

RECREATIONAL BOATING: ROLLING LIKE A WAVE ACROSS NYC

What Stands in the Way of Even More Growth?

Have you been to the Harlem River Lately? There are days when the waterway is filled with racing shells and the riverbanks are crowded with cheering onlookers. College and high school crews flash by; oars dipping into the water as one; bodies leaning, pulling, sending the slender boats skimming across the water.

The recreational boating revolution has rolled like a wave across the water of New York City—and it's beginning to strain the City's waterfront resources. Rowers, kayakers and sailors are all looking for more waterfront space for boathouses and marinas. Sometimes even a simple dock would do.

For rowers in particular, it's a struggle. "There aren't many places we can launch," said Vincenzo Paparo chairman of the **New York Rowing Association**, an organization that is outgrowing its home base at the **Peter Jay Sharp Boathouse** on the Harlem River. "Rowers have to have specialized docs where we can launch specialized boats."

Mr. Paparo is part of a Waterfront Conference panel looking at how best to accommodate the recreational boating boom. Moderated by Ray Fusco, founder of the **Mayor's Cup NYC Kayak Championships**, the panel will also include Capt. Bill Sheehan of **Hackensack Riverkeeper**, **Azure Dee Sleicher of Ocean and Coastal Consultants**, **Jeff Anzevino of Scenic Hudson** and **Jessica Anderson from Pennsylvania Environmental Council**.

What stands in the way of the growth of recreational boating in New York City? In Mr. Paparo's opinion, "people don't consider it when they're doing urban planning. Also, there's a sense of fear of the liability that comes from putting people out on the water."

"What we'd like to see," he said, "is in all this development going on along the waterfront there should be set-asides for boathouses. Land should be allocated for the installation of a boathouse. Our view is that the more people that get out on the water, the more water conditions will improve because people will care more."

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The original article can be accessed at-
<http://www.waterfrontalliance.org/waterwire/2010/12/17/recreational-boating-rolling-wave-across-new-york-city>

