

Canal Dock Boathouse, Inc. (CDBi) – Paddle-Sports Request for Proposal Q & A
Posted to CDBi website 9/16/2017

*(All responses below are subject to further scrutiny by the City of New Haven and could be updated in the coming weeks. Any updates will be related directly to all bidders and posted online.)

1. Would a water dependent retail operation be allowed for within the proposed area to be leased? If so what, if any, limitations would be put upon such an operation?

A zoning change would be necessary to permit retail sales operations in the Canal Dock Boathouse. Board of Alders approval would take 3 to 6 months, but could not be guaranteed. Any limitations would be detailed in a zoning change request. The facility may not be well suited for retail sales operations, and CDBi has not determined if it is supportive of such plans, but well-prepared proposals will be considered.

2. Where is the dock and is it low to the water, like a rowing dock?

All paddling & rowing activities (dragon-boating, kayaking, paddle-boarding, rowing, etc....) will share the "rowing dock." This is a typical, low, rowing dock, with a 4-inch freeboard. Jet-float or similar attachments could be considered for creating additional launching areas for kayaks & paddleboards, but are not currently planned.

3. What's nearby?

Lenny & Joe's Fish Tale restaurant with outdoor, waterfront deck is directly adjacent to Canal Dock Boathouse. A small Info Center/Snack Shack, also on the water, to be operated by Brazi's Italian Restaurant, will open soon approximately 200 meters south of the boathouse. A further 100 meters south on Long Wharf Drive is what has come to be known as Food Truck Paradise. The Maritime Center office park is on the other side of Lenny & Joe's. Ikea, the Long Wharf Theatre, La Quinta, and other businesses of the Long Wharf Terminal are short walking distances on the other side of the highway. Jordan's Furniture and "It Adventure Ropes Course" are approximately 1 mile south on Sargent Drive.

4. How visible is the boathouse? How will people find it?

The Canal Dock Boathouse is adjacent to and can be seen by most traffic passing on highway 95, and will be a main attraction on Long Wharf Drive. The Farmington Canal bicycle & walking trail is being completed from downtown New Haven, and will connect with two-way bike lanes on Long Wharf Drive, a two-directional bike path.

5. What is the history of the project?

Canal Dock Boathouse is part of the [I-95 New Haven Harbor Crossing project](#) and mitigates the loss of the historic Adee Boathouse. CDBi will lease the boathouse from the City of New Haven. CDBi's anchor tenant, University of New Haven, will operate Marine Biology Program research in the boathouse. One part of CDBi's mission is non-motorized boating; rowing and dragon boating clubs will operate from the boathouse, in addition to other paddle-sports. The boathouse will feature premiere event spaces available for occasions like corporate off-sites, small conferences, weddings, and others.

6. What is the 1800 square feet of space to be leased?

This is indoor storage and operations space, where all boating equipment will be stored after hours and in the off-season. Two long boat bays (see schematics) will be shared by all non-motorized activities. Total boat bay indoor space is 6800 square feet.

7. What is the waterway like, how safe – boat traffic, currents?

Significant tides of 6 to 8 feet exist at the boathouse, but little or negligible current. CDBi is not using the site yet on a regular basis, but two successful dragon boat regattas have been held in the area between the boathouse and Long Wharf Pier. The boathouse sits on the inner harbor, but well away from typical boat traffic and the deep-water channel. Barges and large vessel port traffic exists, but mostly between the middle of the harbor and the opposite, eastern shore. The I95 Highway and Tomlinson lift bridges are 500 meters to the northeast of the boathouse, and serve as the entrance to the Quinnipiac and Mill Rivers.

Early mornings and evenings during the warmer months generally provide calm water, whereas midday conditions are generally windier and thus rougher. CDBi does not have significant experience with the site, but expects to offer relatively robust rowing and dragon boat clubs, in addition to vendor-operated paddling sports.

8. Destinations – places of interest – how far?

Experienced boaters/kayaker/rowers can travel miles upstream on the Quinnipiac River, or out to the breakwater in the harbor, conditions permitting. The body of water between the boathouse and Long Wharf Pier has the appearance of a semi-protected lagoon and should be able to safely accommodate plenty of beginner paddlers and others, especially at higher tides.

Sandy Point, and the Sandy Point Bird Sanctuary are approximately 1.7 miles south. The West River is approximately 1.5 miles away, and Light House Point Park is approximately 3 miles south. The [Southwest Ledge Light](#) is approximately 4 miles

south. East Shore and Fort Hale Parks and the US Coast Guard station are approximately 1.5 miles away across the harbor, in addition to Forbes Bluff.

The Quinnipiac & Mill Rivers are textured and interesting, with multiple historic bridges, both rotating and traditional. The Mill River, which is more narrow, has a dam around which a kayak or canoe can portage, then leads to East Rock Park, College Woods, and a waterfall.

Paddlers can easily travel upstream with an incoming tide on the Quinnipiac River and return with the tide; even paddling against the tide is not challenging on most of the river. The Quinnipiac River Marina, with Boat House Café, is approximately 2 miles upstream from Canal Dock Boathouse, where boaters can disembark. The Waucoma Yacht Club resides next door. Oystering takes place upstream of the Grand Avenue Bridge, where the Quinnipiac Meadows offers small channels among its grasses for exploring.

9. Parking?

Parking is available along a one-mile stretch of Long Wharf Drive; there are approximately 15 spaces at Long Wharf Pier, and approximately 30 spaces at the Info Center/Snack Shack. Another lot is being prepared specifically for the boathouse directly across the street, which will provide 30-50 spaces. More parking is in the works, but still in the planning stages.

10. Is there a public launch?

The boathouse facility will be a public dock. CDBi will have the right to reserve the use of the docks for special events.

11. Will the facility provide insurance liability coverage for renters?

Paddle-sports vendors and other tenants will be required to maintain their own general liability coverage and list CDBi and the City of New Haven as additional insured.

12. Will the facility provide or have on staff lifeguards or water safety swimmers?

CDBi has no current plans for lifeguards or safety swimmers to support its dragon boat and rowing clubs. However, it is envisioned that staffing could be shared between organizations.

13. Will the facility provide or have access to a boat for assisting paddlers, etc.?

CDBi will have several safety boats in operation by next summer and it's possible that use of these vessels could be rented or shared.

14. Square footage required is TBD and you will look for recommendations from vendors, correct?

CDBi has indicated that proposals should be prepared based on leasing a minimum of 1800 sq. ft., but alternate proposals and will be considered.

15. What is the scope of suggested free or reduced-cost youth programming? Schedule? Frequency? Other requirements?

No plans are currently in place for this endeavor, and creating a financially successful situation for a paddle-sports vendor is the primary goal of the RFP. However, CDBi leadership seeks to creatively work together with a paddle-sports vendor such that some level of free and/or reduced fee youth programs can eventually be established and even contribute to the profitability and promotion of both entities.

16. Do you have any pre-set rates for renting or offerings that we should take into consideration?

CDBi plans to rely heavily on the expertise and business credentials of an experienced paddle-sports vendor to set rental rates.

17. Are you looking for a recommendation of schedule, or will the facility have a seasonal operating schedule? (Memorial Day - Labor Day or extended, or year round?)

The Canal Dock Boathouse will be open year round for numerous activities (see "[CDBi Proposed Activities](#)" document), but CDBi expects to rely on the expertise of a paddle-sports vendor to set the most effective & safe schedule permitted based on the conditions of the site. In addition, CDBi hopes that an innovative vendor will consider and explore creative, off-season, paddle-sport-related activities, such that the paddling season can be extended on both ends of the summer months.

18. Do plans exist for media spending? If so, how and where, and what is the budget? Will the rental vendor be responsible for promoting and generating awareness of the programs and offerings, or will everything be tied into a larger awareness program for the Canal Dock initiative?

CDBi will promote all activities taking place in the Canal Dock Boathouse, including those of a paddle-sports vendor, but specifics and budget are not yet in place. In addition, we expect to have relatively significant marketing support from the City of New Haven. That said, comprehensive proposals should include a marketing budget based on the experience of vendor.

19. Will the vendor be able to retain branding? (I.E. will it be a “Company X” branded program within Canal Dock, or is it part of Canal Dock?)

All tenants and vendors are expected to be able to retain branding, but CDBi has asked for this to be reviewed and clarified by the landlord, the City of New Haven.

20. Will social media, digital media, and other outreach be funded by Canal Dock or the vendor-partner?

CDBi expects all tenants to work both independently and in partnership with CDBi and other tenants to use digital and social media to promote all activities taking place at Canal Dock Boathouse.

21. Have any preliminary projections been completed on traffic flow, general interest, and scale of the program? Is there any expectation of the size of the program offering? Since this is a new location, if it is determined after a month, for example, that the program needs to increase in size and offerings, will there be an opportunity to grow and expand if necessary?

A market analysis was performed for the Canal Dock Boathouse in March of 2010 and found that “moderate demand for boat rentals” should be expected. The strengths pointing to this demand were:

- Proximity to new residential development in downtown New Haven
- Lack of existing boat rental facilities in New Haven
- New Haven Parks Department boating programs already at max capacity

As stated in the RFP, “an organization that can scale up its offerings is ideal.” CDBi expects to gradually ramp up participation in its own programs, like rowing and dragon boat clubs, over several years, and expects that a paddle-sports vendor will also scale up to meet increasing demand, both seasonally and annually. Finally, CDBi does not currently project filling all available boat storage space within the first year, which should allow for an appropriate level of scaling-up for all boating activities.