



Marin Audubon Society

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CITY OF SAUSALITO
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT

P.O. Box 599 | MILL VALLEY, CA 94942-0599 | MARINAUDUBON.ORG

August 10, 2015

Zoning Administrator
City of Sausalito
420 Litho Street
Sausalito, CA 94965

Dear Sir/Madam:

This letter concerns the application to construct a 1,116 square foot pier and boat lift for a property owned by Edward Fotsch. In addition to the permit, the project requires a variance to allow it to encroach into the rear yard setback and to extend beyond the property boundary onto city owned property. We recommend that this application be denied for the reasons stated below.

- To protect project sensitive habitat including a rock that provides a safe refuge area and San Francisco Bay. The pier would extend into sensitive habitat including the waters of San Francisco Bay and would cover a partially submerged natural rock formation that is used by native birds, including special status species, for resting and refuge. Areas such as this where birds can rest safely from predators, people, dogs etc., are limited in the bay and along the coast. In fact, the California Coastal National Monument is currently proposed to protect such rocks and small islands along the coast. These resources that exist in the Bay should be protected as well. Impacts on these resources have not been addressed.

- To ensure eelgrass is protected. There appears to be eelgrass in the vicinity of the pier. Construction of, presence of and use of a pier for boat ingress and egress has the potential to adversely impact eelgrass beds. Eel grass is an important aquatic resource that provides habitat for many species including, fish, crabs and birds. No project should be approved until the location of nearby eelgrass beds is identified and independent analysis and evaluation of the potential impacts of this project and its subsequent use, on eelgrass is conducted.

- To ensure the public interest in the resources of the Bay in this location are protected. It appears that the approval of the project extending over the Bay and onto city owned property. As proposed, the project would give away of city property for the private use and benefit of the owner only.

Should this property owner wish to proceed with this application, the project should be referred to the Planning Commission for review and evaluation, and ultimately to the City Council for final approval. For any further consideration, the city should require that an environmental assessment and an initial study be prepared that provides adequate information and analysis of the resources in this section of San Francisco Bay and how the pier and the subsequent use of the pier by one or more boats would impact these resources.

Finally, we note that even though the Staff report refers the reader to the City's website, we could not even find any reference to a Zoning Administrator's hearing on the city's website much less any information about this project. If this project proceeds, please add the Marin Audubon Society to the notification list so that we receive information on the project, and ensure that there is adequate time for public review and comment.

Thank you for considering our recommendation.

Sincerely,



Barbara Salzman, Co-chair
Conservation Committee

Cc: BCDC