

## **Board of Variance sets marina plan adrift**

By Naoibh O'Connor-Staff writer

Concord Pacific may have to rework parking and loading arrangements for its proposed marina at the foot of George Wainborn Park. The Board of Variance upheld an appeal June 28, which challenged relaxations granted by the development permit board.

The decision was welcomed by marina opponent Rider Coeey. "Many of us didn't think we had a chance. But since parking and loading were raised as issues at the last meeting, we started looking at them closely," explained Coeey, a spokesperson for FalseCreek-Alert, an email newsletter and website for local residents. "The more congestion and safety issues we found, the more we saw they would be a problem for everyone, including Concord."

The parking relaxation allowed for parking to be permitted offsite under The Erickson-the newest building designed by Arthur Erickson, which is expected to begin construction this year. Rick Scobie, chair of the development permit board, said allowing offsite parking is typical for marinas. "Certainly for marinas it's most common because marinas don't have an upland portion of land in which to accommodate their parking or loading," he said.

Scobie noted the issue is complicated. Under the parking bylaw, parking must be located on the site it's intended to serve, but the bylaw also allows parking to be located on another site within 45 metres of the site its intended to serve, with the approval of the director of planning.

The development permit board believed the marina parking was beyond 45 metres, he said.

During Wednesday's appeal, Concord Pacific indicated the site was actually less than 45 metres away.

"Therefore the board didn't have to make the decision it did-it

simply had to approve the parking location being on a site within 45 metres," Scobie said. "So it was a less significant relaxation in reality."

A loading relaxation was also challenged through the appeal. The parking bylaw requires the provision of one mid-size or "Class B" loading space. The board ended up technically relaxing the required loading with the understanding that Concord would provide two off-site "Class A" smaller spaces to accommodate a cube van-size vehicle.

As it turns out, Scobie said, Concord can provide a smaller space offsite, as well as a larger space offsite.

Now that the Board of Variance upheld the appeal against the relaxations, Concord has several options-it can rework its parking and loading plans or challenge the Board of Variance's decision in court.

Council could also override the Board of Variance's decision, according to Scobie. He said it had already approved the marina's parking and loading plan. Meanwhile, he doubts the parking and loading plan can change to place it closer to the marina. A call to Concord Pacific was not returned by the Courier's deadline.

published on 06/30/2006