

Town of Melbourne Beach

MINUTES

PLANNING & ZONING BOARD WORKSHOP THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 2025 @ 6:30 PM COMMUNITY CENTER – 509 OCEAN AVENUE

Board Members:

Chairman David Campbell
Vice Chairman Kurt Belsten
Member April Evans
Member Dan Harper
Member Gabor Kishegyi

Alternate Board Members

Alternate Todd Albert
Alternate Jason Judge

Staff Members:

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro
Town Clerk Amber Brown

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Kurt Belsten called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Deputy Clerk Cyd Cardwell conducted the roll call.

Present:

Vice Chairman Kurt Belsten
Member April Evans
Member Dan Harper
Alternate Todd Albert
Alternate Jason Judge

Staff Present:

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro
Deputy Clerk Cyd Cardwell

Absent:

Chairman David Campbell
Member Gabor Kishegyi

3. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Discussion on adding a finger pier/dock at the Sixth Ave boat ramp
 - i. Documents from the June Regular Town Commission Meeting agenda packet
 - ii. Drawings provided by Alternate Member Todd Albert

Member April Evans spoke about having concerns, so she reached out to DEP, but did not get additional information. The Board has not had to deal with this before. Has concerns about boat size, how to handle parking, restrict it to residents only, preventing parking along the street, possible insurance liability, and how to control the use of the ramp in a residential area. A resident will finance it and do the repairs.

Will we request that his estate and heirs be committed to this, or at some point will it revert to the Town to do the maintenance?

Alternate Jason Judge spoke about some of what was covered in the last meeting by Mike Kalajian. DEP effectively does not have any say in building a small finger pier. As far as maintenance, he has agreed to maintain it.

Member April Evans spoke about not being sure we can recommend this to the Commission to accept this gift because we're dealing with public property. Also, it's disruptive to the neighborhood if it is enlarged.

Alternate Todd Albert spoke about this being a bigger issue than the pier. This is a neighborhood ramp, and needs to stay that way, but about half of the people using it don't have Melbourne Beach stickers. The ramp has other issues. When water comes up the ramp, it goes to the neighbors' yards. The south side seawall is deteriorating, and the rebar is showing; now there is coquina rock, so you cannot use it to load and unload. The only way to load and unload is to go down the ramp, which is slippery. That's where the pier comes in as a safety possibility. The seawall needs to be repaired, or it is going to be gone. Take the walls of the ramp out to the parking area where the ramp ends, or take additional measures to contain the water. The main things are safety and controlling access. Have parking only for residents. Parking already limits how many people can use it.

Alternate Jason Judge spoke about having a meeting with all of the people that live there, and Mike Kalajian had a solution for the water going to the neighboring yards. There are some problems, like with anything, but there are ways to work around them to make it work for everyone.

Member Dan Harper spoke about being in favor of the dock. The parking would have to be enforced. The safety of getting on and off your vessel is a big deal. As for the insurance liability, we already have a pier, so not sure if there's much additional exposure. As long as Mike gets the DEP permit, there are no codes preventing this.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about there being minimal impact regarding insurance liability.

Alternate Jason Judge spoke about coming up with this years ago because he used the ramp regularly. It has always been difficult to use. It's usable, but it is not safe. The problems exist, but there are also solutions out there.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about how the Commission is addressing the parking ordinance. It does exist, but the fine amount is going to be amended. There is an enforcement piece that is in place and would be applicable to the boat ramp area. Unless the street says no parking, you are allowed to park on the street.

Andy Atkinson – South side of the ramp – This was never an issue until the ramp was redone after a storm. Before, you could never launch anything more than a jet

ski. Now it is very popular. Every weekend, there are 4-5 trailers. Thinks the objective is to be able to launch a boat without having to get in the water and do so safely. Before, there was no wall or coquina rock, and people would just bring their boat up to the seawall and hop in. Repair the seawall, remove the wall, and get rid of the coquina rocks. Anything past 10 feet, you're in their backyard. People are going to loiter and party out there. It has to do with their privacy and safety. If you were on a dock, you would be looking directly into their kitchen.

Marivi Walker – Spoke about having a gate that closes at night. When there were parking issues at Avenue A, the police wrote tickets, and people stopped doing it.

Billy Stephens – Spoke about there being 3 groups to satisfy: what's best for the whole Town, those that want the dock, and those that have concerns. What is best for the Town is safety. The drawback is that if you build it, they will come. Privacy is his biggest concern. It's unreasonable to say you cannot have a dock, but it's also unreasonable not to sit down with people who have concerns. If we are going to do this, propose it be a package: a seawall, beautification, and a dock. Address parking, tags, penalty, and make sure the dock doesn't expand in the future. If the dock is to accomplish people getting on and off their boat safely, what size dock is needed? Proposed 3 feet wide, but 5 feet long, and add a pole 10-15 feet beyond that.

Alison Dennington – Spoke about having a flat-bottom boat, and they get in and out just fine. There have been problems there after storms. If we make it bigger, there will be the same, but bigger problems. What's the actual cost from the insurance? If they pay to build it and maintain it, we would need an agreement with everyone who works on it. You cannot park on Pine Street because there is no shoulder. It will make it dangerous. If safety is the issue, why not just sink a post out there?

Marivi Walker – Spoke about the Town having an umbrella insurance policy that covers the pier and the playground.

Kari Ross – Spoke about the current situation as an unintended consequence. Before, you had the possibility of standing on the sea wall to load and unload, but now there is coquina rock, which goes out quite a bit, but it is dangerous. There is a change that has happened which has created this problem.

A resident spoke about launching a boat there, and before, it wasn't too bad. It is a safety issue. It is not easy to launch. The idea of the dock is not to impede on their privacy. The dock will speed up the launching process. Loitering can be addressed.

Bruce Larson – Spoke about using the ramp for years. It is useful for smaller crafts; for larger crafts, it is more realistic to use another ramp. Concerned about how many people are using the ramp, the problem people are not from in Town, and parking issues. Make sure it cannot be dredged to limit the size of vessels. Safety is a concern. The coquina rock that was added due to the seawall failing has made it more difficult to launch. Address all of those concerns, and then you are closer to addressing the complete picture of what the right solution would be. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday

during the sunset hours are the larger problems. If it is used when it is dark, then lighting needs to be addressed as well.

Alternate Todd Albert asked Mike Kalajian about removing the coquina, fixing the seawall, and putting something along the line of the seawall to step on.

Mike Kalajian – Spoke about having something along the seawall to step on would give people more access to the neighbor's property. You can do the seawall, and people can step from there, but it is not the safest. 95-98% of ramps have some type of access to get on and off a boat.

Alison Dennington – Spoke about the coquina rock as a stopgap due to the seawall. The best option is to take the coquina out, repair the wall, and take the top part out.

Kari Ross – Spoke about how this proposal would be a cost-free solution for the Town. Now people are talking about spending \$100,000 from the Town's budget.

Billy Stephens – Spoke about how there has to be a way to satisfy everyone.

Alternate Jason Judge spoke about doing some more research and going out there and looking at it.

Mike Kalajian – Spoke about how this has become such a big deal. It was supposed to be about safety, and it has become about dredging, which will never happen.

Bruce Larson – Spoke about how there is currently a design problem during storms, and the seawall needs to be addressed either way.

Vice Chairman Kurt Belsten spoke about there being more than one problem. There are security issues, ramp issues, flooding issues, coquina issues, pier issues, safety issues, parking issues, and rowdiness at night issues.

Marivi Walker – Spoke about how there are also a lot of solutions.

Bruce Larson – Spoke about for any project or any issue, look at how many people are affected positively and negatively and to what level.

Marivi Walker – Confirmed the Planning and Zoning Board has not received a proper presentation from Mike Kalajian, who proposed the project.

Member April Evans spoke about the other problems that come into play that need to be addressed.

Marivi Walker – Spoke about writing down the problems and the solutions.

Member Dan Harper spoke about still thinking this is an asset to the community with the appropriate mitigations.

Vice Chairman Kurt Belsten spoke about the area's need for beautification.

The Board agreed that it needs to be addressed as an entire project as a whole.

Mike Kalajian – Spoke about only building the minimum of 15-20 feet because he is not going to build something that doesn't work. It would be a waste.

A resident spoke about when the road was redone, it was raised, and that is what causes the flooding because the water cannot run off the road and down the ramp.

Alternate Jason Judge left at 7:49 pm

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Karen Fenaughty – 323 Third Ave – Spoke about being a member of the Environmental Advisory Board, and the landscape ordinance recommendations that the Board was provided were missing pages. They have received some feedback and made changes to the proposal.

Alison Dennington – Spoke about a proposed ordinance about tree canopy that the Mayor of Cocoa Beach is looking at doing as part of retention, because grass swales are not how you're supposed to do it.

Member Dan Harper spoke about doing a summary of the EAB proposal. Would like to further discuss this in October.

Bruce Larson – Spoke about doing a hyperspectral memory survey of the Town to put some metrics on this. It will take 3-4 generations to recover some of the trees that have been taken out now.

5. ADJOURNMENT


Member April Evans motioned to adjourn; Member Dan Harper seconded; Motion carried 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.



David Campbell
Chairman

ATTEST:



Amber Brown, CMC
Town Clerk

