

Harbor Aesthetics Committee

July 23, 2015

As a prestatement for future Portage Harbor aesthetics, I realize that money is not available at this point for anything beyond function. That said, these are only my thoughts of a wish list and comments that were taken at the Aesthetics Committee formation on July 13, 2015.

1. In my mind, Portage Cove is a working commercial harbor first, a recreational harbor second. Without commercial fishermen and the money they bring to the community, Haines would be in a greatly diminished viable state.
2. As a working and recreational harbor the fact that tourists can see something of the real Alaska and real Alaskans working is a treat and education, even more so as they have free and unfettered access to the docks and grid and frequently avail themselves of both. As recreational boaters on the main dock my husband John and I have been asked numerous times by tourists how things work, what are the gillnetter boats, the trollers, the packers. Most often they aren't asking about recreational fishing or sailboats. They want to understand how the fish/crabs are caught and if lucky enough to see what marine life looks like at the great new cleaning station. To that extent, for people who like signage, possibly an explanatory sign or pamphlets with boat and/or marine descriptions could be placed at Lookout Park or by the "Haines" sign by the current ramp, something along the nature of what is on the Ferry cafeteria tables.
3. Harbor restroom additions would be nice, 2 showers (which don't impede toilet use) and a few more stalls. We used to have separate men/women facilities. Local and transient boaters don't always have the luxury of onboard facilities, and during our travels in SE, it is one of the main reasons Outside boaters don't stop here. Make Haines inviting by adding facilities, possibly with Cruise Ship Tax funds.
4. The ice house, while not part of the new design, created an outcry of ugliness when installed. Would not a few trees on the outside provide aesthetic screening and with growth help shade the facility and make it more efficient?
5. There is a definite need for the new parking area under plan 14B. Can it not be down at the same level as the existing parking lot, keeping an elevation separation from Lookout Park and the Memorial?

And what a wonderful place to expand winter storage. Even if gillnetters are allowed to store boats year round (if the Nightingale is an example), tourists have the opportunity of seeing marine architectural engineering up close. Winter storage is a good way to keep some inflow of money and for Haines to remember its' fishing roots (mental aesthetics of sorts).

Alaska and in particular Haines has a uniqueness that is photographed everyday by locals and tourists alike for what it is. Make it safe and functional and keep the aesthetic costs down.

Regards,

  
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