

Comments about American Cruise Lines Dock

I am Casey Knight, Harbor Board member, but I represent myself and expressing my own viewpoints. I am conflicted about this issue — whether to be in favor of a dock for American Cruise Lines — and I want to explain the nature of my conflict, because I suspect that a lot of other people are similarly conflicted.

There are three perspectives that I take on this issue, and for each of them I wear a different hat. Each hat corresponds to a different way of thinking about it, so I'm going to try on three different "thinking hats" in my testimony.

The **first, and most worn, thinking hat** represents my own *personal feelings* about an increase in tourism in Petersburg, as a fisherman, family-man, and resident. How do I feel about the possibility of an increase in tourist activity? This is an easy question to answer, because I merely have to consult my own inner feelings.

I personally would prefer not to have any increase in tourism during the summer. Indeed, I would rather it be reduced. In the summer, when I am in town trying to get stuff done in between fishing trips, during my busiest time of year, I'd rather not have the added distraction of wandering groups of tourists (whether they are from ships, lodges, or otherwise). In addition, to a certain extent, I feel a bit like a monkey in a cage at a zoo (alternatively: a lion on an African game range) with my habits on display for visitors. I would prefer not to feel this way in my normal day-to-day life.

These are just my own personal feelings, and I suspect that a lot of community members feel the same way. But there are two other hats that I sometimes wear, and which are also relevant to this issue.

The **second thinking hat** represents what my preferences about this issue *should be*, as someone with personal financial interests, who is aware that my quality of life depends on my finances. Should I be in favor of increased tourism in general, and the American Cruise Lines project in particular? This is obviously a harder question to answer, because I have to take into consideration information concerning whether I plan to continue as a fisherman for the foreseeable future, whether I should instead be a tour guide (or something), and so on.

But I do think I can answer this question: I should be more-or-less indifferent about it, from a financial point of view. On the one hand, as noted above, I would prefer there to be less tourism in Petersburg, but — and this is very important — *more tourism might be coming whether I want it to or not*. I might be able to benefit financially from such an increase in tourism, but I presently do not plan to take advantage of it. I am busy enough as it is during the summer months, and I am happy fishing. I cannot currently see any way to effectively change my own fishing endeavors to take advantage of this increase in tourism. I make plenty of money to support my family's lifestyle, and, until I have some obvious reason to find some other occupation, I'll keep doing what I'm doing, since I'm happy doing it. I suspect that plenty of the community feels this way about taking financial advantage of tourism.

(I note in passing that several members of the Assembly *are* financially invested in tourism. I am not saying this to call anyone out. Instead, it is directly relevant to the question of whether the expansion of the tourism industry is inevitable. It is much easier to see increased tourism as a boon to the community if you will benefit from it. I am just trying to be realistic about how those members are likely to vote on this issue. I don't hold this against any of them, and I don't think anyone should.)