



Somers Point's New Waterfront Gem

20-slip bayfront transient marina now open in Somers Point's Historic Bay District

JACK GLASSER, *Mayor, Somers Point*



The City of Somers Point recently unveiled its new bayfront transient marina featuring 20 transient boat slips. The marina also offers slips for tour boats and emergency vessels. In the very near future, amenities will also include electric, water, and pump-out facilities for transient boaters.

With the help of Atlantic County, the state, grants, and the hard work of Somers Point City Council, we proudly enhanced our vibrant waterfront with the addition of this beautiful transient marina.

Somers Point is surrounded by water, with Patcong Creek, Great Egg Harbor River, and Great Egg Harbor Bay making up three of its boundaries. The City is well-positioned to entice visitors to stop, enjoy, and explore everything the City has to offer.

Our bayside waterfront hosts a number of maritime businesses that provide mooring, sales, and service for hundreds of private watercrafts each year. The lively and walkable Bay Avenue district also hosts fine and casual dining, pubs, lodging. Recreation-related businesses, galleries and shops, live weekly concerts throughout the summer, as well as the City's largest annual celebration known as Bayfest are further draws.

Boaters who visit the marina will increase revenue at restaurants, local stores, and other attractions.

As a result, the marina is expected to be an economic driver for the City and a fixture at the waterfront for many years to come.

Preparing for launch

With any new development comes the possibility of challenges. Planning for the marina project began nearly two decades ago. But the effort did not come to fruition until recently.

A project that includes dredging as an integral component can be particularly challenging. The City initially looked at a plan to dredge the entire Bay Avenue waterfront, but that was not immediately feasible.

Luckily, the dredging requirements specifically for the transient marina called for much less volume. We explored several ideas that would allow us to use the dredge materials in a beneficial manner. In the end, we settled on creating an embankment to



Smooth Sailing to a Bright Future

As the proud mayor of this City and a long-time resident, I envision a bright future for Somers Point. I see a City that flourishes with the arts, entertainment and business, and has a well-maintained infrastructure. Somers Point is a robust market for residents and second-home buyers, and now offers an incredible transient marina.

Those of us who call Somers Point home know that it is a destination in its own right, worthy of a second look by tourists headed to the bigger resort towns. Somers Point is walkable, bikeable, and offers incredible opportunities to experience the town both on and off the waterfront, including scenic recreational parks, a picturesque bike path, an 18-hole professional golf course, and a historic walking tour of the city.

So many small towns risk stagnation. But here in Somers Point we work to combat this by continuously evolving and repositioning our local economy. This commitment to growth is evident in the many initiatives implemented over the years such as our marketing, branding and second-home buyer campaigns, new business outreach and promotions. We owe much of this success to the members of City Council and the Economic Development Advisory Commission, whose energy and passion fuels our plans.

The transient marina project is one of the many plans we have for the bay front and City as a whole. Behind the scenes, we are eagerly conceptualizing and implementing more ideas that will reinforce Somers Point as the best place to live, work, and play at the shore, all while keeping the City viable well into the future.

View completed construction on the marina itself.

Economic beacon

With the successful addition of a transient marina, the potential economic and social benefits abound. We are confident that the marina will be a mighty stimulus for tourism. We expect it will draw more visitors to our beautiful City and provide an additional opportunity for enjoyment of the Historic Bay District.

Visitors will be able to catch a show at Bay Avenue's rebuilt Gateway Playhouse, shop at local boutiques and galleries, and have drinks and dinner at one of the City's restaurants. The marina will increase socialization for our current residents and visitors.

In addition, the marina will be a catalyst to creating life-long visitors by establishing a mecca for like-minded boaters, providing additional access for people to grab a bite to eat at nearby restaurants and other popular spots by the marina.

help protect a popular thoroughfare that is part of our local emergency evacuation roadway network.

Atlantic County assisted with the approvals for relocating the dredging materials along Somers Point/Mays Landing Road.

While this planning was ongoing, the City was able to secure grants to help fund the marina. Securing funding took several years to complete. With help from the City's planning firm, we obtained grants to contribute to the cost of the marina.

A \$1.45 million National Boating Infrastructure Grant assisted in funding the dredging and construction for the marina. Also, a \$35,000 grant for grant for the construction of the pump-out station came from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service through the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife in partnership with the New Jersey Clean Vessel Act Program and the Marine Trades Association of New Jersey.

Dredging and construction began, and the marina was completed in time for a Summer 2019 opening. Wickberg Marina Contracting, Inc., of Belford completed the dredging phase of the project. Walters Marine Construction of Ocean



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Focus:
Somers Point

There will be infinite ways to socialize. The transient marina will add an ambience that many other developments cannot achieve as a venue for exciting waterfront activities that include fishing, crabbing, cruising, and waterfront dining. Marina will be an enhancement for all to enjoy, giving visitors and residents the ability to hop in their boats and take in



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the beautiful sights as they sit moored offshore or take a cruise around the bay.

The transient marina offers real convenience for boaters, giving them the ability to stay overnight or longer if they wish, with hookups for water and electric and a pump-out for larger vessels.

The marina will also be a significant draw for the sale and/or rental of residential, retail, commercial, or office space businesses. In many ways, it is a natural part of development and is complementary to our marketing campaigns targeting businesses and second-home buyers. It serves as an anchor for correlative developments adjacent to it, such as a waterfront restaurant, with the opportunity for continued expansion thereby enhancing the waterfront.

By appealing to many age demographics, there are significant benefits to the community in terms of additional, and much needed, access to the water for both active and passive public use. This additional access to the waterfront can help to bridge the gap, bringing people from offshore who might not typically visit, as well as be a great attraction for millennials.

Somers Point is an ideal place to live, work and play, all within walking distance of many activities. These same features may well prove attractive to aging baby boomers looking for a convenient and easily navigated environment that is dynamic and active. Many will find that our bayside community, located just minutes from major seaside destinations, is rich in history, diversity, camaraderie, and fun. 🦞

Mayor Jack Glasser is a veteran of the United States Air Force and New Jersey Air National Guard, and is a retired Captain of the Northfield Police Department. He has been mayor of Somers Point for the past 12 years, where he and his wife Diane currently reside.