. A dock's annual fee is \$1,000.

Moreover, in 2017, the dock policy was revised: "A dock holder who transfers property to a trust and/or to an immediate family member will retain the dock privilege."

Survey

The Survey was offered to approximately 400 members of Suissevale on 8/29/20 to 9/4/20 via email or Facebook. There were 145 responses. 16 responses were removed as duplicates. Respondents were asked if they had a dock or not and whether they would change the policy. Those that would change were asked questions on how they would change. Those that would not change, were asked what they liked about Suissevale. Both groups were asked what they liked about Suissevale.

Overall Findings

20% of dock holders would change the dock policy, and 80% of those who do not have a dock would change the dock policy. When asked, 92% of the respondents who would change the dock policy did not want docks to be passed down to family members. The beach and low HOA fees are the two most important amenities in Suissevale for all respondents. Social Activities were significantly more important to dock holders, than to non-dock holders. Among non-dock holders, dock rotation and raising dock prices were most wanted.

Detailed Results

1. Does your home/lot have a dock?

12% of respondents said they had a dock, and **88%** said they did not. This is about representative of Suissevale membership. About 60 of 585 homes/lots have docks, or about **10%** of the total membership.

2. Are you open to changing the dock policy which may allow for better access of the docks by all members of Suissevale, or not?

73% of all the respondents said **Yes** they wanted to change the policy. **27%** of all the respondents said **No** they did not want to change the policy.

20% of those who have a dock would change the dock policy. **80%** of those who do not have a dock would change the dock policy.

Suissevale Dock Survey Analysis – November 11, 2020

3. What would you like to change about the current dock policy (open ended question – representative responses)?

Non-Dock holders volunteered the following:

“Docks rental should be at market rate and not subsidized by the association dues of the rest of the community. Dock access should not be able to be passed to family in a will or trust.”

‘When landowners sell their property the docks should be given up. Original owners only including by death divorce etc Dock should be turned back’

“Every member/homeowner should have an opportunity to put his/her/their names in a hat...and each year names will be pulled and winners, granted a dock for that year ... no one should be granted a dock FOREVER!!!! Its ridiculous! and unfair!”

“As I understand things, we're required by court decision to use a waiting list. Assuming that's the case, we need to use the list., we support anything to improve the fairness and accessibility to all members, while receiving a fair fee for the asset..... There's an improper representation/percentage of slip holders on the BOD. There's a conflict of interest in that they vote to improve and create rules to essentially hold in perpetuity "their own" undervalued boat slips, denying fair access to the larger community.”

“I don't think the price reflects the going rate in the area. Those who have the docks now will never give them up.”

“1) Bypassing the wait list and passing docks to children of dock holders should be stopped. This is very unfair to the “first come, first serve” established policy. Entitlement and selfishness is a major problem in the community. 11 of 14 Board members are dock holders. 2) There should be limits on how long someone has a dock. 3) New dock policies should be phased in gradually, considering how long some people have waited for docks due to a flawed system.”

“Acknowledge the marina is common property and slips should be shared on a rotating bases. There needs to be more turnover. A wait list of 20+ years is unacceptable”

“The Dock policy should be a lottery each year. Each member who would like to be included could pay a fee to be included. The Marina is not a public Marina. It SHOULD be open to everyone in Suissevale. Also, Docks should NOT be able to be put in a Trust. That was just the BOD members making sure they would never lose their dock!! As a member of Suissevale for 18 years, I should have the same rights as ANY other member, PERIOD!!!”

“The way family members are assuming the dock over waitlist people Some never on waitlist or paid for that waitlist turn.”

“Members pay the same association dues so they should be afforded the same equal opportunity to enjoy a boat slip for the season. The current policy is not equitable for all members. I would suggest an annual lottery for members that wish to enter that lottery (not all will and you must have a boat registered with Suissevale to qualify) - this would create a fair and equal opportunity for all to enjoy this amazing privilege.“

“I would like to see A fair & equitable use of docks with time limits in usage instituted. If your name is on that waiting list you will get an opportunity.”

“Get rid of it and put the previous policy prior to 2017 when you pass your house down to your kids they are the NEW MEMBER and thus go to the BOTTOM of the list to wait their 20 years like every other new member. They are nit entitled to the dock.”

Suissevale Dock Survey Analysis – November 11, 2020

“Eliminate recent trust addition meant to keep a dock in the family for life and keep people on the wait list longer than ever intended. Set a 5-year max for any family to hold a dock and then they go to the end of the wait list. Recycle the 12 who have held a dock the longest each year.”

“The dock should only be for the owners and not for their children or relatives. There should be a 5 year cap on the dock so everyone can have the opportunity to dock their boat or a lottery. Eliminate the fee for going on the waiting list.”

Dock holders volunteered the following:

“You are only eligible to receive a dock if you are on the wait list. Remove the following sentence. "A dock holder who transfers property to a trust and/or to an immediate family member will retain the dock privilege"

“The docks are for members, only. A member is a person/persons who are on the title to the property. Transferring a dock to a non member is prohibited. Family members other than spouses should not be allowed to retain a dock unless they were on the title when the property was purchased!”

“2 maybe 3 docks saved for rental rotation for people on wait list... or expansion of dock marina”

4. Below are issues with current dock policy. Please check your top three most important issues (among all members wanting policy change).

Issues	Percent of all votes
DOCKS CAN BE PASSED TO A FAMILY MEMBER: "A DOCK HOLDER WHO TRANSFERS PROPERTY TO A TRUST AND/OR TO AN IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBER WILL RETAIN THE DOCK PRIVILEGE"	92%
WAIT FOR DOCK IS TOO LONG.	59%
DOCK FEES DO NOT REFLECT MARKET VALUE	51%
NEW MEMBERS HAVE LITTLE/NO CHANCE OF GETTING A DOCK	51%
RULES ENCOURAGE DOCK RETENTION (EXAMPLE: DON'T HAVE TO LIVE IN A HOME AT TIME OF DOCK ASSIGNMENT)	44%

Suissevale Dock Survey Analysis – November 11, 2020

5. Please rank the dock policy solutions from best solution to least good solution.

Solutions	Score
Create a dock rotation system for interested members	3.6
A combination of raising dock prices and making newly open docks available on a rotation basis	3.3
Raise dock prices from the current \$1,000 to market prices (est. \$3,500) and making newly open docks available to wait list	3.1
Create a free lottery with interested members participating	2.7
First come, first serve at rate that maintains 3-5 year wait	2.4

6. What in the dock policy do you find most desirable? (Open ended and asked of those not wanting policy change. Representative sample.)

"I've been waiting so when I get it I want to keep it."

"My understanding is that only the dock holders pay for the use, and it does not effect my HOA fees, actually I believe helps them"

"After I followed the policies in place that I understood when I built a home here, that I will hold that dock until I give it back and no longer need it."

"It is a fair policy and everyone who currently has a dock waited their time to get one"

"Waited 20 years should be able to use, sorry about the people that should wait"

"Everything you need to follow the rules when you bought into Suissevale you knew the situation. I waited almost 20 years and had no problem with it."

"The price"

"We had a dock for many years and gave up a few years back. The same people have typically kept docks that have been in suissevale for many years. I realize acquiring a dock at this point is years of a wait list. Its desirable to me to pass dock privileges to families whom have trusted property to their heirs as most of those heirs have Also been coming & enjoying boating with family in Suissevale for many, many years."

"I believe your are wrong and misleading about the change to the rules WRT transfer to trust or family members. I dont have a dock and when I moved here I understood it was a first come first server situation. I dont think that can or should be changed because almost everyone who has a dock had to wait a long time to get one, and those on the waiting list have been waiting as well."

"Nothing"

Suissevale Dock Survey Analysis – November 11, 2020

First come first serve policy

“Most reasonable price for value on the lake. Dock fees also subsidize other amenities within the community.”

“The opportunity to have a dock so conveniently located to the beach. The opportunity to have some docks rented out. The fact that the dock fees are what cover the maintenance of the docks AND they now subsidize other costs.”

Abiding to the original rules and regulations that were already in place

7. Of all the amenities in Suissevale, which do you find to be most desirable? Pick your top three.

Choices	All Responses
Beach	88%
Low HOA Fees	64%
Docks	32%
Flat Fee for Water	32%
Social Activities	30%
Other	14%
Right to Rent House for Short Period	9%
Low Dock Fees	7%

Other had 15 written individual responses, none duplicated. Boat ramp, tennis courts, kayak racks were mentioned once.

8. The following analyzes the responses of those who wanted to change the dock policy, to those who did not want to change the dock policy.

20% of dock holders wanted to change the dock policy. 80% of non-dock holders wanted to change the dock policy.

	Have a Dock	Don't Have a Dock
Would Change Dock Policy	20%	80%
Wouldn't Change Dock Policy	80%	20%

The primary reason dock holders gave to change policy was they did not want docks to be passed on to family members:

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- 9. The only statistically significant differences between members who wanted to change the dock policy and those that did not want to change dock policy was on what amenities were ranked higher. **Members who did not want to change dock policy ranked “Social Activities” significantly higher than members who wanted to change dock policy, and as their third most important amenity.** Members who wanted to change dock policy ranked “Right to rent house for short period” significantly higher than members who did not want to change dock policy, but it was relatively unimportant overall.

Of all the amenities in Suissevale, which do you find to be most desirable? Pick your top three.

All Responses

	Beach	Low HOA Fees	Docks	Flat Fee for Water	Social Activities	Other	Right to Rent House for Short Period	Low Dock Fees
All Respondents	88%	64%	32%	32%	30%	14%	9%	7%
Would Change Dock Policy	87%	60%	35%	34%	21%	16%	13%	5%
Wouldn't Change Dock Policy	90%	73%	23%	27%	53%	7%	0%	13%

 Denotes significantly higher than other respondent group