



## **1. COMMUNITY SURVEY FINDINGS**

On January 22, 2021 a survey was administered to solicit the needs and wants of residents, as well as visitors, as it pertains to town property known as Parker's Boatyard. A key objective was to gauge support for a community boating center to enhance and expand harbor offerings available to the public. The survey was shared widely through direct e-mail, the initiative (Marblehead Community Boating Center) website, various Facebook posts and groups, and printed press, including the [Marblehead Reporter](#). The survey garnered more than 600 responses. Average time to complete the survey was 9 minutes, indicating high respondent engagement with the survey. The survey closed on February 4, 2021.

Data from the respondents indicated that the majority of people -- **77 percent who are residents of MHD** -- are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with public access to Marblehead Harbor. Furthermore, **84% of respondents** stated their enjoyment and use of Marblehead Harbor would increase with greater public access. More than **49 percent** of people answering the survey stated they know someone who would benefit from ADA compliant access to Marblehead Harbor. Many respondents indicated that a community boating center would improve the town. More than **91 percent** of respondents stated a community boating center would enhance the appeal of Marblehead and **59 percent** of people stated they thought a boating center would increase the value of their property.

Resident excitement for a community boating center was apparent also in the open-ended questions with respondents eager for public access to the Harbor.

Initial concerns around the Marblehead Community Boating Center as shared through the open-ended questions would be efforts to mitigate parking issues and boater safety in the Harbor. It is notable, however, that the provided open ended comments around these sentiments were not authorized to be shared in conjunction with the respondent's name and/or they opted to not disclose identifying information.

## SURVEY FINDINGS

### SUMMARY

**QUESTION 1: How satisfied are you with your ability to access Marblehead Harbor publicly (not through a club or private property)?**

Very satisfied 6.13%

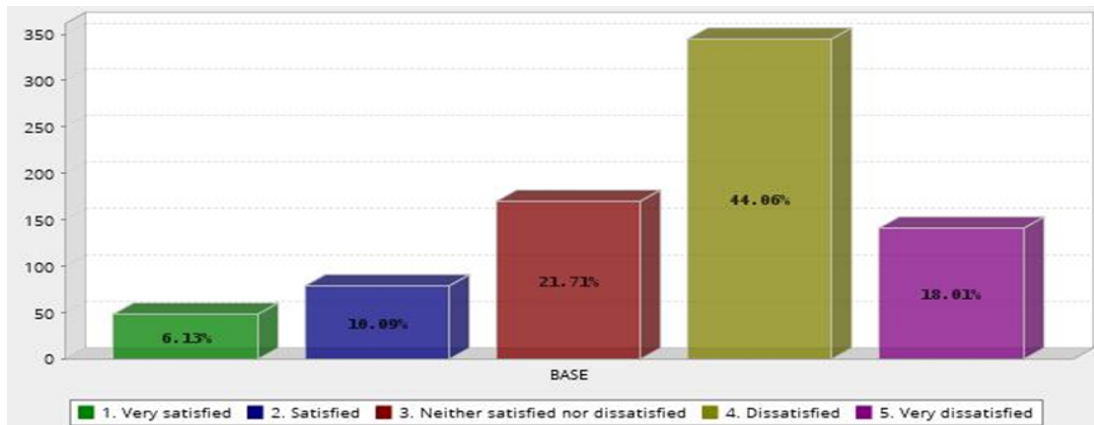
Satisfied 10.09%

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 21.71%

Dissatisfied 44.06%

Very dissatisfied 18.01%

- **62%** of respondents stated they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their access to MHD Harbor.



**QUESTION 2: How likely is your enjoyment of Marblehead Harbor to increase if you had greater public access?**

Very likely 57.34%

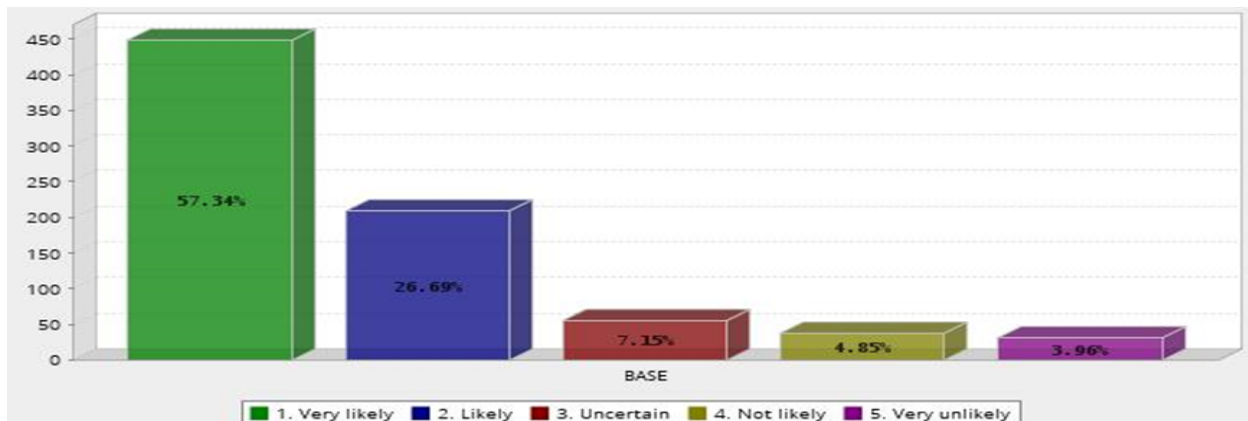
Likely 26.69%

Uncertain 7.15%

Not likely 4.85%

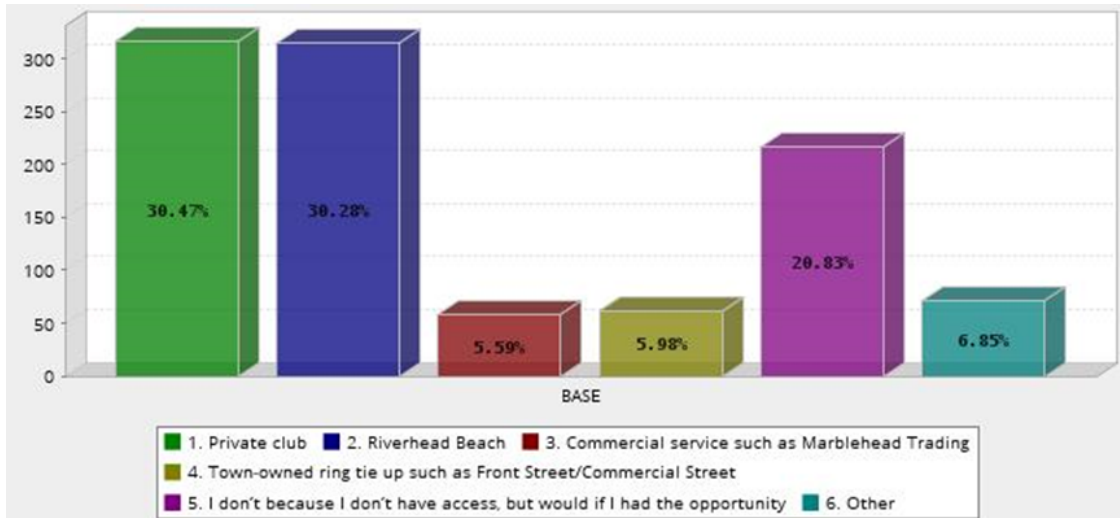
Very unlikely 3.96%

- **84%** of respondents stated their enjoyment of Marblehead Harbor would very likely or likely increase with greater public access.



**QUESTION 3:** How do you currently access Marblehead Harbor (check all that apply)?

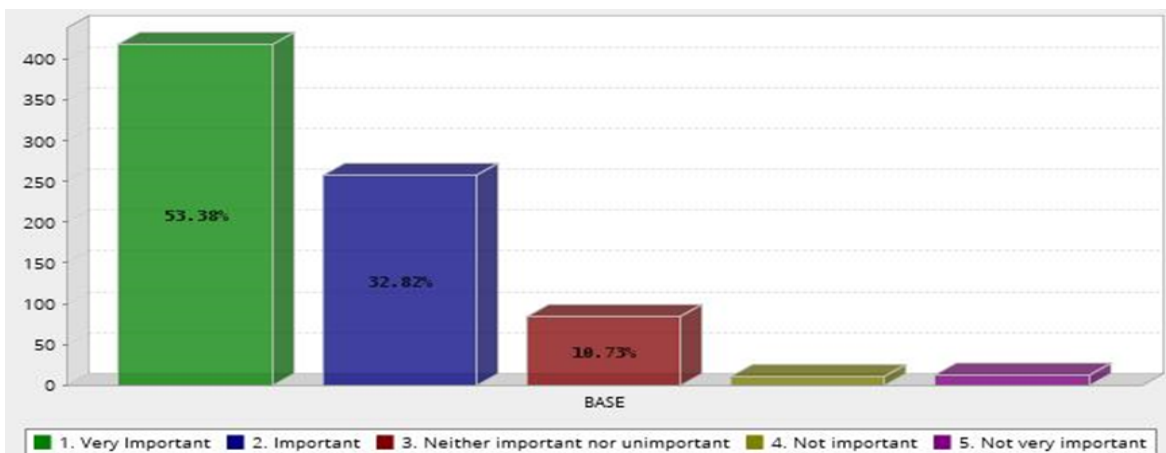
Private club 30.47%  
 Riverhead Beach 30.28%  
 Commercial service such as Marblehead Trading 5.59%  
 Town-owned ring tie up such as Front Street/Commercial Street 5.98%  
 I don't because I don't have access, but would if I had the opportunity 20.83%  
 Other 6.85%



**QUESTION 4:** In your opinion, how important is it for Marblehead to offer ADA (American Disabilities Act) compliant Harbor access?

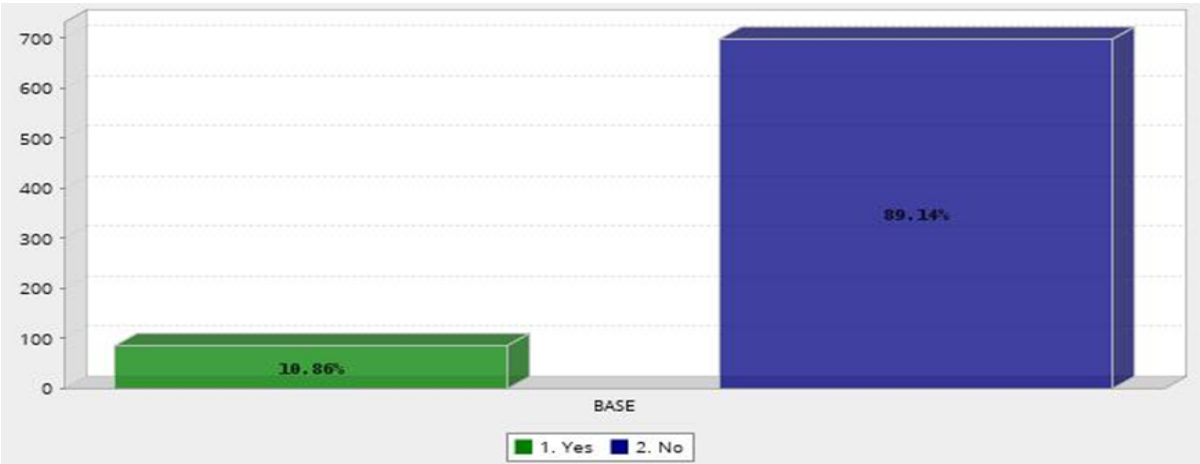
Very Important 53.38%  
 Important 32.82%  
 Neither important nor unimportant 10.73%  
 Not important 1.40%  
 Not very important 1.66%

- **86%** of respondents chose that ADA compliant access is very important or important.



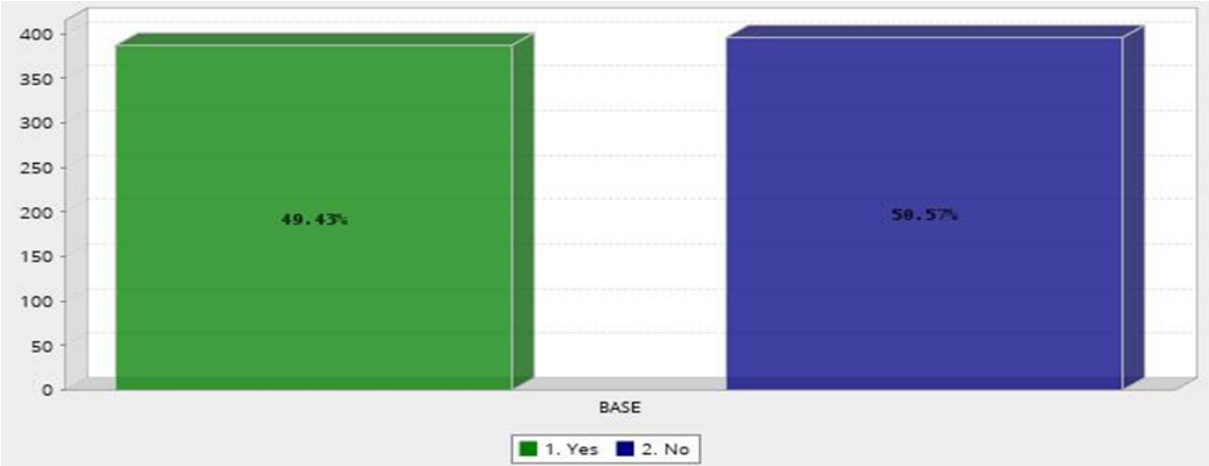
**QUESTION 5: Would you or a member of your household benefit from ADA compliant access to Marblehead Harbor?**

Yes 10.86%  
No 89.95%



**QUESTION 6: Do you know someone outside your home who would benefit from ADA compliant access to Marblehead Harbor?**

Yes 250 49.43%  
No 266 50.57%



[CONTINUED]

**QUESTION 7:** Select your TOP 5 most important potential offerings from the list below, and rank (1 is most important to you, 2 is second and so on through 5):

Top 5 highlighted

- **Dry storage and crane access for privately owned small sailboats** 283
- **Dry storage and launch access for privately owned kayak/SUP** 329
- **Dry storage and ramp access for privately owned Laser, 420's, Zodiac, etc** 250
- **Sailboat rental (<20 ft)** 320
- Kayak/SUP rental 239
- Powerboat rental (<24 ft) 204
- ADA compliant access 182
- **Youth sailing lessons** 264
- Adult sailing lessons 221
- Youth boater safety classes 163
- Adult boater safety classes 192
- Seamanship courses (weather, navigation, etc) 171
- Advanced Training (Captain License Course) 103
- Other 7

**QUESTION 8:** During the summer season, approximately how often do you access Marblehead Harbor to paddle, powerboat or sail?

Monthly	17.88%
Daily	16.09%
Weekly	50.19%
Not at all	15.84%

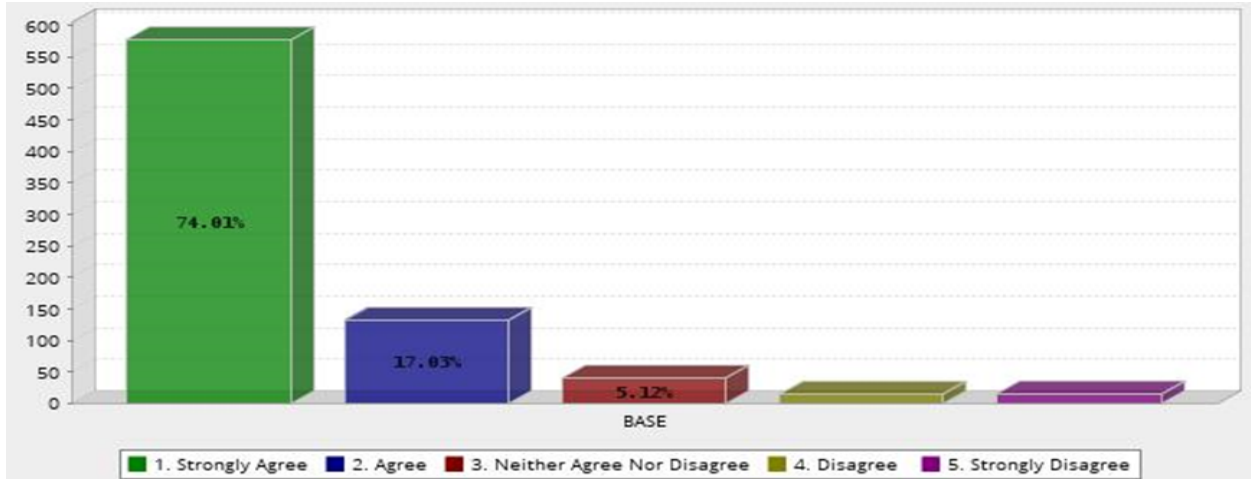
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**QUESTION 9:** Please rate your agreement with the following for each:

**9.a. I think a community boating center would enhance the appeal of Marblehead**

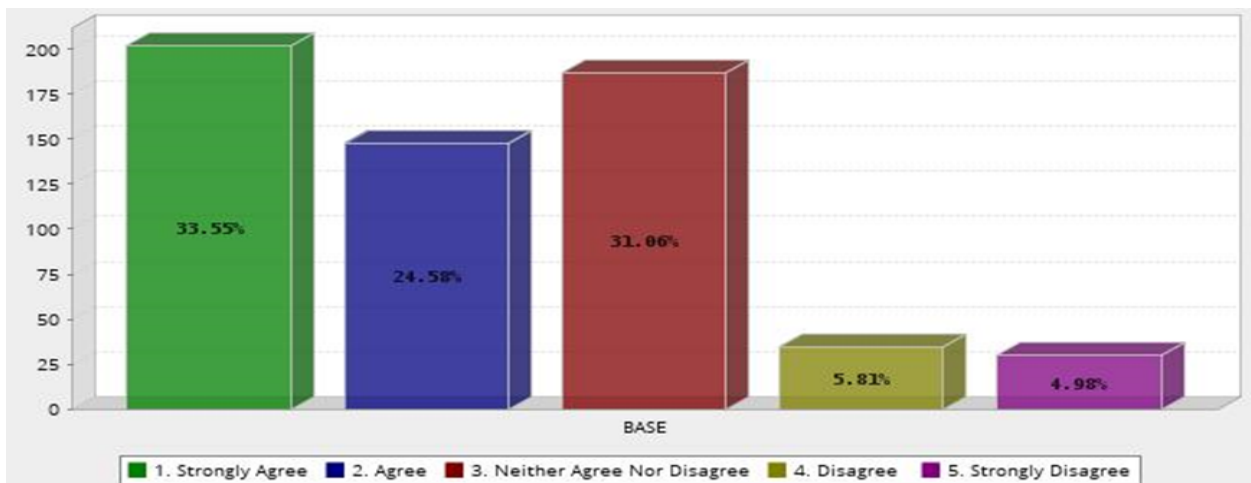
Strongly Agree	74.01%
Agree	17.03%
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	5.12%
Disagree	1.79%
Strongly Disagree	2.05%

- More than **91 percent** of respondents stated a community boating center would enhance the appeal of Marblehead.



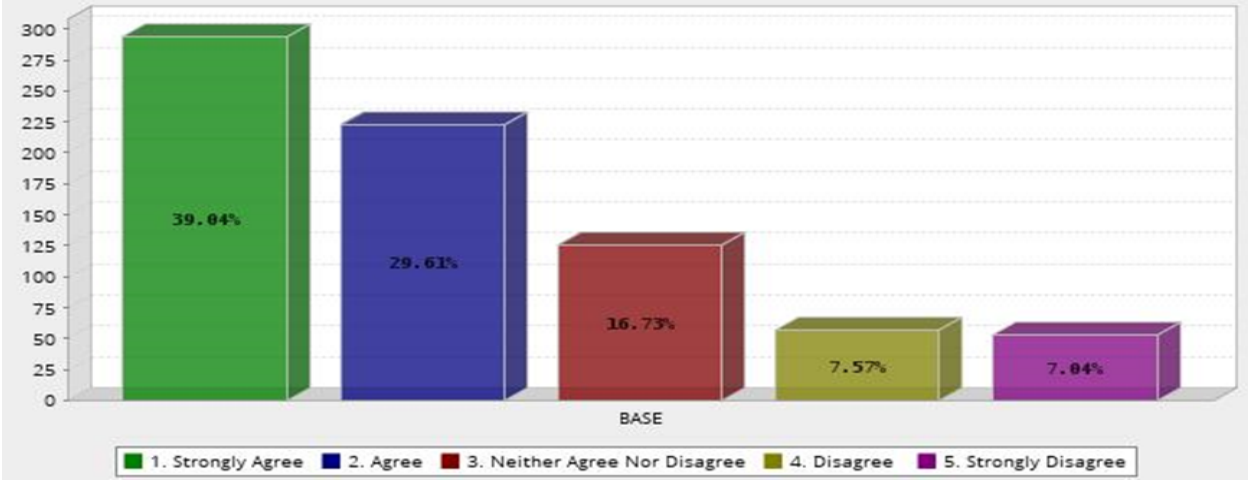
**9.b. A community boating center with ADA-compliant access would allow me to enjoy life in town without having to travel to Boston or surrounding communities to access the water**

Strongly Agree	33.55%
Agree	24.58%
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	31.06%
Disagree	5.81%
Strongly Disagree	4.98%



**9.c. I feel I do not enjoy Marblehead Harbor to the fullest extent because of limited public access**

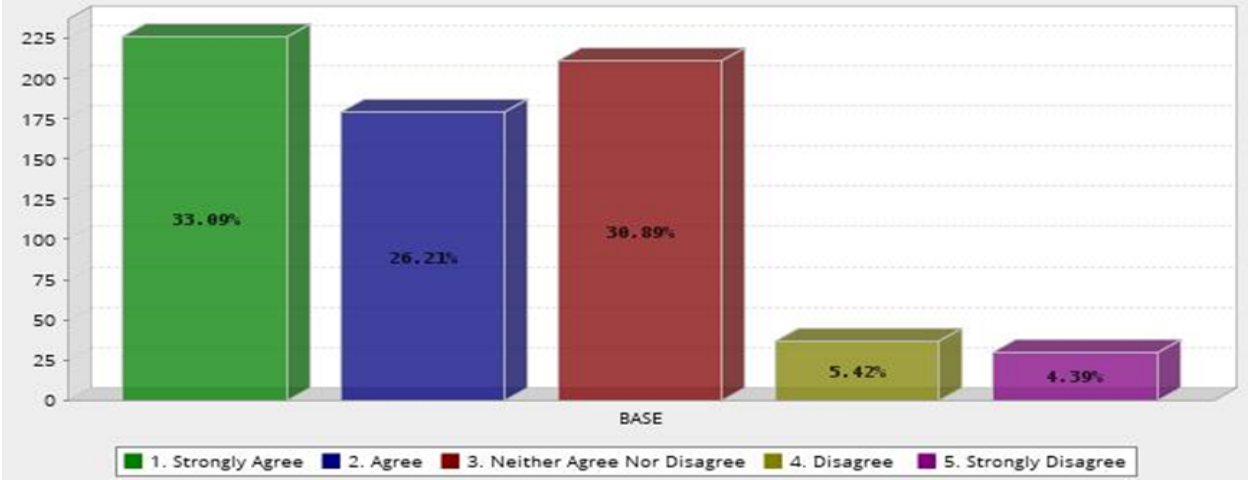
Strongly Agree	39.04%
Agree	29.61%
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	16.73%
Disagree	7.57%
Strongly Disagree	7.04%



**9.d. I believe a community boating center would increase the value of my property**

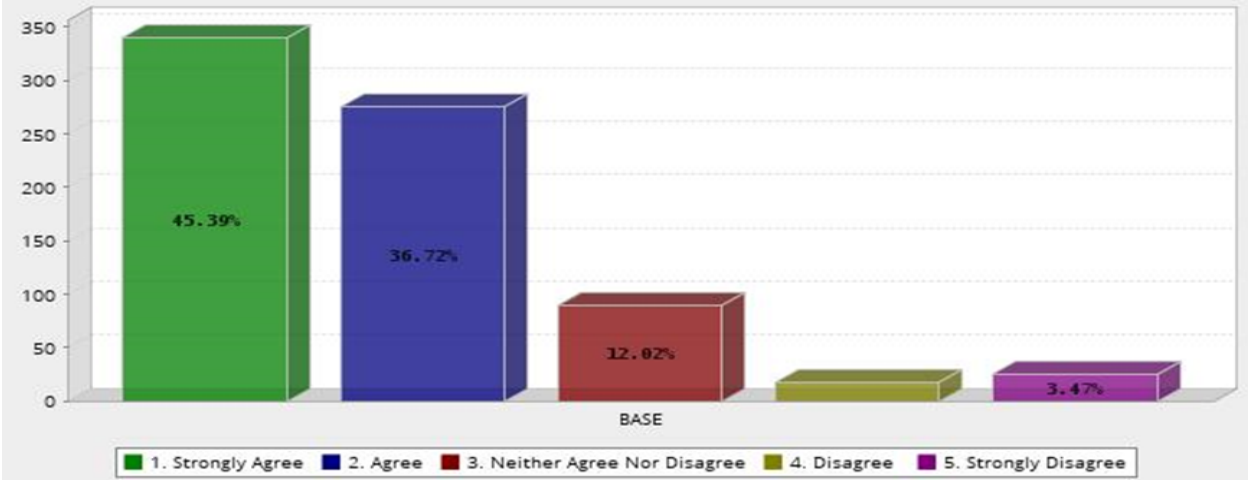
Strongly Agree	33.09%
Agree	26.21%
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	30.89%
Disagree	5.42%
Strongly Disagree	4.39%

- 59 percent of people stated they thought a boating center would increase the value of their property



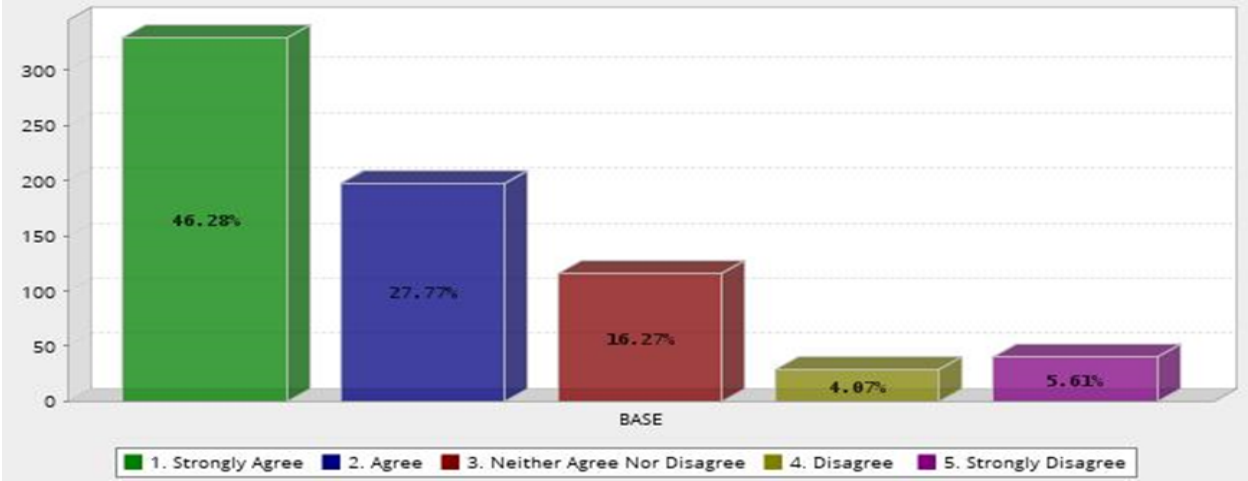
**9.e. A boating center would allow me to build my skills on the water and try new things**

Strongly Agree	45.39%
Agree	36.72%
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	12.02%
Disagree	2.40%
Strongly Disagree	3.47%



**9.f. Public storage and launching options for my personal craft would increase my use**

Strongly Agree	46.28%
Agree	27.77%
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	16.27%
Disagree	4.07%
Strongly Disagree	5.61%

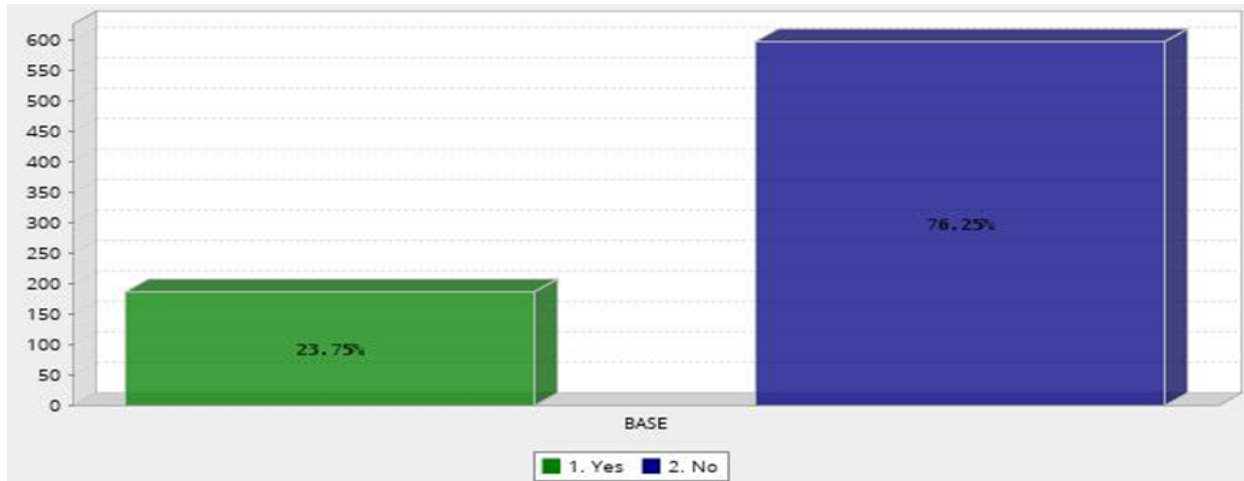




**QUESTION 10:** Do you have a boat moored in Marblehead Harbor?

Yes 23.75%

No 76.25%



**QUESTION 11:** If yes, how do you access your boat?

BYC, CYC, DYC, EYC or MYC launch	82.35%
Private dinghy from a seasonal ring through Harbormaster	3.92%
Private dinghy from private dock at my residence	1.96%
Paddle/row	7.19%
Other	4.58%

**QUESTION 12:** If you were to use a community boating center, located in the general area of Marblehead Light Department, what would your primary mode of transit be?

Walk	20.42%
Bike	1%
Car	61.10%
Other	0.49%

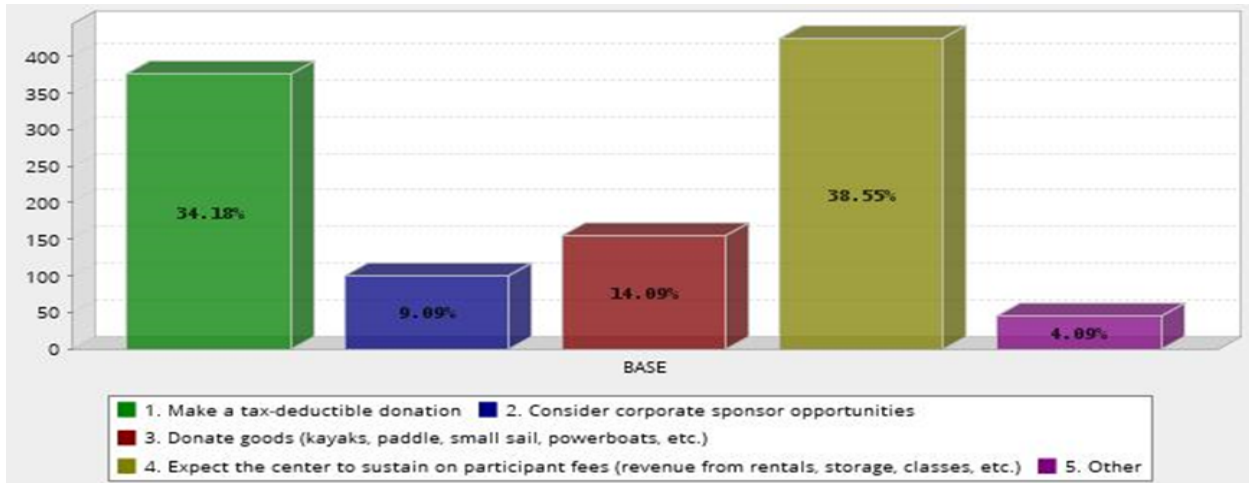
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**QUESTION 13: The proposed Community Boating Center would be a nonprofit organization that operates on user fees, grants and donated funds (not tax dollars).**

**To support its operation and offerings would you: (check all that apply)**

Make a tax-deductible donation 34.18%  
 Consider corporate sponsor opportunities 9.09%  
 Donate goods (kayaks, paddle, small sail, powerboats, etc.) 14.09%  
 Expect the center to sustain on participant fees (revenue from rentals, classes, etc.) 38.55%  
 Other\* 4.09%

**\*Many of the “other” responses from users said they would volunteer their time to help support the Center.**



**QUESTION 14: In which town/city do you currently reside?**

Marblehead 77.09%  
 Salem 2.95%  
 Swampscott 2.78%  
 Other 17.18%

- **77 percent** of the respondents reside in Marblehead.

**QUESTION 15: How many people are in your household?**

1 9.60%  
 2 28.97%  
 3 14.24%  
 4 31.95%  
 5 11.92%  
 6+ 3.31%

**QUESTION 16: What is the age range of people in your household?**

0-10	16.52%
11-17	11.34%
18-24	8.26%
25-34	5.72%
35-44	16.33%
45-54	17.06%
55-64	15.06%
65-74	7.44%
75-84	2.00%
85+	0.27%

**QUESTION 17: In what precinct do you live?**

1	12.04%
2	11.20%
3	10.20%
4	7.19%
5	8.86%
6	7.69%
I do not know	22.91%
I am not a Marblehead resident	19.90%

**QUESTION 18: What information would you need in order to support a community boating center in Marblehead?**

1. None. The greatest flaw in our fine Town is harbor access and unless one is willing or has the means to join a private yacht club, harbor access remains limited at best. We need to have better harbor access for all residents, not just the affluent who can afford to join private clubs.

**Bill K, Marblehead**

2. How it would be paid for, who could access it, what would be offered - I love this idea

**Martine E, Marblehead**

3. I grew up in Marblehead and now I own a condo in Swampscott. When I came back to the east coast, I first went to Community boating in Boston off of Storrow Dr. It would be great to have a facility like that in Marblehead. If I had not grown up with sailing I never would have been able to access sailboats here in Marblehead. People will invest in the waterfront if they can experience it first-hand.

**Ann W, Swampscott**

4. None. I live on Gregory Street and this would be a good way to democratize access to the water in Marblehead. The Riverhead launch is dependent on tides and not in great condition.

**Rodolphe H, Marblehead**

5. To better understand the fees. I am hugely supportive of this idea. We're a young family that recently moved to Marblehead. We love being on the water, but access to sailing for non-club members is hard in Marblehead. We keep a kayak at Riverhead, but our passion is sailing.

We currently keep our sailboat docked in Winthrop (at a community dock pier) and have to drive 20 minutes to use it due to harbor wait lists here. I've been looking at purchasing a small sailboat to teach my children with, and enjoy the harbor directly, but don't have the yard to store it and am looking to avoid the hassle of trailer sailing living 100 yards from the water. In the past we've loved the access and model provided by Piers Park in East Boston. Navigating the local clubs and membership requirements and social gatekeepers is daunting for newcomers. We rented a small center console power boat from a local this summer and had a blast as well, but we were surprised there weren't more public options. We live near Devereux and have easy access to the proposed location. I'd love to get involved with time or resource if we can. We'll be keeping an eye out for updates and / or information sessions. Thank you for your work so far!

**Jon B, Marblehead**

6. I support it right now! So many friends benefited from the Community Sailing program in Boston. Having the same type of program here would be invaluable.

**Doug W, Marblehead**

7. Will the property have a fish cleaning area on one of its floats? Will the center haul and launch small power boats? Can the center offer power hosing of small boats in the fall? Will there be a small clubhouse with restroom facilities? Will there be access to water and electricity?

**Roger T, Marblehead**

*\*there were some open-ended question responses that requested more information about parking plans and boater safety training but those respondents declined to share their open-ended responses in affiliation/in a presentation of this survey*

#### **QUESTION 19: Do you have any concerns about the creation of a community boating center?**

1. No, amazing that something like this does not exist in Marblehead yet. Make Parking close to / near the Marblehead community boating center during high season for residents only, both sides and in the surrounding streets only certain sections are non resident parking. So residents are not experiencing any parking trouble, create enough drop off parking spot, so people and or stuff can be unloaded. Install bike racks on a safe or guarded location, so bikes can be parked and locked properly.

**Anne M, Marblehead**

2. The need for this facility is huge. The previous incarnation of the MBC ran for 30+ years and just disappeared. This iteration needs real roots so it's not susceptible to the whims of a relatively small number of people.

**Shan M, Essex**

3. I am strongly behind this project but am also concerned that our town seems very financially strapped and struggling to fund much needed programs and maintain current infrastructure and assets. I want this to move forward but only if there is a strong plan for maintaining the facility and infrastructure without needing an override from a town that seems to already be financially strapped.

**Elizabeth E, Marblehead**

4. Yes, that you will limit our current use of the space - residents of Redstone lane and adjacent streets should be given full access to the space automatically as they will be the ones who have to absorb the impact of the increases traffic and activity. And make sure parking on the streets is protected to street residents only!

**Allison M. Higgins, New Hampshire**

5. I just want to ensure that it is accessible physically and financially to all Marblehead residents. It's a wonderful idea and I'm more than willing to personally support.  
**Laura K, Marblehead**
6. Low tide boat ramp is sorely needed. Also this proposal should seek to differentiate that it offers something other than the storage and launching offered at Riverhead or Stramski and doesn't cannibalize the SUP rental vendor already at Riverhead.  
**Geoff D, Marblehead**
7. That it will not happen. I would like to see a floating classroom that showcases green technology and water quality solutions.  
**Camron A. Marblehead**
8. That the additional boat traffic from such a center should be readily controlled so as not to interfere with other boaters who regularly use the harbor. The creation of such a center would further promote the town as both a boating mecca and a tourist destination.  
**Mark H, Marblehead**

*\*there were some open-ended question responses that raised concerns about parking and traffic on the harbor but those respondents declined to share their open ended responses in affiliation/in a presentation of this survey*

#### **QUESTION 20: Please share any further thoughts that you have:**

1. I would way rather send kids to community boating center than a private club - just the inclusivity and informality of this kind of thing is great. Would love to have hoist access for a fee. Would also be happy to help on a volunteer basis... long ago sailing instructor, boatyard kid and boatbuilder who thinks this could be great for the town!  
**Chris R, Marblehead**
2. I am not a Marblehead resident, but keep a boat in Beverly. As the parent of a paraplegic sailor I would love to see more accessible sailing options on the north shore. I also think it's important to make the resources of Marblehead harbor available to people who are not members of exclusive yacht clubs.  
**Dan W, Acton**
3. The property at Parker's Yard is owned by the town. As Marblehead taxpayers, we have had an asset taken from us, but not seen any reduction in our taxes. How fortunate we as Marbleheaders that this effort is being spearheaded! The time to make these ideas reality is now! Marblehead has always been a community based around access to the water; we need to ensure that it always will be!

Public storing and launching of keelboats at Parkers had been going on for 30+ years prior to this recent disruption in public access. Currently, this public property is only utilized by private companies to turn a profit. That is fine, but that certainly should not be the sole purpose of a public, waterfront asset. On a personal level, I used to pay \$150/year to launch and recover my boat at the beginning and end of each season using the hoist at Parkers. I have seen my costs more than triple as I've had to utilize a private boat yard. If I had the desire to join a Yacht club, I would have to endure a years long wait for a place to store my boat with any of the clubs in town.

MRA - the group that oversees area sailing regattas has been vocal about the decline of active, local, racing boats. This decline increases annually. Keeping the public from accessing the only viable keel boat launching point will only contribute to this decline more significantly.

Anyone with a trailerable boat that cannot be launched at Riverhead (or without the patience to launch/recover at just the right tide window, or lacking a stout enough tow vehicle to pull a trailer through the ravine just beyond the base of the concrete ramp- Riverhead is not for the faint of heart), is now left with the choice to pay hefty fees to a private boat yard, or an even more costly commitment to a local yacht club in order to simply use their boat; something that was easily and affordably accomplished until quite recently.

Sailing is a big part of Marblehead's heritage and its current identity. We hosted the America's Cup! Surely, we can create a space for the public to access, kayak, power and dry sail from!! Marblehead is an internationally recognized venue for regattas, and a destination on every cruiser's "bucket list." Access to sailing in our harbor should not be restricted to yacht club members. If storage and launching of keelboats at Parkers continues to be banned, we as a community will take a major hit to our identity. It is well past time to not only resume operations as usual (public storage and launching of boats) but to realize the full potential of Parkers through improvements such as a larger crane capable of launching additional fleets of one design boats, a ramp to launch and recover small boats, and storage racks for dinghies and paddle craft.

**Jack H, Marblehead**

4. SailMaine in Portland, like other similar successful community sailing programs, represents a great example of how a community sailing center can improve access and equity for youth and adults, and increase understanding and participation in human and wind powered sports. Marblehead's waters are an amazing resource, but limited public access can mean that the waters, and sailing, remain a pleasure primarily for the wealthy.

**Nat C, Newburyport**

5. Thank you! I think this is a wonderful idea and initiative! We enjoy SUP from Riverhead occasionally and would love an option for a place to store if we purchase our own boards.

**Becky S, Marblehead**

6. Marblehead was once proud of her moniker the 'Yachting capital of the world'. She has slipped into the 'center console outboard power boat' capital. I would like to see a renaissance in sailing. I would like to see more quality access and instruction for those that are disabled or not financially positioned to spend big bucks just to get near (let alone on) the water. If we are to promote the clean/green sport of sailing we need to make it accessible to youth, elder and the disabled! We have a number of disabled sailors in our, one time 'Yachting capital' yet they have no access in town and have to travel to Boston at a minimum just to sail at a venue that is accessible. That's not only a shame but as well a terrible statement on the present state of 'exclusivity' in water front access in the town of Marblehead.

**John R, Marblehead**

7. I am from Marblehead and access Marblehead Harbor from the Salem Harbor side where I keep my boat. I prefer to kayak in Marblehead Harbor and struggle to find a place to launch my kayak since the CYC (where my parents belong) built up the sea wall. I've found myself hauling it over the rocks at the lighthouse at times and wish there was a different place further down the harbor to launch it as it takes a while to get from Riverhead to the harbor edge pending tide. Further, I dinghy race a lot with friends from out of town who struggle to find places to launch their boats since Parker's has shut down; people who live in Boston and don't want to spend the \$ to belong to a Marblehead-based club but who enjoy sailing in Marblehead once a week and who are helping us stay a sailing town.

**Allyson S, Marblehead**

8. When one thinks of the history of Marblehead and it's sailing/boating-centric history... it is sort of surprising that this initiative wasn't started or successful decades ago. Thanks for prioritizing it now and working to see if/when it can take hold. While there is the Little Harbor Boathouse, SUP East Coast, and yacht clubs offering both member-only and some public

options... what you are proposing or seeking seems far more accessible on ALL levels from convenience and breadth...to affordability.

**Blake J, Marblehead**

9. No, it's a long-underused space. A focus to support community access (similar to what didn't work at the less central and less accessible Stramsky's over a decade ago) would be a very nice addition to the community overall... and specifically for such a potential gem in the rough @ Parker's. Community sailing and openness to kayaking, instruction, and other community offerings would be a fantastic addition to the community and an on-ramp to the boating and harbor experience for many/all.

**Mark F, Marblehead**

[END]