

THE SAN FRANCISCO SAILING SCIENCE CENTER

By Jeff Owens

What do you get if you combine Sailing, Science and STEAM Education using fun, hands-on exhibits, in a large, world-class museum? The answer is the San Francisco Sailing Science Center, a project to create a new interactive science museum, framed around sailing. The target location for the museum is in Hangar 3, on Treasure Island.

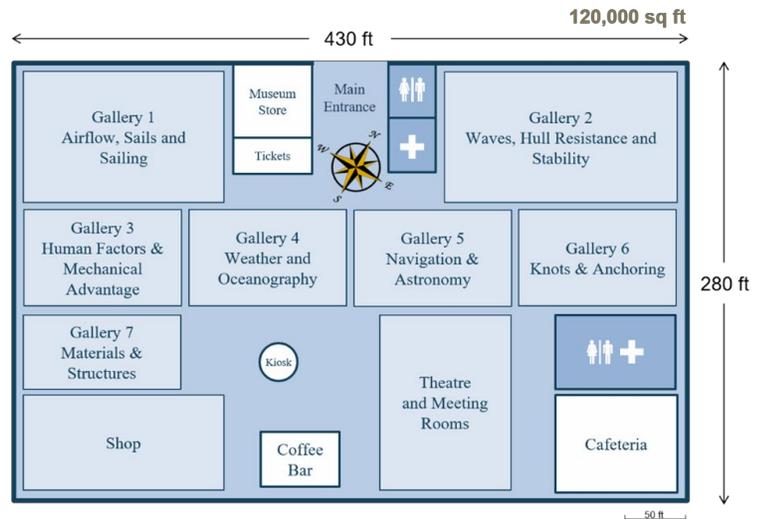
On Saturday, November 10, the Directors of the Sailing Science Center project held a meeting at Fort Mason Center to generate interest and input for this project through an event they called a Stakeholders Gathering. The purpose of the event was to gather decision-makers, difference-makers, influencers and interested parties in the room together to discuss how this project can benefit all the constituent communities it is touching.

Among the constituents in the room were representatives from the Treasure Island Citizen Advisory Board (TI-CAB), the Treasure Island Sailing Center (TISC), the Treasure Island Yacht Club, One Treasure Island, Treasure Island Community Development (TICD), the Bay Model, the Call of the Sea, Latitude 38 Magazine, the Presidio Trust, the St. Francis Yacht Club, and the UC Berkeley Naval Architecture Department.

Project Founder and President, Jim Hancock, spoke for 15 minutes about the project before opening the floor to discussion and Q&A.



Hancock described the San Francisco Sailing Science Center as a project to create a hands-on, interactive science museum, framed around sailing. The plan for the museum includes 200 to 300 exhibits that are being designed to be both fun and educational. A key part of the project is a partnership with Dos Pueblos Engineering Academy, a program within Dos Pueblos High School in Goleta, California. The partnership would engage Dos Pueblos to design and build exhibits as student projects. Hancock explained that by involving students early in the cycle they can forward their mission of inspiring a passion for sailing and science before the museum doors are even open.



A Conceptual Floorplan of the Museum showing its seven galleries

The timeline for the museum includes five to seven years of exhibit development before the permanent facility is opened on Treasure Island in 2025. This timing coincides with when full ferry service to the island is scheduled to start. In the interim, efforts will focus on prototyping and testing exhibits, fundraising, and preparing the permanent facility in Hangar 3. Testing and promotion of the exhibits will be done through a mobile museum designed to extend the project's outreach geographically.

One of the most ambitious aspects of the project is the choice of Hangar 3. It is by no means a "done deal" that SSC will get the lease to this building, although Hancock is confident that when the plan is put before the Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA) it will show well against any other ideas competing for the space. Continuing, he explains why the museum is the missing piece in the puzzle, and why Gerry Tierney said that in 20 years working on Treasure Island it was the best use yet that he had seen for Hangar 3.

Located in the Heart of San Francisco Bay, Treasure Island is the ideal location for the Sailing Science Center, and the Sailing Science Center is the ideal attraction for the location. Through its theme, the Center captures the bay's sailing-past of exploration, commerce and naval strength; while connecting with the bay's sailing-present of recreation and tourism; and reaching into the bay's sailing-future of advanced technology and world-class competition.

No snapshot or postcard of San Francisco Bay is complete without sailboats. It's simply a part of who we are. Now, with the U.S. Olympic Sailing Team making their home on Treasure Island, the call for a facility that honors sailing's relationship to the scientific, technological and educational character of the Bay Area and Silicon Valley is more compelling than ever.

As Treasure Island goes into its redevelopment this is the perfect time to act. Together with the U.S. Olympic Team, the Treasure Island Sailing Center and Clipper Cove, there is a unique opportunity to sculpt the southeast corner of Treasure Island into a world-class hub of sailing that draws in sailors and non-sailors alike.

In summary, Hancock says, It's the Right Thing, in the Right Place, at the Right Time.

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