

MAPUA BOAT CLUB INC

14 December 2015

MDCA Public Meeting

Intro self

Thank MDCA for arranging and facilitating the meeting at such short notice.

The MBC were not able to arrange a meeting with our 3 Ward Councillors to discuss a solution to boat ramp access so we accepted this opportunity for MBC members and Tamaha Sea Scouts who have been completely overlooked with the restricted access we now have as a result of the commercialisation of the Mapua Wharf precinct.

First a bit of history just to remind us all why we still have a wharf, boat ramp and boating activity here in Mapua. Boating activity which I think you'd have to agree help give Mapua some of its uniqueness and aesthetic values that make us want to live here and keep Mapua as our home.

In 1987 the NHB was going to dismantle the Mapua Wharf, neither the NHB or the TDC had any interest in it and so the MBC stepped forward and offered to maintain the wharf and was granted a lease along with approval to build a boat ramp alongside the wharf.

This ramp was built by boat club with the help of the community seeing the value of a safe and practical access point to the water.

Contrary to comments from some quarters the MBC did not have sole or exclusive use of the boat ramp – anyone could and did use it – eg remember the estuary jet boat tours that used to operate from the wharf, kayakers use it and of the course the sea scouts even cyclists and the ferry have used it?

The MBC used to have approx. 150 members several years ago but now has a membership of about 75+ families while the scouts have over 70+ members.

There are hundreds of Mapua kids who have been through the scouts and learned boating skills and seamanship along with a love for the water during the 28 years the MBC has maintained the wharf as “guardians of the wharf” a title earned in 1987.

Over the last 10-12 years access has slowly been restricted through the removal of the dinghy rack on the wharf, removal of trailer parking at the boat ramp and lack of manoeuvrability as commercial activity expanded, and while some of these things happened a number of years ago along with the mysterious removal of our boat ramp sign they have all had an impact on the MBC retaining trailer boat members and of course ramp

use has declined because of the lack of manoeuvrability and conflict between the vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

The conflict has been created by the TDC, endorsed by our councillors not acting upon the concerns of the boat club and boating community who have preferred to allow the slow and continuous creep of commercial interests at the wharf.

This slow creep has now reached a full crescendo with the \$1.4m TDC investment in Shed 4 and has now resulted in access restrictions to all vehicles.

Vehicles will be banned between the hours of 10am and 7pm, in the words of the TDC commercial Manager Gene Cooper “health and safety trumps all”, pity they didn’t think of that at the outset and address the concerns expressed by the MBC in an overall plan – do council think they can also control the tides by making the boat ramp accessible only between 7pm and 10am!

Gene Cooper has also stated to the MBC that “Boat clubs throughout the country do not have access directly to the wharf. They move gear through Marina’s to get to their Boat and this instance is no different. I think we are putting up obstacles for the sake of it sometimes.”

Coastal villages around the world have preserved access to the wharves and the water for Boating communities; even in crowded places like Portsmouth, New Haven, Rockport and Gloucester in New England.

In NZ Nelson, Havelock, Waikawa, Mana, Seaview, Westhaven, Halfmoon Bay, all of them and many more you can drive up to the pontoon gate and park!

Even in our major cities you can drive on to the Viaduct Basin and Princess wharves in Auckland or in Wellington you can drive onto the old overseas terminal wharf and access Chaffers Marina.

Napier has converted their old wool and grain stores and preserved vehicle access to all parts of the marina and wharves at the same time, Gisborne and Whangarei also. Therefore we struggle with Mr Coopers assertion – and let me say right here we are not putting up obstacles for the sake of it, as this development has now proven.

The fact is this slow creep and conflict has seen pressure shift to Grossi Point where up to 40+ trailer rigs can be on any given morning or evening at this time of the year when the snapper are in the bay.

The Grossi Point pressure has resulted in conflict between picnickers, Swimmers, walkers and neighbours all to satisfy the commercial growth at the expense of our community.

The question is Mr Cooper when will health and safety trump this?

For now council seem ok with this conflict and forget about health and safety and the damage to the reserve at Grossi Point as they have allocated \$80,000 to develop Grossi Point!

Yet on the TDC website boat ramp list it refers to Gross Point as *“subject to significant tidal effects and may be usable only on a high tide with local knowledge.”*

The best time to go swimming at Grossi Point – yep you guessed it high tide!

There has been and was no consultation with the MBC or sea scouts re the \$80k upgrade of Grossi Point – may be council staff and our councillors would do well to reacquaint themselves with the TDC policy regarding engagement with stakeholders!

While the MBC has had representation on the wharf forum Chaired by Cr Ensor our concerns over retaining access and our ability to use the wharf and boat ramp to launch and retrieve trailer boats and service moored boats have not been heard or acted upon and now we have this situation.

And quite frankly we have had a gutsful of not being heard.

The commercialisation of the wharf precinct has been done for businesses, tourists and visitors to Mapua – this development has not been done for the local community in fact you could argue we have suffered as a result and our elected representatives are responsible.

Why has this been allowed to happen at the expense of what our community had created at the wharf and had enjoyed at Grossi Point!

Because let's face it Mapua wouldn't be what it is if it weren't for the wharf and the boating activity that it attracts, a wharf saved by the Mapua Boat Club – the aesthetic and intrinsic values that Mapua has relate directly back to what was ceded in 1987.

The TDC states in its Coastal Structures Activity Management Plan that population in Mapua will increase by 2039 by 478 from the 2014 pop of 2028.

Think about that 478 people in 25 years, that is growth of less than 20 people a year!

We have 80 houses on Mapua Rise and another 91 in Aranui Rd approved! Those two developments alone will take care of the 25 year forecast in the next couple of years.

I suggest the TDC go rework these figures, if they are making decisions that affect our community on this type of shoddy forecasting.

On top of this there are the 200 properties around Marriages Road and more land will get converted to residential or lifestyle blocks, and there is a number of properties in the village attempting to subdivide.

Why is this important – well Nelson/Tasman has one of the highest boat ownership rates in the NZ. And in 2009 NZ had 450,000 recreational boats.

That is 1 boat for every 8 people?

Take that TDC growth figure of 478, and 1:8 that is another 60 boats in Mapua!

If the population forecast is wrong and its 800 that is another 100 boats in Mapua, without the growth in the surrounding district.

Yet our access to the water has been restricted and already struggles to cope, how will it cope with these increased numbers?

Only last week a Nelson Mail article reported on the pressure the Nelson boat ramp is under making it clear more and better boat ramps are required across the region as boating and fishing clearly are one of the most popular recreational activities in our region, recreational activities we should be encouraging in this day and age.

The TDC clearly struggles with managing recreational boating, judging by recent news in regard to Mapua and both Kaiteriteri and Pohara, perhaps it is because of their lack of consultation and refusal to listen what communities are saying.

Mapua is the only Coastal village on the Waimea Estuary it is unthinkable we will not have a half decent boat launching area that does not impact on other activities, given we had one once!

The MBC talked to the TDC about buying the section next to the Golden Bear and Hamish's a number of years ago this was a potential boat ramp location, the section would have cost about \$380k at the time, no interest here from council an opportunity lost yet they went ahead and purchased the Golden Bear & Hamish's building "in commercial interests".

The MBC attempted to have a boat ramp included in the design of the Waterfront Park, this was overlooked and the boat club were told we had a boat ramp and that will always be, my how things have changed!

The building of Shed 4 is compounding the parking and traffic management issues at the end of Aranui Road and the wharf precinct and no extra parking plan has been implemented.

Council do have \$180k in the 2015-16 year and another \$350k in the 2018-19 year to spend on car parking.

We suggest that before any additional ratepayers money is spent to mitigate the parking issues council have dialogue with the MBC re the location on a new boat ramp and an overall vehicle plan for Mapua that will include boat trailer parking to replace that lost at the Wharf and allow for growth.

The MBC accepts that there is conflict for pedestrians with vehicles and cyclists at the wharf and while this is not of the boat clubs making agrees this needs to be remedied.

The club seeks a positive solution and it is clear the relocation of the boat ramp is the only answer and that Grossi Point is not suitable.

The MBC has looked at many options for an alternative boat ramp including

- The Mapua Leisure Park
- An Iwa Street Marina
- The Causeway to the leisure Park, which incidentally the council wants to sell, more slow creep I might suggest, be warned!
- 3 sites at Grossi point
- the waterfront park.

The boat club preferred option is the waterfront park and this is the only practical solution on the other side from the dunny on the hill, the dunny that you can have a shower in when it rains.

The location of this has the full support of our membership, the immediate neighbour and many members of the wider community, and while this location will utilise some of the open space at the Waterfront Park the following will be achieved:

- Remove vehicle/pedestrian conflict in the wharf precinct area
- Remove cycle pedestrian conflict in the wharf precinct area
- Return Grossi Point to the recreational area it was designed to be
- Remove conflict vehicle/Swimmer/Picnickers at Grossi Point
- Increase the green space on the northern side of the wharf precinct area
- Allow the building of the promenade to link the waterfront Park with the precinct
- Provide 24/7 access to the water for any water safety issues in the estuary or channel
- Better utilises the Waterfront park space

And finally the Coastal Structures Activity Management Plan states..

“the council will continue to allow the use of coastal assets for coastal related activities and other compatible uses in a manner that minimises conflict with local community and the coastal environment, serves the needs of the district and is self-supporting”

We claim the TDC has failed to meet their own objectives in the case of the local Mapua community's use of coastal assets and we want to know why – and we expect our elected councillor's to put it right!

In the words of the late Alan Martin "it's the putting right that counts!"

We look forward to the support of our Mapua community on this very important issue for our coastal village and boating community and hope we can work with our community groups and TDC in reaching a positive enduring solution of a new boat ramp located at the Waterfront park..

Thank You.