

Victoria Harbour Ferry is frequently asked what the company position is on the development of the Victoria International Marina project. In recent weeks there have been a number of meetings held by the developers as well as community groups, both in support and in opposition to the project. Representatives of Victoria Harbour Ferry attended each and every meeting. The company has an opinion on the project, which is based on the company's 20 years of safe operations in the harbour and as arguably the most frequent commercial user of the waters in the harbour, alongside of the 'parameters' of the development as they have been represented to Victoria Harbour Ferry.

It should be noted that this is an 'opinion' based on observations and representations of the project.

Victoria Harbour Ferry has two primary concerns regarding the Victoria International Marina project. They are 'safety' and 'environment'. The ongoing safety of air and marine operations in Victoria's Harbour is in the hands of Transport Canada. Federal regulations are the oversight of those federal agencies responsible for all commercial and pleasure craft on the water and all aircraft entering or departing the harbour. It is our opinion that all of the federal agencies involved in monitoring the safe operations of marine and aircraft in the harbour are meeting a high standard of enforcement.

For as long as the harbour remains a working harbour, there will be a challenge to balance the impact of air and marine operations with the lifestyle impact on the community. This balance will always be maintained via an open dialogue between all federal agencies and the community. Change should only come as a result of balance and fair assessment to the needs of all concerned.

Having stated our position on the role federal agencies who may oversee the marina development, it is important to state our opinion on what we think the impact of the Victoria International Marina may have on the 'safety' of air and marine operations in our harbour.

To date, VHFC has not been apprised of any permits, certifications or other documents received by the developer from any agency, federal, provincial or municipal authorizing the development of the project.

The current iteration of the project calls to mind, in our opinion, several safety concerns. The project may cause aircraft and marine operations to shift to other areas of operation in the harbour that could lead to a condensed environment wherein there is a risk of incident which may not normally have existed.

Victoria Harbour Ferry is not aware of any agency... federal, provincial or municipal issuing permits, certification or other documents stating that the removal of thousands of yards of seabed is acceptable.

Victoria Harbour Ferry has not been apprised of, to date, any agency certification regarding the safety nor the environmental issues presented with the development of Victoria International Marina.

Safety of air and marine operations on the waters of our harbour and our harbour marine environment are the primary concerns of Victoria Harbour Ferry and it is our opinion that neither of these two issues has been addressed by the developer to the degree that government overseers of the applicable regulations have approved the project.

Our community, that which is Victoria Harbour Ferry is our backyard. The residents of our community have been the backbone of our business for 20 years. Their safety and their living harbour are our concern and we will continue to support the need to maintain a balanced working harbour. That 'balance', in our opinion, should never compromise safety in our harbour.

Any harbour development on the sea bed and surface of our harbour waters should be held to a standard that meets both the regulatory requirements development and operation as well as a reasonable standard of community requirements.

The developer of Victoria International Marina should not become the precedent that may compromise the future of the safety and environment of our harbour.

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