

December 4, 2015

The Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forest Resources and Lands, Province of British Columbia

The Honourable Bonnie Raitt, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, Canada

The Honourable Gail Shea, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada

Her Worship Mayor Lisa Helps and Council, City of Victoria

Honourable Ministers, Mayor and Council:

I am writing on behalf of the South Island Sea Kayaking Association (SISKA) in regard to the proposed Victoria International Marina (VIM) development in Victoria Harbour.

SISKA represents over 200 active local sea kayakers who regularly paddle the waters off our coast as well as inland waterways including the Gorge, Esquimalt and Victoria Harbours. We are very familiar with the proposed marina site and continue to have a number of serious concerns for the safety of boaters if this development proceeds.

The planned transit channel between the proposed floating VIM dock and the shore, intended for passage by non-powered boaters would feature blind entrances at both ends, insufficient clearance at high tides under the gangway, the likelihood of considerable floating debris obstacles and a width that would not permit the safe passage of OC6s or similar-sized boats inadvertently meeting there. This could well result in marine accidents and injuries.

If the proposed marina complex were to be located further offshore to widen the transit channel, there would be insufficient room for powered vessels to pass around the perimeter without infringing on the floatplane taxiway on the north side of Pelly Island. The result of these navigational challenges would very likely be the mixing of marine traffic in the area and the potential for additional marine accidents.

In November 2009, SISKA made a detailed submission to the various authorities outlining our concerns about a previous version of this proposed development (attached). Despite the very significant concerns expressed at that time by ourselves, a number of other organizations and the public at large, the governing authorities permitted this development planning process to continue without any public consultation and the current flawed marina proposal is the result.

Regrettably, we have been given no opportunity for feedback on the current proposal, but note from the VIM website (<http://vimarina.ca>) that two local companies involved in rowing and kayaking have apparently been given concessions to operate at the marina. However, it is absolutely essential, before the proposed marina development proceeds any further in this public waterway, that the views and concerns of the much broader community of local kayakers, canoeists and small boaters be fully heard and safely accommodated.

We therefore call upon the provincial, regional and municipal authorities to ensure that the public is properly protected in our local marine environment.

Sincerely,



Alan Campbell

Vice-President, South Island Sea Kayaking Association

Victoria, British Columbia

Copies:

Ryan Greville, Manager, Navigation Protection Program, Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, Canada

Susan Farlinger, Regional Director General, Pacific Region, Fisheries and Oceans Canada

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Jim Handy, Senior Planner, Development Agreements, City of Victoria

Jason Johnson, City Manager, City of Victoria

Tom Zworski, City Solicitor, City of Victoria

Murray Rankin, MP

Randall Garrison, MP

Maurine Karagianis, MLA

Carole James, MLA

Gary Holman, MLA

Chandra Herbert, MLA

Alyssa Zhang, Financial Manager, Victoria International Marina

Peter Harris, Pacifica Paddle Sports

Harold Aune, Whitehall Rowing

Executive, South Island Sea Kayaking Association