

**From:** [Kelly Mitchell](#)  
**To:** [Julie Cozzi](#)  
**Subject:** Harbor project  
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Please forward this email to the assembly members

I think it is unfortunate that the harbor expansion project is under fire while the fishing fleet is out on the water, working to fuel our local economy. They are the primary users of our crowded and increasingly shallow harbor.

The recent uproar over the aesthetics of the harbor project by a small but vocal group of people is frustrating. Where were they when the plans were first being drawn up, where were they when grants were being written and the ground work was beginning? This project has been in the works for years, and the harbor has been packed full with boats jockeying for space to get ice or use the crane for too long.

The "parking lot" that the anti-expansion people dislike so much is not a place to leave cars, it is a boat storage area. A place to haul boats out of the water for winter storage and maintenance. It needs to be big enough for a vehicle towing a 30+ foot boat to maneuver. Many people store their boats in Skagway, paying rent to that town, because we don't have the space.

The same anti-expansion people do not like the idea of the metal wave barrier style breakwater. Their "float" in the parade indicated that there will be no new slips in this first stage of construction. There was an engineering study and a pile driving barge in town year before last; a rubble mound breakwater would be too wide at the bottom and would essentially sink in the soft bottom of Portage cove. No new slips because you must build the breakwater before you build the floats or the new slips will be destroyed.

It is distressing to hear the "us and them" attitude of the anti-harbor group. I guide tours in the summer and enjoy being able to share with visitors that Haines is a fishing town. I describe our successful gill net fleet, tell them about mesh sizes, about the 5 types of salmon and about the pride we have regarding our varied economy. We aren't just another tourist town, we are a real Alaskan town.

A bigger harbor will accommodate not only the fishing fleet but recreational and tourism related vessels, to have a bigger harbor we need a longer breakwater.

Thank you for reading this, Kelly Mitchell

Sent from my iPad