

May 22nd, 2009

Honourable John Baird MP

john.baird@tc.gc.ca
Minister of Transport Canada
418 2249 Carling Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario
CANADA K2B7E9

Victoria International Marine

Dear Minister Baird:

On behalf of the OCEAN Industries British Columbia association, I am writing today to express our support for the Victoria International Marine and ask that the New Government of Canada complete all processes required to allow Community Marine Concepts to proceed with the construction of this world class development.

OCEAN Industries BC is for people who support a clean, safe, and secure Ocean and Marinspace economy. We are a membership driven non-government organization that works with small business, industry, academics and governments on means that result in responsible development of the Ocean and Marinspace.

Our industry economic account is comprised of more than 86,000 people employed in both the public and private sector which contributes more than \$11.5 billion to the gross domestic product of British Columbia.

You will have by now, been informed and appraised of the economic benefits to Metro Victoria accrued from the Port Calls associated with the Superyacht Class vessels. Having attended one of several open houses hosted by the proponents, I can tell you first hand that many of the people who express objections for this proposal do so on two grounds, which have very little to do with the actual development.

The people who stand for the disadvantage and advocate for social justice are one group. The second are people who had not bothered with details of the actual development and lay false and misinformed claims regarding its environmental profile. Neither one of these are based on fact or science given that the people who make up the development team are amongst the very best engineering, environmental science, transportation research and registered professional biologists in the world and are based in Metro Victoria.

The real benefits to British Columbia offered by this development include that it will serve as a home base or starting point for a new market that has been under-developed. Victoria International Marina makes a difference for BC because:

- It will enable the Superyacht Market to establish qualified Port Call Centers our organization have named "Open Harbours" up Vancouver Island, the Sunshine Coast, Central Coast and into Alaska from this base. This is an order of magnitude positive impact in a world that seeks incremental improvements at best. This will include rural and remote communities, settlements and First Nation destinations that would not otherwise have the opportunity to host visitors from this demographic; and;

- The demographic of the clients served by these pocket cruise vessels are often business class related. The leaders of the regional Tech community, Tech Park's, Camosun College and University of Victoria have commented off-line that the opportunity to connect visitors, clients and guests that are accommodated by these vessels is at a level unequalled by the existing visitor market.

To the best of our knowledge, the proponents have met or exceeded all of the local and regional requirements for compliance and the completion of the last phase of the Songhees development, Victoria International Marina. They have also worked with the local First Nation communities to ensure that they are included in the process and that long-term benefits accrue to the community from their involvement in the development consultation process. This is an effort that is not legislated, but is a matter of the hi-level of commitment of the developer to the social contract required to operate in a BC community today.

In closing, we do not seek to place this developments existence over the safety and security of the Inner Harbour in Victoria. I can tell you that our Members know that the project does not conflict with the safe passage of vessels or aircraft, as your staff will have indicated to you.

We look forward to your final approval and the completion of this project that will herald the opening of a new Ocean and Marinespace chapter for rural, resource and remote communities across Canada's Pacific Gateway.

Sincerely,



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BHB/pnm

Attach.

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Oprah's visit to Alert Bay: 'Awesome'

Victoria Times Colonist Published: Saturday, August 04, 2007

The tiny community of Alert Bay is still bathing in the afterglow of an unexpected visit Friday by the queen of daytime TV, Oprah Winfrey.

Winfrey came to the community of 556 people on Coromorant Island, about 500 kilometres north of Victoria, just before noon Friday, according to 'Namgis First Nation Chief Bill Cranmer.

She arrived on a 150-foot yacht owned by B.C. billionaire Jim Pattison, who visits the small community in Johnstone Strait about once a year.

On the PerezHilton.com celebrity gossip site, one reader wrote in about the visit: "We don't get a lot of excitement here, so when I noticed this giant yacht parked at the local dock, I knew it was someone important. Sure enough, the town was buzzing with word that OPRAH WINFREY was here! I couldn't believe it!"

"People were just so excited to see her," Cranmer said Saturday. "It was like a mob. She signed autographs, posed for pictures."

Cranmer picked up Winfrey and Pattison in his truck and brought the two back to the U'mista Cultural Centre and the 'Namgis big house, where a potlatch was in progress. Winfrey was given a tour of some native artifacts at the cultural centre before heading up to the potlatch.

"She's got quite a fan club up here," Cranmer said.

Andrea Cranmer, co-ordinator of the T'sasala Cultural Group, says she admires Winfrey and watches her television show because she promotes things like women's leadership. She was in the big house with hundreds of others when Winfrey made her entrance.

"I was really shocked and then it was kind of like a dream that she was standing inside our big house," Andrea Cranmer said. "Some people cried, some people were just hugging her, praising her for being in Alert Bay."

During the potlatch, it's customary for women not to speak, she said. But the chief made an exception, and Winfrey, fresh from a whirlwind tour of the cultural centre, told the assembled crowd that they're fortunate to have their culture intact.

Andrea Cranmer said Winfrey praised the 'Namgis ancestors and the rest of the people for keeping their traditions alive when many African-American traditions had been lost.

Winfrey was given an honorary name in the language of the 'Namgis that roughly translates to "Wise Woman" and she took part in some dancing before walking back to the dock.

"It's still amazing," Andrea Cranmer said Saturday. "We're like, who's coming next? Bono? Come with Bono next time! Because we all believe in the same things - healthy spirits, being connected - so it's really cool."

The Alert Bay rumour mill had it that Winfrey and Pattison's next stop would be Nimmo Bay, a nearby fishing resort that once played a role in an episode of the TV show Boston Legal.

Alert Bay itself is no stranger to celebrities. John Wayne, Bob Hope and Merv Griffin were all known to visit the village, which they enjoyed because they could have a drink in the pub without being bothered, according Alert Bay Mayor John Rowell. When Rowell heard about Winfrey's surprise visit, he made his way down to the dock but the TV mogul was long gone.

"It was the topic of conversation last night," Rowell said.

But not everyone in town was star-struck.

"I knew she was here, but I just don't give a s--t," said Alert Bay resident Roy Johnson, when reached by phone. "It was inconsequential."

