

Pillar Point Harbor & San Mateo County Harbor District

MCC presentation 7/5/2014

by Lisa Ketcham

Aerial images courtesy of California Coastal Records Project

Pillar Point Harbor Construction – 1960's

Outer breakwater construction by Army Corps - 1959-1961.

Wave surge within outer breakwater wouldn't allow floating boat berths.



Bulkhead – fill – parking lot
Admin/harbormaster building
Concession building
Maintenance building

Johnson Pier
Boat launch ramp
East restroom

1972

Harbor Construction 1970's

Reworked vehicle entrance, additional parking near highway



1979

Inner Harbor Construction 1980's

- Extend bulkhead/fill/parking lot westward; west harbor restroom
- Inner breakwaters
- Added parking lot at corner Hwy 1 & Capistrano
- Dredging for floating boat docks/berths; dredge placed on Perched Beach



By 1993

- Boat launch ramp relocated to east inner breakwater, expanded to 6 lanes.
- Boat trailer parking lot added uphill from new road to launch ramp.
- Public fishing pier added on top of west inner breakwater.
- Coastal trail paved from Perched Beach to Surfers' Beach.



Inner Harbor East Shoreline

Prior to inner harbor dredging & construction, the entire east harbor shoreline was a natural sandy beach backed by bluffs.



Inner Harbor East Shoreline

Perched Beach and adjoining wetlands --
safe & popular place for kayaking, paddle-boarding, wildlife viewing.



Harbor District priority for Perched Beach:
bulkhead, fill to 15 ft elevation, pave/develop

Inner Harbor East Shoreline -- “Perched” Beach

Popular kayak, paddle board rental & launch beach



Inner Harbor East Shoreline -- “Perched” Beach California Coastal Trail



Inner Harbor East Shoreline -- Wetlands

Wetland habitat created to mitigate for boat launch ramp development, 1990.

Harbor District now proposes to bury with dredge material to replace loss of Perched Beach to development, but where will they mitigate for this loss of mud-flat habitat?

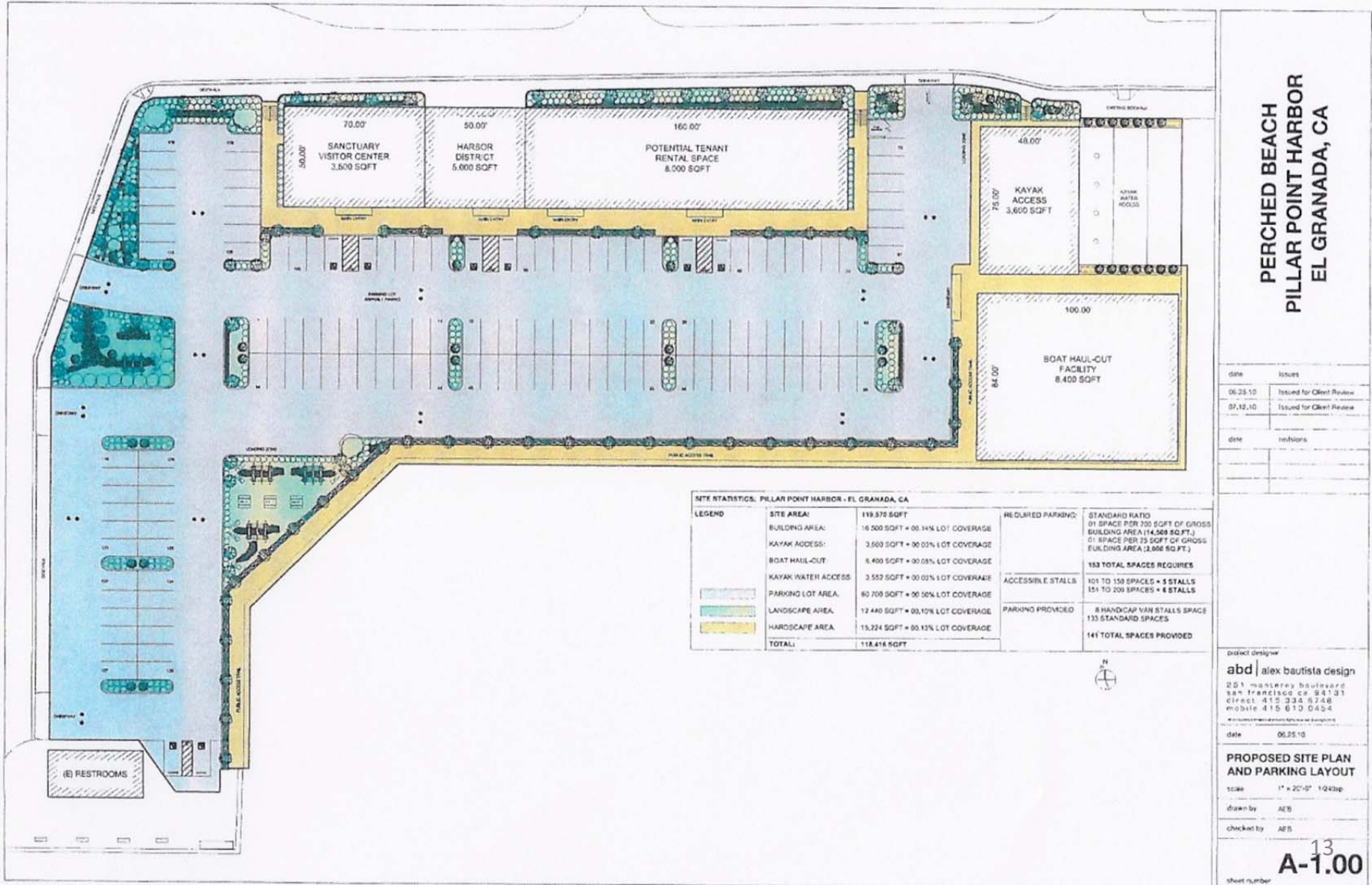


Perched Beach Development Projects – ebb & flow

- 1991 Master Plan recommended developing Perched Beach, claiming its steep drop off was unsuitable for swimming. (kayak? paddleboard? picnic?)
- 2000: 2-story, 5200 sq ft building, restroom/laundry first floor, rental space on second floor. CDP approved 2001, permit expired, never built.
- 2004: 1-story, 2300 sq ft building, restroom/showers/laundry. CDP approved 2005. Building permit issued. Never built – “too expensive”.
- 2005: 40-berth and haul-out project -- consulting services obtained.
- 2008: Haul-out facility not feasible – thus bulkhead could be extended further. Discussion of 2-story development – same location as 2000 & 2004 plan.
- 2010: Perched Beach Committee (Tucker/Parravano) agreed to reactivate consultant contract to plan bulkhead, possibility for admin office, other development. Vision to complete bulkhead in next 12-18 months.
- 2011: Authorize detail bulkhead design.
Public meetings: public prefers recreational area, not building.
- 2013: Third dredge disposal event from “emergency” launch ramp dredging – serves pre-development purpose to convert beach to upland area (previous events in 1998, 2006 without CCC permit).

2010 Perched Beach Bulkhead Site Plan -

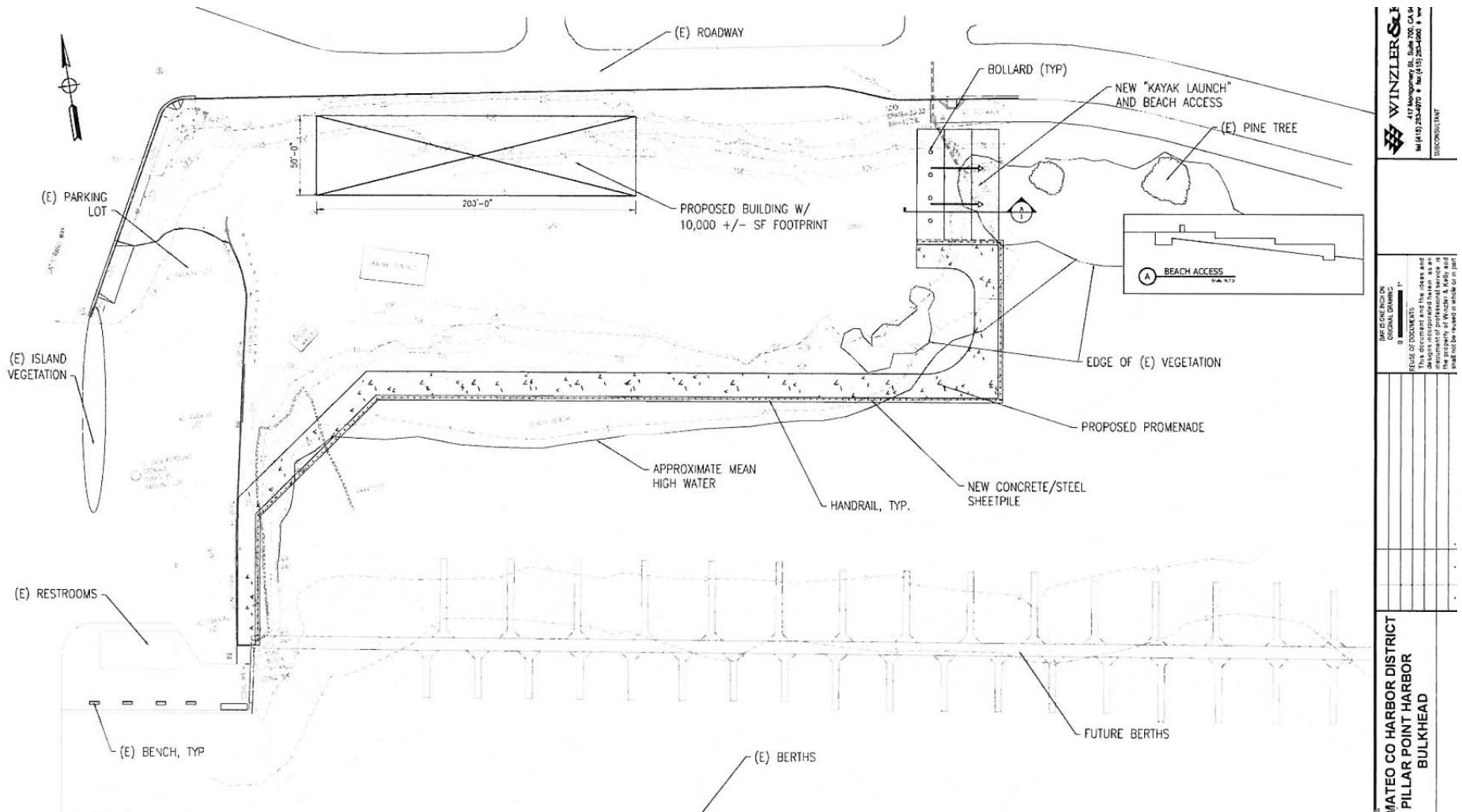
16,500 sq ft building, boat haul-out facility, concrete kayak launch ramp



2011 Perched Beach Bulkhead & Fill

\$3.1 million = construction cost estimate

\$309,000 = consultant design fees paid through January 2012.



2012 - Perched Beach

Despite moving planned multi-use building to Parking Lot B site, Harbor District still plans to build new bulkhead, fill & pave Perched Beach.



Pillar Point Harbor Bulkhead

Beneficial Use of Harbor Dredge Material



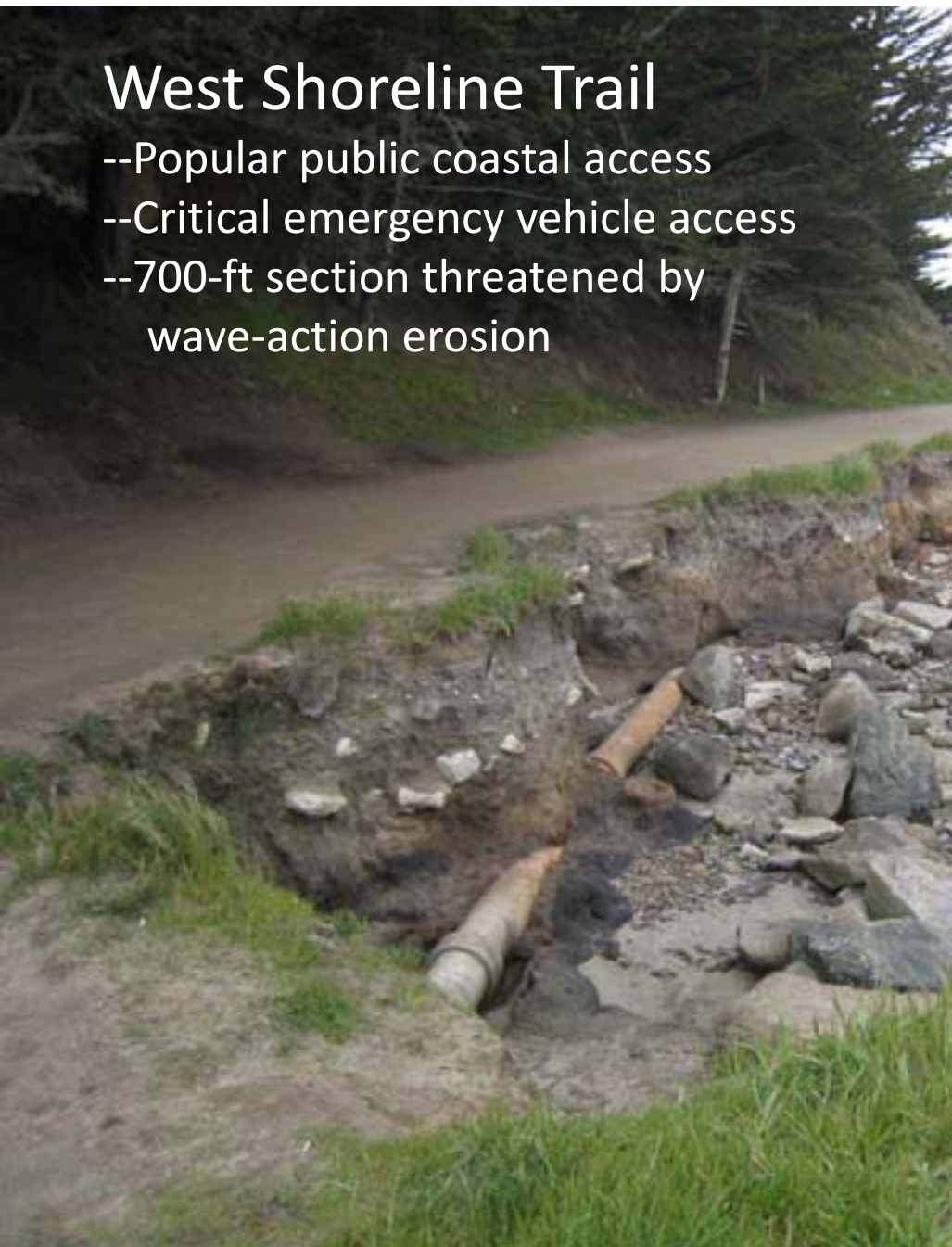
Sites proposed by Harbor District:
IH = Inner harbor beach at kayak stand,
aka "Perched" Beach
WL = Wetlands/Mudflat habitat -- not eroding.

District priority: Fill or mitigate for development.
Public priority: Sand nourishment of eroding beaches.

West Shoreline Trail

- Popular public coastal access
- Critical emergency vehicle access
- 700-ft section threatened by wave-action erosion

- Trail owned by Harbor District.
- \$365,000 repair already budgeted.
- Repair delayed while 2013 launch ramp dredge material was placed on Perched Beach.



Harbor District Administration Building

1960's – 2004 (40 yrs) shared 2,400 sq ft with Harbormaster.

2004 -- Board approved 150% increase in office space via temporary move to SSF rented quarters (3,600 sq ft) for up to 5 yrs, followed by return to permanent office space on coast to be purchased or built.

2009 – 5-yr non-cancelable office lease extension at \$90,000/yr.

2011 – 13,500 sq ft multi-purpose building proposed for Perched Beach.

2012 – District approves Parking Lot B site for multi-purpose building, and begins architectural planning although there are no confirmed tenants. Lost parking spaces would be moved to Perched Beach.

2015 – District declines to purchase, but moves District Office to leased space in El Granada starting at \$7,000/mo.

Revenue from sale of surplus property held in reserve for District Office:

- El Granada Firehouse to Fire District – \$450K in 2006
- Burnham Strip to Granada Sanitary District – \$850K in 2010
- Portola/Obispo 2.71-acre parcel to Fire District – \$845K in 2015

[2019 update: ¼ acre at Portola/Obispo re-purchased from Fire District for \$1.3M for District Office]



Harbor District's Portola/Obispo parcel, 2.71 acres

- ¼ acre zoned neighborhood commercial next to post office.
- 2-½ acres zoned El Granada Gateway (open space).

Acquired in 1953. Leased out in 2000 for 55 yrs for development too ambitious to be approved. Bought lease back in 2011.

District claims it is unsuitable for their long-sought admin building – sells to Fire District for \$845K in 2015.



[2019 update: ¼ acre at Portola/Obispo re-purchased for \$1.3M for Admin Building]



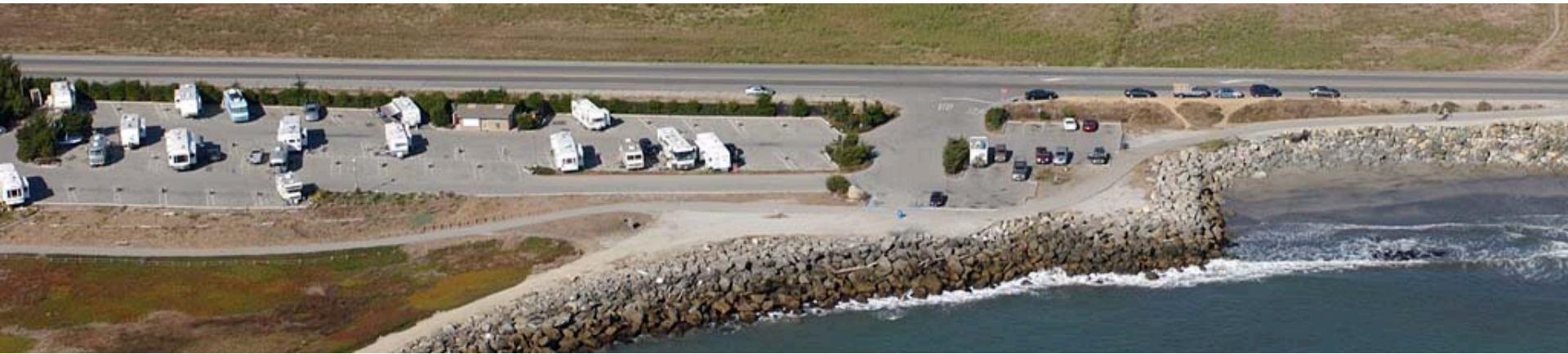
Surfers' Beach

For decades this District-owned lot with public restroom was available for day-use beach parking & self-contained overnight RVs.



Surfers' Beach Public Access, Views, Parking

1998: Harbor District leased out property as RV Park for 25 years with option to renew. No record of a Coastal Development Permit anywhere.



2003 & 2009: Lessee requests exemption to Length of Stay Ordinance due to low occupancy and not wanting to lose permanent RV residents. Opposed by CCC.

Today:

- Restroom closed and locked.
- Tall landscaping blocks public ocean views.
- \$10 parking fee at day-use lot results in lot mostly empty while beach-goers park along the highway.
- Community considers major infrastructure expenditures to solve Surfers Beach parking problem.



Paid parking in all public Pillar Point Harbor lots – Harbor District Priority

- This includes Mavericks parking lot at end of West Point Ave.
- Likely will result in same parking overflow into surrounding area as caused by paid parking at Surfers' Beach Day Use Lot.
- Public fund of property taxes is the source of over half of District revenue.

Former Princeton Boatyard

- 1972 – 2003: Only ocean haul-out facility from Santa Cruz to Bodega Bay.
- 2003: District voted 3-2 not to buy property and permanently closed boatyard.
- Sally Campbell: “The Board did not act in the best interest of the public when they twice failed to acquire a facility that is so vital to the commercial fishermen and recreational boaters at Pillar Point Harbor.”



Romeo Pier

1996 - Harbor District purchased pier for \$185,000, while at the same time deciding not to buy Princeton Boatyard property for \$200,000.

1998 – Pier closed as unsafe.

2010 – District terminates License Agreement for land access to Romeo Pier.

2013 – Public warns deteriorating pier is imminent marine debris disaster.

2014 – Engineering services for pier demolition plan approved, \$61,200.
Preliminary capital budget for pier removal: \$650,000.

[Update: 2018 – Pier removed for \$2.3 million]



Romeo Pier

Pier abandonment 16 yrs ago has led to Safety & Environmental Protection Issue.

- Boards/hardware are falling in the water.
- Main pier building is unstable.
- Many support pilings no longer reach ground.
- Buildings covered with graffiti.



San Mateo County Harbor District

More info and background links on MCC website

Pillar Point Harbor Issues Page

www.midcoastcommunitycouncil.org/harborshoreline/

1933: Harbor District established by Board of Supervisors Resolution

1933 – 1948: District inactive

1953 – 1960: Land acquisition at Pillar Point. Outer breakwater.

1960 Master Plan: Only Phase 1 built (pier, bulkhead, fill, office, concession building) due to unanticipated storm waves within harbor.

1966, 1970, 1977, 1991 attempts to dissolve Harbor District –
1966 dissolution by County Board of Supervisors, approved by voters,
overturned on technicality by courts in 1969.

1976 – 1985 Coastal Permit 133-76 and amendments for inner harbor

1991: Master Plan – Pillar Point Harbor Urban Waterfront Restoration Plan