QUESTIONS TO AND ANSWERS FROM THE NEW DOCKS COMMITTEE FALL – 2009

Question From Steve Davis – Slip 32
I'm behind in my reading and only just now got a chance to read the August and Sept report of the dock committee.

I realize that everyone assumes that the condition of the existing docks is poor, on the edge of insurability, etc.

Is there a report anywhere that tells what condition the existing dock(s) is in, in structural terms.

For example:
what structural members are involves:
Pilings,
girders,
joists, or
deck?

Is the problem:
The microbes and worms are eating our pilings.
The pressure treated wood is rotting.

What area of our complex is involved?
Slips (aprox 1 - 25) north of bath house #2
Slips (aprox 25 - 45) south of bath house #2
The circular dock
The dock west of the circle toward the bridge?

I'm in slip #32 and I have had two free standing pilings eaten off at the soil line. Bad problem.
But my pressure treated deck and support structure stills looks pretty good.

If there is no report, can the committee just give me the number of a few slips that I can look at next time I'm on board?

I realize that pressure treated lumber has a utilitarian look that would probably be shunned by most members of swanky yacht clubs. But other than the worm eaten pilings, I'm having a hard time seeing the problem (with the deck). Is the deck so far gone that we should not consider driving new piles to support the existing pressure treated deck. With a decision to keep the deck, we could put more money into pilings of a more lasting material.

Reply from New Dock Committee

Steve

You have experienced first hand, the most pressing problem with the docks. Borers get into the pilings right at the earth level, and just eat away, taking away all of their strength. This happens all over the area. I was chairman of the dock committee at Queen Ann's Cove Condos across the creek. They started loosing pilings 10 years ago. I discovered that when I lightly brushed one, and it snapped right off. Same problem as we have. The problem exists throughout the Bay Area.

Let me start with a couple of general statements before getting into the details. Number one, is that these docks were built to sell, not to last. Next is the fact, that we talked with 4 reputable marine contractors about major repair/renovations. They all said it would be cheaper to build new than to try to save the existing docks.

I suggest that you walk the docks, and count the replacement boards. This is easy to do because the different colors. Then, take a close look at many of the others, and you will find they need replacing now or soon, and how far behind can the others be.

I was personally involved with the replacement of the last batch of deck boards. Note they are installed with screws, instead of nails. That is because the stringers are splitting to where nails will not hold. Many of the screws simply went through the deck boards and spun in the stringers instead of gripping. Many screws are in at an angle to find enough grip. So we have failing deck boards, attached to failing stringers, attached to failing pilings, and that leaves nothing to save. Also note that the most expensive element in the piers is the pilings.

I noted that you are slip 31.That is in the section 23 through 48. When you see our plans for construction, you will find that 23 through 48 is the fifth and last phase of construction. This is done, because these docks are in much better condition than the others, so you need to look beyond your area.

Now, as to what measures we are taking to improve on the quality for the new docks.

Ideally, we would build concrete floating piers, with heavy duty steel pilings. I sincerely doubt that our members would accept the cost of that, which could run 40,000 to 50,000 dollars per slip, so we must look elsewhere.

You have seen our proposals in the newsletter and on the website. That calls for the contractors to provide two bids, one for fixed and one for floating.

Your committee has looked at many floating docks, and are considering the Sullivan brand as they have a superior reputation, and the ones we have seen with a little age on them have held up much better than the others. Also, Sullivan is one of the largest, if not

the largest manufacturer of their style docks. It takes only about 80 pilings to anchor this type of docks, and 65 finger pier anchor pilings, as opposed to over 1,000 dock and mooring pilings for fixed docks. This makes it feasible to use steel (12 inch dia. with 1/2 inch wall thickness) to anchor the main docks and traditional treated wood pilings for the finger piers. This makes the floating docks have a longer life than fixed, since piling life is extended, and the docks and their utilities never go under water.

As for the fixed docks, here are the basic material specifications:

Dock pilings-8 to 10 inch tops, treated to 2.5 CCA(the best available)
Mooring pilings-10 to 12 inch tops treated to 2.5 CCA
Stringers and headers, 2x8 rough cut treated to 2.5 CCA
Deck boards-2x8 dressed lumber treated to .60 CCA
All bolts, nuts, and washers are 5/8 inch hot dipped galvanized
All steel parts and fittings are to be hot dipped galvanized

For your reference, the treated lumber from Home Depot or Lowes is treated to .40 CCA or less.

Steve, if you have any more questions, please feel to phone my cell at 804 370 4066. I would also encourage you to attend our new dock committee meetings, which normally occur at 8:00 AM on Sat. mornings, and /or the next board meeting on Oct 14.

Best Wishes
Ed Fisher