

## Introduction/Summary

Keeping in mind that responses were not sought from a randomly generated sample, but instead were sought from anyone willing to participate, the following analysis is not statistical but it generally describes the findings as they may influence policy decisions.

Some takeaways of the survey results are:

1. All seasonal and year-round uses were viewed more favorably when sited on moorings or at a boatyard/marina than when sited at an anchorage – though there were clear differences among types of uses, with transient boating being almost equally favored regardless of whether or not it was at mooring, anchorage, or boatyard/marina.
2. Commercial waterfront/waterway users (*i.e.*, waterfront business owners/employees, water-dependent business owners/employees, and commercial fishermen) were generally more positive about the presence of harbor uses than recreational (*i.e.*, recreational boating and recreational fishing/shellfishing) waterway/waterfront users.
3. The following categories of uses were perceived as positive—though to differing degrees—at all locations: seasonal recreational boat berthing, seasonal commercial boating, and transient boat berthing.
4. The following categories of uses were perceived as negative—though to differing degrees—at all locations: houseboats, liveaboards (with the exception of at a boatyard/marina in Vineyard Haven Harbor), and floating non-water-dependents uses.
5. Perceived opinions about houseboats and floating businesses were largely negative, though non-residents were less negative about houseboats and floating businesses than residents, for most categories of impacts.

Note: this round of analysis did not look at the *existing use* questions related to the availability of amenities, existing condition of public access sites, and general perception of the waterways, given the short time-frame for analysis and the pressing need to address the questions of future uses.

## General Demographics of those who Participated in the Survey

Overall, there was very good representation from Tisbury residents (N=223), and decent representation of other island residents (N=70). Non-island residents were not very numerous (N=35). Fourteen respondents did not provide zip codes, and two provided zip codes that could not be attributed to a specific town. The responses of these 16 people of “unknown” residency were included in the analysis as non-residents.

Many of the respondents were recreational users of the waterways, *i.e.*, recreational boaters (N=274) and recreational fishermen/shellfishermen (N=179), mirroring the very recreational nature of the Town’s waterways. Commercial uses were represented less than recreational uses, *i.e.*, waterfront business owner/worker (N=56), water-dependent business owner/worker (N=35), and commercial fishermen (N=25). Of those who took the survey, 15 respondents did not participate in any of the waterway-related activities provided as an option from which to choose. While their specific use(s) are unknown, they may represent swimmers, photographers, beach combers, dog walkers, and other types of waterfront/waterway users.

As you'll notice in the analysis below and in the graphs in the document sent out last week, we also analyzed the data to see if there was any significance to those who said they did NOT use the waterway for a certain purpose. In particular, we looked at non-recreational boaters, non-commercial fishermen, and non-recreational fishermen/shellfishermen.

In terms of the use of specific waterways, Vineyard Haven Harbor was the most commonly used waterway (N=228), with the Lagoon second (N=165) and Lake Tashmoo third (N=147). People had the opportunity to indicate their use of multiple waterways (*e.g.*, Vineyard Haven Harbor *and* Lake Tashmoo), which is why the cumulative total N is greater than the total number of people who responded to the survey.

## Analysis of Future Uses:

We analyzed the data on each use by (1) resident/non-resident, (2) type of waterway user, and (3) waterway(s) used by the respondent (three waterbodies were included in the survey - Vineyard Haven Harbor, Lake Tashmoo, and the Lagoon). Due to the methodologies used in the analysis, respondents may have been double-counted if they indicated that they enjoyed multiple uses of the waterways (*e.g.*, recreational boating and recreational fishing) or that they used more than one waterway. For this reason, we also provided an overall analysis of the responses, regardless of type of user, waterway used, and resident status.

### Seasonal Recreational Boat Berthing (p.6)

Most survey respondents were in favor of this use in all three waterbodies, especially when sited on a mooring or at a marina or boat yard. The rate of support declined (but was still favorable) for this use in an anchorage – though the level of support for seasonal recreational boating in an anchorage was lowest for Lake Tashmoo. Residency status did not seem to impact the general findings.

Seasonal recreational berthing was also overwhelmingly supported on moorings or at a marina/boat yard by all waterway user types and users of all waterways, with commercial waterway/waterfront users supporting it in higher percentages than recreational users.

Seasonal recreational boat berthing *in anchorages* was also well supported by all users, though less so than at moorings or at marinas/boat yards. In particular, the data reveal less support for seasonal recreational boat berthing in anchorages *in Lake Tashmoo* as compared to the other waterbodies – though the number of people who support this use in the waterbody still outweighs the number who are not supportive.

### Year-round Recreational Boat Berthing (p.17)

Year-round recreational boat berthing on a mooring or at a marina/boat yard was supported by most people – though to a slightly lesser degree than seasonal recreational boat berthing.

*At anchorages*, people were split on whether year-round recreational boating should take place, with 51% and 52% supporting it in the Harbor and Lagoon, respectively, and 49% supporting it in Lake Tashmoo.

Responses did not vary greatly based on residency.

Across types of users, support for year-round recreational boat berthing *at anchorages* was particularly low (though still generally supportive) among recreational boaters, recreational fishermen, those who identified themselves as non-recreational boaters, and those that were not commercial fishermen. Unspecified users were more or less split on whether or not they approved of the use at an anchorage. Those who keep their vessels on a slip, mooring, or at an anchorage indicated a slight lack of support for this use at an anchorage. Commercial fishermen and water-dependent business owners/employees seemed generally more supportive of year-round recreational berthing at anchorages than other types of harbor users.

The waterway(s) used by respondent did not seem to indicate a deviation from the trends noted above.

#### Seasonal Commercial Boat Berthing (p.29)

Again, this use was generally favored within the waterways, but like the uses described above, seasonal commercial boat berthing received less support at anchorages than on moorings or at marinas/boatyards. The levels of support within a given category (*i.e., at a mooring, in an anchorage, at a marina/boat yard*) were similar across all waterbodies (*e.g., roughly 77% of respondents approved of the use at a mooring in any of the waterbodies*).

Non-residents were slightly less supportive than residents of seasonal commercial boating at a mooring in Lake Tashmoo and at a boatyard/marina.

Lagoon users were the least supportive of the use in any waterway as compared to non-Lagoon users, though they were still overall supportive.

Those who worked for or owned a waterfront or water-dependent business and commercial fishermen approved of seasonal commercial boat berthing at an anchorage more than other types of users.

#### Year-Round Commercial Boat Berthing (p.40)

Generally speaking, support for year-round commercial boat berthing was strongest at marinas and boat yards, with greatest support in Vineyard Haven Harbor (76% in favor), and less support in the Lagoon (69%) and Lake Tashmoo (65%). While residency did not seem to impact responses for Lake Tashmoo or Vineyard Haven Harbor, there was greater uncertainty about the berthing of year-round commercial vessels at boat yards/marinas in the Lagoon among residents (11%) compared to non-residents (6%), which might explain why non-residents said “no” more than residents. (The percentages for yes were the same (69%) for residents and non-residents.)

Year-round commercial boat berthing received less support on moorings, but support was relatively consistent among the different waterways – all received 68-69% support. There was a fair bit of uncertainty among non-residents as compared to residents (as indicated by a high number of “maybes”) which likely affected the number of non-residents willing to indicate support.

Year-round commercial boat berthing at anchorages received the least support, with only 45% of respondents saying it should be allowed in Vineyard Haven Harbor, 43% saying it should be allowed in the Lagoon, and 39% saying it should be allowed in Lake Tashmoo. Residents were more likely to say “no” than non-residents, with the exception of on Lake Tashmoo, where more non-residents said “no” than “yes” – but the margin was only 2 people. Unlike the general findings, which leaned toward a lack of support, commercial waterways/waterfront users, (*i.e., waterfront and water-dependent business*

owners/employees, commercial fishermen) showed support for year-round commercial boat berthing at anchorages for all waterbodies, while recreational users showed less support. Recreational boater support was split for Vineyard Haven Harbor, while a greater number of people responding “maybe” and “n/a” in the Lagoon and Lake Tashmoo may have tipped the majority of responses toward non-support. The same may be true for recreational fishermen/shellfishermen, who also indicated “maybe” and “n/a” at higher rates in Lake Tashmoo than in other waterbodies.

#### Transient Boat Berthing (p.51)

Generally speaking, transient boat berthing was supported, with the greatest number of people showing support at moorings in Vineyard Haven Harbor (N=286) and at slips/boat yards in Vineyard Haven Harbor (N=283). The use was least favored, but still approved of, in Lake Tashmoo. Residency status did not seem to greatly impact responses.

Recreational boaters approved of transient berthing slightly more in Vineyard Haven Harbor than in the other harbors. The small number of non-recreational boaters seemed less certain of transient boat berthing, with relatively high “maybes” – however, they still seemed generally supportive of the use.

Vineyard Haven Harbor users were slightly more supportive of this use at an anchorage than non-Vineyard Haven Harbor users.

#### Houseboat Berthing (p.62)

Generally speaking, more than 50% of respondents were not in favor of houseboat berthing in any waterbody by any means, especially at an anchorage. That being said, roughly 1/3 of respondents were supportive of houseboats on moorings or at marinas/boat yards.

Non-residents seemed to provide more “maybes”, relatively speaking, than residents.

Water-dependent business owners/employees were the only user group that showed more support than non-support for houseboats, and this majority support was limited to moorings in the Lagoon and Lake Tashmoo, and at boatyards/marinas in all three waterbodies – though the group was split almost 50/50 on their support of houseboats on moorings in Vineyard Haven Harbor. Commercial fishermen were also split 50/50 on whether or not to support the use on a mooring in the Lagoon and in Vineyard Haven Harbor.

The waterway(s) used by respondents did not seem to greatly sway results.

#### Liveaboard Berthing (p.73)

Support for liveaboard berthing was lowest in anchorages, with slightly more than 50% (51-56%) of people saying “no” to the use at an anchorage in any waterbody. The percent of people who indicated support at a mooring was higher, but did not surpass the 50% majority (support at a mooring in Vineyard Haven Harbor was close, at 49%); and in fact, 44% of respondents answered “no” to supporting the use on a mooring in Lake Tashmoo, while 42% were supportive; and 46% supported it in the Lagoon, while 40% were not supportive. Similarly, lukewarm support was expressed for boatyards and marinas, with 53% showing support for liveaboard berthing at a boatyard/marina in Vineyard Haven Harbor, and respondents almost split on the use at boatyards/marinas in the Lagoon and in Lake Tashmoo (48% yes, 44% no in the Lagoon; and 45% yes, 43% no in Lake Tashmoo).

Non-residents seemed to show slightly more support for the use at a mooring in the Lagoon than residents (51% vs. 44%), but residency in general was not a large factor in the responses.

Water-dependent business owners showed considerable support for the use in all locations, and commercial fishermen generally supported the use on moorings and at boatyards/marinas – they were more split on the use at an anchorage.

While the waterway(s) used by respondents did not seem to have a profound impact on results, the responses of Lagoon users suggested they were generally less supportive of liveaboards than those who do not use the Lagoon.

#### Floating non-water-dependent use (p.95)

As with most other uses, support for floating non-water-dependent businesses was lowest at anchorages, with the vast majority (more than 70% across all three locations) not supporting these uses at an anchorage. Lack of support was also indicated on moorings and, to a slightly lesser degree, at marinas and boatyards.

Non-residents typically showed more support for non-water-dependents uses than residents. This was especially true for non-water-dependent uses at anchorages, though they still answered “no” more than “yes” in all cases.

Water-dependent business owners were the user group most supportive of floating non-water-dependent uses, supporting the use on moorings and at marinas/boatyards. All other user groups generally did not support this use at any location.

The waterway(s) used by respondents did not seem to greatly sway results.

## Analysis of Opinions on Impacts of Waterway Uses

People were asked to indicate whether they feel that houseboats and/or floating businesses have the following impacts:

- Provide affordable housing
- Contribute to community character and/or traditions
- Provide economic opportunities
- Provide essential services
- Contribute to appeal of the town to visitors
- Impact water quality
- Conflict with other harbor users
- Cause negative visual impacts
- Cause positive visual impacts
- Create inequality

The following sections describe the impacts by (1) houseboats and (2) floating businesses.

#### Perceived impacts of houseboats (p.107)

Houseboats were largely perceived unfavorably, with the top three primary negative perceptions being in the categories of water quality (N=183), harbor use conflicts (N=180), and visual impacts (N=162). The

top three least negative perceptions were in the categories of character and traditions (N=104), affordable housing (N=103), and economic opportunities (N=95).

In general, non-residents perceived the impacts of houseboats to be less detrimental than residents, though they still generally indicated more negative opinions of houseboat impacts than positive opinions. For example, almost 29% of residents perceived affordable housing benefits from houseboats, while almost 37% of non-residents perceived affordable housing benefits from houseboats. In addition, 30% of residents felt that houseboats contribute to community character/traditions, while 35% of non-residents felt houseboats contributed to community character. Similar trends were observed in the difference between non-residents on the topics of providing essential services (15% yes for residents and 24% yes for non-residents), contributing to visitor appeal (20% yes for residents and 28% for non-residents), causing negative visual impacts (51% yes for residents and 47% yes for non-residents), and causing positive visual impacts (59% no for residents and 46% no for non-residents). The exception to this trend was the perceived impacts of houseboats on water quality, with 54% of residents indicating their belief that there is an impact, and almost 60% of non-residents believing there is an impact. Residence status did not seem to affect the topics of conflicts with other harbor uses and providing economic opportunities.

Perceptions of houseboats also related to type of waterway user, with commercial fishermen more evenly split on the various impacts of houseboats than other users, and water-dependent business owners/employees generally more positive than negative about the impacts of houseboats when it comes to affordable housing, character and traditions, economic opportunities. On other topics such as positive visual impacts and visitor appeal, water-dependent business owners/employees were roughly split 50/50. Recreational boaters had more negative views on houseboats in general than non-recreational boaters. Recreational fishermen/shellfishermen had more negative perceptions of houseboats' impacts on water quality (71%) than non-recreational fishermen (61%).

#### Perceived impacts of floating businesses (p.120)

While survey responses indicate that people recognize positive impacts associated with floating businesses (N=165), all other perceptions of impacts were more negative than positive. Water quality seemed to be the largest concern (N=165), followed by harbor use conflicts (N=151), and negative visual impacts (N=132). Character and traditions (N=123) and essential services (N=98) were among the more positive perceived impacts, though they were still more negative than positive.

As with houseboats, residents seemed to have more negative perceptions of floating businesses than non-residents on the topics of community character (40% non-residents said yes, 37% of non-residents said yes); economic opportunities (53.6% non-residents said yes, 49.5% residents said yes); providing essential services (36% non-residents said yes, 27% residents said yes); appeal to visitors (34% of non-residents said yes, 26% of residents said yes); conflict with other harbor users (44% non-residents said yes, 48.5% residents said yes); and have positive visual impacts (30% of non-residents said yes, 17% of residents said yes). Residents and non-residents responded almost the same on the topics of creating inequalities (37% yes from non-residents and 39% from residents) and creating negative visual impacts (41% each). Once again, however, non-residents were more critical than residents of water quality impacts, with 50% of residents identifying water quality impacts and 53% of non-residents recognizing water quality impacts.

Regarding responses by type of waterway/waterfront user, waterfront business owners saw more positives than negatives in terms of character/traditions and economic opportunities, harbor use conflicts, negative visual impacts (though they still recorded more “no” than “yes” to the questions about positive visual impacts), and inequality. Water-dependent business owners/employees took it one step further by ranking all positive impacts positively and saying “no” more than “yes” to all negative impacts. With the exception of the “economic opportunities” category, recreational boaters did the inverse of water-dependent business owners/employees, saying “yes” more often than not to all negative impacts, and “no” more often than not to all positive impacts. Commercial fishermen were once again split on their perception, but were the only group, other than water-dependent business owners/employees, to indicate more positive visual impacts than negative impacts (by a margin of 1, with 1 maybe and 1 n/a).