

Dear Santa Cruz Port Commission

Jack O'Neill's history within the harbor has helped make it what it is today. The harbor has received a tremendous benefit from the O'Neill boating businesses over the years, including his sailing instruction. Jack helped to finance the restoration of the Jack O'Neill building, and founded, led and was a top funder of the O'Neill Sea Odyssey Program. All of these entities have served the harbor and Santa Cruz Community by increasing tourism and generating revenue for the Port District and related businesses.

Most importantly, Jack's legacy began with his efforts to keep people warm while surfing in colder waters by innovating the wetsuit, which over 70 years has revolutionized ocean access, a value the Santa Cruz Harbor shares. O'Neill Sea Odyssey has served 127,000 students from the Monterey Bay and Santa Clara County region area by bringing them to the harbor and providing them with a life changing educational experience on the ocean.

All other elected officials in Santa Cruz County and the Cities within it, and the Chamber of Commerce, have all helped to preserve Jack's legacy in Santa Cruz through giving proclamations, acknowledgements, named places and a street. 1989 Pepsi-O'Neill Cold Water Classic, O'Neill received Recognition of extraordinary contributions to the growth of surfing locally, nationally, and internationally. In 2010, O'Neill received the City of Capitola Mayor's Proclamation Business of the Year by Mayor Sam Storey and California State Senator Joseph Simitian, as well as received A certificate of Congressional Recognition of outstanding and invaluable service to the community by Congressman Sam Farr, and California Legislature Assemblymember William Monning commending charitable programming and outstanding volunteer, deserving of commendation and recognition as a continuous supporter and donator to many local community events and who sponsors important local economy boosting contests. In 2012, the parking lot area by the Dream Inn was designated by the state as a California Point of Historical Interest where Jack had his surf shop. In 2013, Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce gave Jack Man of the Year Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2014, the Jack O'Neill Lounge displaying the O'Neill history opened. In 2014, the 55-foot-long mural featuring archival photographs of milestones in O'Neill's personal history located adjacent to the parking lot below the Dream Inn. In 2016, the Jack O'Neill Way Street dedication by the City of Santa Cruz, by Santa Cruz City Councilman David Teresas. In 2017, In honor of Jack O'Neill's many contributions to surfing, the local community, and the well-being of the oceans, the city of Santa Cruz declared July 9th to be Jack O'Neill Day and redubbed the lot next to his home Jack O'Neill Park. November 30 2022, O'Neill Surf Shop on 41st Ave was recognized as a significant historical landmark by Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History's Historical Landmark Program making the Surf Shop a new State of California Point of Historical Interest. The City of Santa Cruz Mayor's Proclamation making Jan 9 2024 O'Neill Cold Water Classic Day in the city of Santa Cruz by Mayor Fred Keeley.

It is therefore disheartening and quite perplexing that 3 of our elected port commissioners, Toby Goddard, Steve Reed, and Reed Geisreiter, are doing the opposite of what all other elected officials have done in Santa Cruz County and the State of California by voting to remove Jack O'Neill's name from the building he built in the harbor. That very building would not be here today without Jack's investment and hard work. As voting constituents within the Santa Cruz Port Commission District, we are letting you know that your vote and decision to remove Jack O'Neill's name from the building does not represent what the community wants. Had the Port Commission sought public input and the input from their constituents they would have been able to make a more informed decision about the negative impact and opposition the vote to remove Jack's name from the building has caused. Mistakes can always be

rectified, and we are asking the Commission to include the public and constituents they represent and rescind the decision to remove Jack O'Neill's name from the building. A better more suited official name that acknowledges and preserves the building history and Jack's contribution to the harbor would be O'Neill Waterway Center.

Thank you for your time,

Pat O'Neill and Amber Jones

Handwritten signatures of Pat O'Neill and Amber Jones, separated by a vertical line. The signature on the left is 'Pat O'Neill' and the signature on the right is 'Amber Jones'.

Barney Langner Jr. former Officer and Director of the Santa Cruz Surfing Club Preservation Society.

Owner **Portola Surf Shop** 1970-1982 when I sold my shop to employee Michael Locatelli.

Member/Treasurer of the Sculpture Selection Committee 1988-1992. O'Neill Family provided 2000 t-shirts which were sold to raise close to \$37,000. Those monies were instrumental for the success of the Surfing Stature project.

In 1995 Michael had a stroke and was somewhat paralyzed. He had no choice but to eventually close the shop. To his rescue came the O'Neill Family that offered him a job to manage their surf Shop. The offer included much needed health insurance... and life when there was no future.

Change the name if you will. But know I'll start a petition tomorrow to change the name back. Seems I have expertise in these areas.

From: [Bill Gray](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Date: Thursday, September 19, 2024 5:28:24 PM

Please, leave the name recognition to Jack O'Neill. As a long time resident, I believe we should acknowledge his contribution.

Bill Gray
Capitola

From: [Candida Stricklen](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Date: Monday, September 23, 2024 4:33:13 PM

Dear Port Commissioners,

I am a retired teacher of 36 years in Santa Cruz and have had many wonderful encounters with the O'Neil family. Some of my students and I have been lucky enough to use the O'Neill Sea Odyssey in return for doing a good "deed" for the community. In return they enjoyed a ride on the bay and learned a lot about it while doing experiments and learning about marine biology. They have donated endless merchandise and money for countless fund raisers (cars even) and the building that you disgracefully renamed, and that was a donation from this family. For what reason? Santa Cruz Waterfront Building?...really, some generic name? You really needed to get public comments on this or more discussion with the community before you do such a horrendous action.

Please reconsider,
Candida Stricklen

From: [Carl Keehn](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Cc: [Bridget O'Neill](#); [Tim O'Neill](#)
Subject: O'Neill Building
Date: Saturday, September 21, 2024 5:22:02 PM

Dear Chair Reed,

Hope you are well. Been quite a while since we met.

I started working for Jack in 1971 and have been around for O'Neill Yacht Center, O'Neill Yacht Sales, O'Neill Dive Shop, O'Really, Jack O'Neill & Associates, O'Neill Sea Odyssey and the O'Neill Building. Why does the Commission wish to change the name?

In my opinion, it would be a mistake for the Santa Cruz Port District to turn their back on the history of the O'Neill Building.

I am writing to ask you to revisit your decision made at the August 2024 Port Commission meeting to remove the O'Neill Building's name and replace it with "Santa Cruz Waterfront Building." Instead, you should engage the public in this important discussion.

Removing the informal name for 2222 East Cliff Drive obscures an important part of Santa Cruz' and the Harbor's history. It's an homage to the contributions of Jack O'Neill, his support of the Santa Cruz Harbor, as well as O'Neill Sea Odyssey and the 127,000 students it has served.

Your commission renamed the building with little public notice, rejecting a request to move the discussion to a future meeting with adequate notice so the community could participate. Please reconsider this decision and provide an opportunity for a thoughtful community dialog.

Sincerely,
Carl Keehn

From: [Catherine Hodges](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: 2222 East Cliff - public input
Date: Thursday, September 19, 2024 9:13:37 PM

Dear Port Commissioners:

After reading the Guest Commentary in the Santa Cruz Sentinel, I felt compelled to write to you. I attended the August 27th Port Commission meeting when the decision to change the name of the O'Neill Building to "Santa Cruz Waterfront Building" was made. One of the Commissioners commented that the Walton Lighthouse, and another building in the harbor are named after donors, and that this is a common practice. A middle ground could have been something like "The O'Neill Building at the Santa Cruz Waterfront". Classy, honors the builder/donor history and states place.

I remember 2222 East Cliff as the O'Neill Yacht Center. I don't know the history on changing the name. Regardless of the name, two out of five Port Commissioners questioned the decision, so holding off on a formal name until getting public input seemed reasonable. Community outreach is important on many levels. Please consider putting the name change back on the September 24 agenda or the October 22 agenda.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Catherine "Bengie" Hodges
114 Camino del Sol
Santa Cruz, CA 95065

From: sknywls@aol.com
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: O'Neill name removal
Date: Friday, September 20, 2024 6:42:09 PM

To whom it may concern:

Much like the name grab at Cabrillo College, this subject flew under the radar of most county residents. Obviously this was purposeful.

We don't need to tell you that this is wrong, your secrecy tells us you know that. O'Neill is a part of the fabric of Santa Cruz County and our incredible ocean. The surfing industry and ocean conservation gained much from the influence of O'Neill.

Why do you attempt to erase that?

Leave the O'Neill name as it is at the harbor. Don't you have some other pressing issues at the harbor to deal with? What is behind this name change? Money? That seems to be the logical answer. I cannot see another. Shame on you

Cheryl Vessey-Messersmith

From: [Dan Haifley](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: O'Neill Building, Agenda Item #9, 9/24/24
Date: Saturday, September 21, 2024 8:58:58 AM
Attachments: [The O'Neill Building, A Short History.pptx](#)

Dear Port Commissioners-

I'd like to thank you for placing an item on your upcoming agenda to reconsider the name chosen at your August, 2024 meeting for what is often referred to as the O'Neill Building at 2222 East Cliff Drive. I also appreciated the opportunity to make a presentation to you on the history of that building at that meeting, and I have attached that power point to this email for your reference.

Having raised funds for renovation of the O'Neill Building (which occurred in 2004) and having worked in that structure for 20 years as Executive Director for O'Neill Sea Odyssey and for one and one half years in the early 1990s as Executive Director of Save Our Shores, I respectfully request that the "O'Neill Building" name be formally adopted.

Thank you for your consideration of my views!

Dan Haifley (He/Him)
(831) 234-8148

The O'Neil Building, A Short History

By Dan Haifley, retired OSO Director



“Harry Hind and I (were) old-time surfers from Kelly’s Cove and Ocean Beach, San Francisco. We surfed there in the 1950s, and became good friends. I had the idea to open a surf shop at the Santa Cruz harbor, and I asked Harry if he could back me on the deal. He said he would.”

– Jack O’Neill

“Then Harry brought in a CPA and an attorney, and soon our surf shack became an 8,500-square-foot building.”

We got approval from the harbor and built it in 1965. In 2000, Harry and I donated this building to the Sea Odyssey...”





Over the years the building housed O'Neill Yachts, O'Neill Dive Shop, O'Neill Surf Shop and O'Neill Sea Odyssey.

Jack was one of many with great harbor stories. After the 1964 tsunami washed the dredge to sea, Jack and two friends located and returned it to the harbor.



It was renovated in 2004-2005. O'Neill Sea Odyssey paid \$1.56 million, or 47% of the cost, mostly grants and donor funds, plus a loan.

Brian Foss said OSO's financial involvement made renovation possible.

The California Coastal Commission granted a waiver of their review of renovation due to the presence of OSO's education center and the Surfrider water quality lab – priority ocean dependent uses under the Coastal Act.





O'Neill involvement is part of the harbor's rich history, and speaking for myself, I hope it won't be lost.

From: [Darrel Louis](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: Jack O'Neil Building
Date: Saturday, September 21, 2024 10:31:29 PM

Honorable; Port Commissioners

Having moved to the community in 1978, and being impressed with the rich surfing and sailing community, I decided to learn to sail. Of course, the O'Neill Saling Center was the place to go in 1979 and the Santa Cruz Yacht Club was the place to be. I joined the club in 1981 and am currently an active member. Fast forward to 2024; renaming this "Iconic" building **Santa Cruz Waterfront Building** is Milk Toast, a slap in the face to all the O'Neills who have contributed to Santa Cruz. I am appalled, puzzled, shocked, disappointed, and alarmed by the recent decision on behalf of those who voted to name-change this iconic building. Myself, former Port District Commissioners, Harbor Employees, residents, and Yacht Club Members are perplexed by the decision made by three to rename (sic) the O'Neill Building. This is not yours to rename, it is the "Communities" to rename or not! Your role is fiscal responsibility and you are not privy to arbitrarily executing the renaming of buildings. What's next "Ocean Front Boat Docking and End Ties" for the harbor or "Seabright Beach Boat Harbor"? Your role is but for a short period of time and like the Dream Inn which was renamed several times over the years, ultimately returned to its roots and thus the Dream Inn was reborn. So shall The O'Niell Building be returned. I am out of town this week and would love to be at your meeting this week to listen in on the opposing comments. Recall is in order for the foolishness of your decision and may you bear the brunt of criticism you so deserve.

Captian Darrel Louis Ref #3572843
Merchant Mariner Credential
Doc #USA000729858/Exp 31 Jul2028

From: [David J. Terrazas](mailto:David.J.Terrazas)
To: scpd@SCPD
Cc: [David J. Terrazas](mailto:David.J.Terrazas); kwstoner@comcast.net; [Monica Terrazas](mailto:Monica.Terrazas)
Subject: Agenda Item No. 9 - Reconsideration of a formal Name for 2222 East Cliff Drive
Date: Tuesday, September 24, 2024 11:05:37 AM

Dear Chairperson Reed and Commissioners Smith, Goddard, Geisreiter, and Gertler:

I recently became aware of the Port Commission's August 27, 2024 action which sought consideration of a formal name change for a Port District owned building which was originally built and financed by Jack O'Neill and his partners in 1965.

Based on an online review of the agenda packet and board minutes from August 27, 2024, it appears that the Port Commission voted to rename the building to the "Santa Cruz Waterfront" by a 3-2 vote; with Chairperson Reed, and Commissioners Goddard and Geisreiter voting yes and Commissioners Smith and Gertler voting no.

I am writing to strongly object to this action and to respectfully request the Port Commission reconsider their vote in light of Jack O'Neill's significant contributions to the Harbor, greater Santa Cruz Community and globally. Jack O'Neill represents a legacy to our past, who's historical contributions to surfing, ocean conservation/education and entrepreneurialism should not be broken.

Although, your agenda packet for today's meeting (September 24, 2024) has scheduled Agenda Item 9, for the "Reconsideration of a Formal Name for 2222 East Cliff Drive", there is no memorandum attached to the agenda item which indicates which Commissioner is bringing the matter forward and what they are proposing.

As a former elected official who served as Santa Cruz City Mayor and Councilmember, I had the opportunity to work with the O'Neill Family and Jack O'Neill and to learn first-hand about their contributions to our community and their personal histories. The O'Neill story is uniquely Santa Cruz and representative of California's innovative spirit and culture throughout the world. Jack O'Neill and his family are integral to our town and have built something really special here. Please do not erase their contributions in the harbor with shortsighted decisions.

Although I am unable to present in person because I am traveling out of the area, I urge the entire Port Commission to reconsider their prior action and instead move forward to solidify Jack O'Neill's legacy at the Harbor with formal name recognition as well as the development of historical signage and/or public art. Alternatively, I encourage the Port Commission to engage in an extensive public process to consider a formal building name, historical signage and public art, which incorporates Jack O'Neill and his rich history associated with the Harbor and unique personal contributions to Santa Cruz and throughout the world.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,
David J. Terrazas

From: [Debbie Falconer](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: Fwd: Delivery Status Notification (Failure)
Date: Monday, September 23, 2024 12:05:21 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: Debbie Falconer <randdfalconer@gmail.com>

To: scpd@santacruzharbor.org

Cc:

Bcc:

Date: Fri, 20 Sep 2024 08:19:12 -0700

Subject: Renaming the O'Neill building

I want to make my voice heard on this issue. I think it's ridiculous that 3 people can decide to rename this building without any public polling or notification. I think you will find - should you bother to ask - that no one agrees with this decision. Please re-think this proposal before it's too late. Let's honor Jack O'Neill the way he deserves to be honored - for all he has done for Santa Cruz.

Debbie Falconer
1940 Harper St.
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

From: [Dick Larimer](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: Name change of O'Neill Building
Date: Friday, September 20, 2024 8:02:42 AM

Why would you even think about changing the name of the O'Neill building? Whose idea was that? The name O'Neill is synonymous with our dear city of Santa Cruz. The idea is foolish, insulting and disrespectful to the man and family that has done so much for our community. Don't do it!!

From: [Donna Maurillo](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: Do not remove the O'Neill name from the building
Date: Monday, September 23, 2024 10:59:08 PM

Count me in as one of the people who do not want the O'Neill name removed from the building at the harbor. Jack was a legend known throughout the world for his environmentalism and his devotion to ocean conservation. That tradition continues with the Sea Odyssey program for students in our area elementary schools.

Why would you want to remove his name from common usage for that building? Don't erase our local history and the attention that Jack O'Neill brought to ocean conservation. His leadership is one reason we have no drilling along our coastline.

Thank you...

Donna Maurillo

Scotts Valley, California 95066

View my photographs at
www.DonnaMaurillo.com



County of Santa Cruz

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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September 24, 2024

Santa Cruz Port Commissioners,

I urge you to preserve the name of Jack O'Neill on the building he and his partners constructed in 1965. The O'Neill name is synonymous with Santa Cruz, surfing, outdoor recreation, and ocean conservation. It would be a disservice to erase his name from this landmark building, located in a port so deeply connected to his legacy.

As a former Mayor of Watsonville and current Santa Cruz County Supervisor, I have personally witnessed thousands of youths from Watsonville and schools throughout Santa Cruz County, including participants in my Young Supervisors Academy, benefit from the programs offered by the nonprofit Jack O'Neill founded in 1996, O'Neill Sea Odyssey.

Many of these young people had never experienced sailing in the Monterey Bay waters before, and the experience has left a profound impact on their understanding of environmental stewardship.

Sincerely,

Felipe Hernandez

From: jane.scurr
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: O'Neill Building
Date: Friday, September 20, 2024 9:35:09 AM

Dear Commissioners,
Jack O'Neill has contributed so much to this county. Please do not take away his legacy by changing the name of the building.
I don't even understand why you are considering this. You are required to have public input.
This makes no sense !

Jane Scurr
Aptos

From: [Jean Brocklebank](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: Revisionist history mistake
Date: Thursday, September 19, 2024 7:37:40 PM

Dear Port Commissioners ~

This email was originally sent to only two commissioners. We are sending this now, officially to all commissioners.

We were unable to be at the August 27 Port Commission meeting. We certainly had **no idea** by the description of the agenda item that the Commission was considering **removing** O'Neill from the name of the O'Neill Building!

This is tantamount to removing Simpkins from the Simpkins Swim Center or McPherson from the McPherson Art and History Museum. Why revise the astonishing history of how the O'Neill Building got there in the first place? Jack O'Neill made it happen, just like Bill Simpkins made the Simpkins Swim Center happen!

Yes, things change, and today is today. But history is history. Sadly, we risk losing the threads of the historical fabric of our community, one thread at a time. This is serious loss, one bit at a time.

Even worse, the "Santa Cruz Waterfront Center" is completely without merit. Inane.

How about considering instead, naming it the O'Neill Center. If you must. Or, a longer "O'Neill Center at the Harbor" (OCH ... has a celtic sound to it that might make O'Neill smile!)

We have since learned that the building has never had a formal name, but history shows that when KUSP public radio broadcast from it, beginning 50 years ago, they also referred to it as the O'Neill Building. Members of the public constantly referred to it that way, especially when directing friends for a rendezvous at its restaurants and coffee shoppes. In other words, the building had a name based on use. Certainly any current tenant of the building can be proud to be a part of such interesting history.

We hope you will revisit your 3-2 decision. Unfortunately we will not be able to be at Tuesday's meeting (9/24), due to surgery scheduled that day.

Sincerely,
Michael Lewis
Jean Brocklebank

From: [Jean Brocklebank](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: O'Neill building controversy
Date: Friday, September 20, 2024 10:13:10 AM

Dear Chair Reed ~

After reading the minutes of the August 27 meeting, we feel more strongly that the matter of naming the building at 2222 East Cliff Drive **be revisited** and that requests for a more public discussion of the matter be allowed in the interests of transparency and inclusiveness of the public, which elects the members of the Port Commission.

Below you will find three Letters to the Editor of the Sentinel published today (9/20). Generally, one letter writer may be speaking for a hundred others who do not send letters to a newspaper. Here you will read three, indicating there are probably hundreds who feel the same.

We urge you to revisit this matter at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,
Jean Brocklebank
Michael Lewis

Make your voice heard on O'Neill Building name

Sept. 18, the Sentinel published a Guest Commentary from two Santa Cruz Port Commission members, Dennis Smith and Darren Gertler, titled "Don't erase O'Neill's legacy at the Harbor."

The article says it all. There are no documented notes on the Santa Cruz Harbor website from the Aug. 28 Port Commission meeting agenda that supports or clarifies the reasoning behind the name change from the O'Neill Building to Santa Cruz Waterfront Building.

While I'm not a surfer, I appreciate all that the O'Neill family has done for Santa Cruz, the surfing industry and ocean conservation under the O'Neill Sea Odyssey program.

On July 9, 2017, around 2,500 surfers paddled out at Pleasure Point to pay tribute to Jack O'Neill after his death. Let's not let his legacy be erased by an unsupported name change to the building he built and then donated to the Harbor.

Contact the Port District at: scpd@santacruzharbor.com or attend the next Port Commission meeting Sept. 24, 5:30 p.m. at 365 A. Lake Avenue, Santa Cruz. You can also attend remotely at SantaCruzHarbor.org.

— Jackie and Peter Whiting, Aptos

Alarmed over changing name of O'Neill Building

I read with alarm the Guest Commentary in the Sentinel regarding the name change of the

historic O'Neill Building.

This name change makes absolutely no sense. It's not like O'Neill moved in and rented the building. Not only did Jack and company build the building, he then paid for half of the remodeling costs then donated the building to the Port District in 2004.

The O'Neills have employed thousands of people over the past 60-odd years, and the O'Neill brand has contributed untold millions of dollars in sales tax and revenue to the city and county of Santa Cruz.

Why not honor the worldwide recognized O'Neill name and what their family has brought to Santa Cruz with a historic naming of a building rather than the generic meaningless name the commissioners came up with?

Additionally, the O'Neill Sea Odyssey has contributed to over 100,000 young school-age kids' education from all over the state.

The big question is why would three commissioners want to change this without public comment or any additional discussion? What's the big secret?

— Bill Farrington, Santa Cruz

Hard to believe port commissioners' vote

It was hard for me to believe the Santa Cruz Port Commission voted 3-2 to give the O'Neill Building, at the harbor, a new name. This is an insult to Jack O'Neill, Harry Hinds and to our community.

I have had a boat in the harbor for 30 years. As I go out the harbor, I always point out to my guests the legacy the O'Neill boat that has taken over 100,000 school kids out to sea and other marine activities that have occurred. It is hard to believe three commissioners have pushed this process without public input and voted for erasing legacy that belongs to all of us.

— Alfred Carlson, Capitola

From: [JIM MOORE](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: This is absurd!
Date: Sunday, September 22, 2024 10:22:48 PM

I can't believe The Santa Cruz Port Commission voted 3-2 to give the O'NEILL BUILDING, at the harbor, a new name! This is an insult to Jack O'Neill & his family, Harry Hinds and also to our our community.

I have worked on boats at the Santa Cruz Harbor for over 60 years & The O'NEILL BOAT is a legacy that has influenced over 100,000 school kids by allowing them to have a closer look at the Monterey bay and experience other marine activities that would not be available to them, had they not been so generous.

It is hard to believe that three commissioners have pushed this process without public input and voted for erasing a legacy that belongs to all of us.

*Jim Moore
Moore & Sons Outboard Motors
831-332-4590*

From: [Joyce Anderson](#)
To: [scpd@ SCPD](#); [Tracey Weiss](#)
Subject: Jack Oneill legacy
Date: Thursday, September 19, 2024 10:32:10 AM

Good morning,

I'm voicing my concerns with the news I read in the sentinel about the changes made by three people to change the name of the building at the harbor.

I was appointed by Jack Oneill to serve on his advisory board which I am still a member of.

I have been a community advocate for 28 years as a Tv producer and host for my show

INSIDE SANTA CRUZ , I have supported OSO and filmed for Jack for years. In 2014 I was awarded by the US
PRESIDENT

FOR MY COMMUNITY SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERISM,

So I plan to attend the meeting on September 24th , asking why

This decision was made without public knowledge and input,

Sincerely, Joyce Anderson

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Judi Grunstra](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: Building name change
Date: Friday, September 20, 2024 7:30:17 AM

To the Commissioners:

I like to keep informed about the actions of several city and county commissions. Though normally the Port Commission isn't one of them, I read about the decision to remove Jack O'Neill's name from the building, replacing it with a totally bland name that dishonors the legacy of this man who helped put Santa Cruz "on the map." I reviewed the Aug 27 agenda item, and there is insubstantial background or reasoning given behind the proposal. I don't know if the Commission meetings are recorded, or if the public can hear the discussion that led to the vote.

I have lived here for 33 years. I don't surf. But I see the Santa Cruz I once loved losing its uniqueness, slowly but surely swallowed up in the name of marketing, lack of vision, and yes, greed.

I hope that public outcry will cause you to reverse your decision. Stick to your duties of managing the "sustainability" of the port and don't take on meaningless actions.

Thank you.

Judith Grunstra

From: [Kathy A](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: Keep the Jack O'Neill building
Date: Wednesday, September 18, 2024 7:29:08 AM

Been here 42 years.

Not a surfer but proud of our surfing history

Jack O'Neill is part of that local history and his name is legendary

I love the connection and a building name at the port helps keep it alive.

Why would you ever want to change it to Santa Cruz Waterfront?

How vanilla.

Port Commission Meeting Speech... 09-23-2024

My name is Kim Stoner. I was born and raised here in Santa Cruz. My family has been living in this area for over 100+ years. I have been sailing out of this harbor since it was completed and I have been surfing here since the early 1960's.

I am a Surfing Historian and one of the founder's of our Santa Cruz Surfing Museum which we opened in 1986. I won't talk about my various work background, as it takes too much time. The only thing I will mention to you is that I worked as an independent contractor consultant on the Murray St./Harbor Bridge project (on and off) for over 15+ years searching title records and court cases before retiring at the end of 2023.

So... I am very disappointed that you are considering a name change of this beachfront building. I am not going to repeat what others have already mentioned of what Jack O'Neill (an icon)... has accomplished for Santa Cruz.

Something I would like to share with all of you is back in 2008 when the economy went into a recession and the City of Santa Cruz voted to close the Surf Museum I received a call from Jack O'Neill wanting to meet with me. Jack was a businessman, and I grew up surfing with 2 of his sons, Pat and Mike. He wanted to know what our costs were for Surf Museum operation and I told him close to 25K per year. Jack gave us a donation of \$\$ to keep the Surf Museum open for over 8 months and said if we needed more later to call him. He stated that our non-profit should start our own fund raising program, (which we did) and we were able to keep the Surf Museum open.

So... I urge the Port Commissioners to reconsider the name change and keep the O'Neill name on... and for the building... he constructed, of which you own the land under.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully, Kim Stoner

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kim Stoner', with a stylized flourish at the end.



420 Capitola Avenue
Capitola, California 95010
Telephone: (831) 475-7300
FAX: (831) 479-8879

Website: <http://www.cityofcapitola.org>

To: Santa Cruz Port District
Port Commissioners
135 5th Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Dear Chair Reed, Vice Chair Smith, and Commissioners Goddard, Geisreiter, and Gertler,

I am writing today to express my opposition to the recent decision to rename the "O'Neill Building" to the "Santa Cruz Waterfront Building." This building holds significant historical and cultural importance, not only for the Santa Cruz Harbor but also for the broader surfing and outdoor education communities. Jack O'Neill's legacy, through both his business endeavors and the invaluable work of the O'Neill Sea Odyssey, has shaped the identity and spirit of this location for decades.

Jack O'Neill and his partners played a pivotal role in the development of this building, contributing both financially and through their efforts to keep it viable for the harbor community. Moreover, the building has been a home to the O'Neill Sea Odyssey program, which has provided ocean exploration and education to over 100,000 students, many of whom would not have had such an opportunity otherwise. This connection to ocean education and stewardship is central to the building's identity and legacy. Renaming the building diminishes the recognition of a legacy that has had a lasting and meaningful impact on Santa Cruz and beyond.

I strongly urge the Santa Cruz Port District to reconsider this decision and to restore Jack O'Neill's name to the building in honor of his lasting contributions to our community.

Sincerely,

Kristen Brown
Mayor, City of Capitola

From: [Liz Pollock](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: keep the o'neil name!
Date: Sunday, September 22, 2024 12:14:34 PM

hi,
i want the building name to remain O'Neill.
liz pollock
8312519218

From: [Lora Lee Martin](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: Stunned....Really?! Don't rename the building
Date: Monday, September 23, 2024 7:43:36 PM

O'Neill is one of this region's iconic names. How insulting to consider renaming the building he helped to make happen to a name that holds no significance and is less than inspiring. This community is proud of our surfing heritage and O'Neill, a world recognized name, is central to that and so much more. I urge you to keep the O'Neill name for the building.

Lora Lee Martin

Sent from my iPad

From: [Alejo, Luis](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Cc: [Felipe Hernandez](#); [Ramon Gomez](#); dhaifley@oneillseaodyssey.org
Subject: Keep Jack O'Neill's name on his building
Date: Thursday, September 19, 2024 11:05:22 PM

Dear Santa Cruz Port Commissioners,

As a former Mayor of Watsonville and now Monterey County Supervisor, I want to urge you to keep Jack O'Neill name on the building he constructed in 1965 with his partners. The O'Neill name is synonymous with Santa Cruz, surfing, outdoor recreation and ocean conservation, and it would a shame to erase his name from that landmark building located in a port with so much of his history.

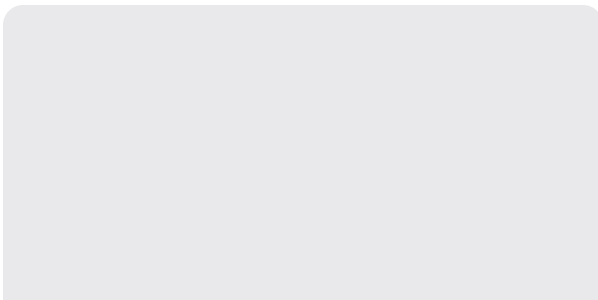
During my tenure in the State Assembly, I personally witnessed many disadvantaged Latino youth from my hometown who were able to learn about ocean protection and conservation because of the programs offered by the nonprofit organization Jack O'Neill founded in 1996, O'Neill Sea Odyssey. Most of my young constituents had never been into the beautiful Monterey Bay waters, and it left a profound impact on their understanding about environmental stewardship.

Today, from the other side of the Monterey Bay, I urge the Port Commission to reconsider your vote from last month. Don't erase the respected and admired name of an important historical figure and leader of the Monterey Bay region. Simple publications are no replacement to completely erasing his name from this building.

I would instead urge you to consider and adopt a compromise of naming it the “**Santa Cruz O'Neill Waterfront Center.**” That would be a name that everyone could appreciate across the the entire Monterey Bay!

Sincerely,

LUIS A. ALEJO
Monterey County Supervisor, District 1
State Assemblymember, 30th District (Ret.)
Watsonville Mayor (Ret.)





Santa Cruz

Guest Commentary | Don't erase O'Neill's legacy
of surfing, ocean education at Santa Cruz Harbor
santacruzsentinel.com

From: [Mark Boolootian](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: O'Neill Building
Date: Tuesday, September 24, 2024 12:17:58 PM

Please respect the legacy of someone who is important to our community, as well as to the rest of the world. The O'Neill Building should remain named as it is. To change the name would be an extraordinarily unwise and unkind action.

Mark Boolootian
Santa Cruz resident

From: [Martha Tousseau](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: O'Neill
Date: Friday, September 20, 2024 9:40:08 AM

Please do not erase the O'Neill legacy at the SC Harbor, his name is legend and adds so much appeal to our area, Santa Cruz Waterfront Building is boring. The O'Neill waterfront building maybe?
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Maureen Brandi](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: Don't change name of Oneill building
Date: Friday, September 20, 2024 7:20:23 AM

Please don't change the name of the O'Neill building, a name of pride and historical significance for our county, to a generic name that means nothing to the people of this community. The building should continue to be named O'Neill!

From: mmccabe812@aol.com
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: Naming of Santa Cruz Harbor Building
Date: Monday, September 23, 2024 9:54:53 PM

Dear Port Commissioners:

I read with dismay that 3 of the 5 Port Commissioners are proposing that the Main Building at the Santa Cruz Harbor not be named after Jack O'Neill.

Let me say that I am neither a surfer or a sailor but I do know who Jack O'Neill was and about the contributions that he made to surfing and sailing not to mention the fact that his philanthropic contributions have given Santa Cruz the Sea Odyssey Program. Why wouldn't the Port Commission embrace the legacy that Mr. O'Neill left to Santa Cruz and beyond?

I respectfully request that the Santa Cruz Port Commission postpone consideration of naming the Main Building at the Harbor until

- 1) The three commissioners advocating this change give their reasons for such a change
- 2) The public can have more time to submit public comments. After all, this is a public space with many stakeholders

And, if I had a vote, I would enthusiastically vote for the building to be named in honor of Jack O'Neill for all he gave to the Harbor and the community and for his belief that we all have a stake in ensuring the health of our Oceans.

Sincerely,
Michele McCabe

From: [Michael](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: Renaming the Jack O'Neill building...
Date: Friday, September 20, 2024 8:33:34 AM

Dear Port Commission,

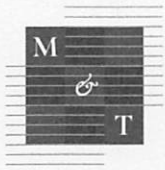
As a long-time Harbor observer since the days of Woods Lagoon, it seems to me that the Port Commission would have better things to do than to deal off the bottom of the deck concerning the renaming of this building. The Sea Odyssey program has benefitted generations of schoolchildren and has increased the awareness of marine ecology among the local population. This alone qualifies Jack O'Neill the honor of continuing the current name.

I am sure that there more important and pressing issues that deserve your attention than this.

Do your real jobs!

Mike Honig

mwhonig@gmail.com



McCabe & Totah LLP
Certified Public Accountants

September 19, 2024

1760 The Alameda
Suite 300
San Jose, CA 95126

Tel: 408 977 7090
Fax: 408 289 8276

Partners

Mike McCabe
408 977 7093

Ann McCabe
408 977 7091

Kim Totah
408 977 7092

Dear Chair Reed and Port Commissioners-

I am writing to ask you to rescind your decision made in haste during the August 2024 Port Commission meeting. The decision to erase the name "O'Neill Building," for the structure at 2222 East Cliff Drive is short-sited and is an attempt to erase an important part of Sant Cruz, and the Harbor history. The well-established though informal moniker "O'Neill Building" pays credit to the important history and contributions of Jack O'Neill and the O'Neill Sea Odyssey to the vibrancy of a Harbor community.

The Simpkins Swim Center, McPherson Room at the Art and History Museum these are but two examples of how the community has honored and celebrated the contributions of important members of our community. To erase the contributions of any one person, dishonors the rich and complicated history of our community. The building at 2222 East Cliff Drive would not have been possible without the vision and foresight of Jack O'Neill, Harry Hind, and others.

I am excited about the work being done to create a diverse and welcoming Harbor Community. While names shift, (see London Nelson Center) they do so to honor the rich cultural history of our region. While you have a right to determine much about the harbor's operations, your effort to erase the building's legacy should only be done if it is an option presented and should only be done after a thoughtful, community dialog.

Thank you for considering my views.

Very truly yours,

Mike McCabe

Michael J. McCabe, Partner
McCabe & Totah LLP

From: [Niels Kisling, AKA Captain Niels](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Cc: [Blake Anderson](#)
Subject: What's in a name?
Date: Tuesday, September 17, 2024 10:24:58 AM

What's in a name? EVERYTHING!

What a crappy, disrespectful name you picked for the O'NEILL BUILDING. It will always be called that by those of us locals. No one has enough time these daze to say SANTA CRUZ WATERFRONT CENTER.

The name change completely disrespects those of us who have known this building since it was commissioned by Jack O'Neill.

Shame on you-

Niels

Niels Kisling

It's my job.

From: [Pamela Edwards](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: Why building name change? Keep O'Neill name!
Date: Friday, September 20, 2024 10:51:41 AM

Dear Santa Cruz Port Commission.

I am writing to voice my displeasure with the Santa Cruz Sentinel Guest Commentary announcement (and subsequent letters to the editor) that the O'Neill building at the harbor will be changed to the "Santa Cruz Waterfront Building". Why?

Why does the name need to be changed?

Why was the Call for a name change not announced to the general public (not just for those who follow the Port Authority meeting calendar)?

Why were there no opportunities provided for public input?

The harbor is a public facility enjoyed by many, not just those who own boats or are employees at or near it. The O'Neill name has a long history in Santa Cruz as a business, and a conservation and education organization.

Please explain to us locals why the Port Commission decided to make this change.

Sincerely,
Pamela Edwards
45-year Santa Cruz resident

From: [Renee Golder](#)
To: [Justin Cummings](#); scpd@SCPD; [Matt Huffaker](#)
Subject: Renaming the O'Neill Building
Date: Friday, September 20, 2024 8:54:04 AM

Dear Members of the Port Commission,

I am writing to express my profound disappointment regarding the decision to rename the O'Neill Building to the "Santa Cruz Waterfront Building." This decision overlooks the significant impact that the O'Neill family, and particularly Jack O'Neill's legacy, have had on our community.

The O'Neill Sea Odyssey (OSO) serves over 5,000 students annually, most of whom are multilingual learners, underrepresented minorities, and socioeconomically disadvantaged youth. For many, OSO offers their first chance to experience the ocean and develop a connection to the marine environment. This experience fosters empowerment and a sense of belonging, transforming lives in our community.

The O'Neill family has played a crucial role in establishing Santa Cruz as a premier surf destination, attracting tourists from around the world. This influx of visitors not only boosts our local economy but also promotes our community's identity and values. The legacy of Jack O'Neill has contributed significantly to tourism, and maintaining the name of the building serves as a tribute to the family's ongoing economic impact on Santa Cruz County.

In addition to serving as Vice Mayor, I am an educator and for over 20 years working exclusively in Title 1 schools in this county. I have seen firsthand how OSO has positively affected our community, especially for children living in poverty who have never had the chance to be on a boat or enjoy the ocean from that perspective. Renaming the building feels like a disregard for the values Jack championed and the contributions his family continues to make.

I urge the Port Commission to reconsider this decision and honor the O'Neill legacy by keeping the building's name. Doing so would not only celebrate Jack's contributions but also reinforce our commitment to providing enriching opportunities for all students while recognizing the O'Neill family's enduring economic influence. Please re-consider your decision, and instead add a plaque to forever memorialize the legacy of Jack O'Neill.

Sincerely,
Renee Golder



Renée Golder
Vice Mayor City of Santa Cruz

-  809 Center Street room 10
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
-  831-420-5202
-  rgolder@santacruzca.gov
-  cityofsantacruz.com



From: [Rick Myers](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: O'Neill Building Name Change
Date: Friday, September 20, 2024 1:20:40 PM

I am as a 45 year resident of the Santa Cruz area, mystified as to why one would want to change the the name on a long standing structure containing the O'Neil name. This family has done so many good things for our community over the years. They deserve this continuing recognition. I am disappointed to hear this decision was made by three individuals without input from the local citizens. This is my input-Please leave the present O'Neil name!

Sincerely,
Marcella Myers

From: tarenlaw@aol.com
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: From Robert Taren
Date: Tuesday, September 24, 2024 5:30:53 PM

Please reconsider the name change back to the O'Neill building. What your commission has done is devalue a piece of Santa Cruz History that has been a beacon of leadership for those who cherish the Santa Cruz coast and bay and to those who want to protect our coastal environment.

Thank you,

Robert Taren
Santa Cruz, Ca.

From: [Robin Cabak](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: Renaming of O'Neill Building
Date: Friday, September 20, 2024 9:49:14 AM

I am a slip renter in the South Harbor with my husband and just was reading the 8/27/24 meeting minutes. I am disappointed in the handling of name change of a major building in our harbor without the input of the community. I appreciate the commissioners that requested a delay in the final vote, but am flabbergasted that the other commissioners did not grant the delay. What is the need for such a rush? Please put this back on the next agenda and publish a notice in the Sentinel to allow public input. The O'Neill family and O'Neill Sea Odyssey are iconic to our city and provide educational opportunities to our school children, including both of mine, with their ocean awareness programs.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Regards,

Robin Cabak

Aptos, CA

Owner of SV Higher Power

831-818-3382

From: [Steve Larson](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: Keep the O'Neill Building Name
Date: Monday, September 23, 2024 7:19:38 AM

Dear Port District representatives,
As a Santa Cruz resident since 1972 I deeply respect the cultural, political and surfiness of Jack O'Neill. His influence was deep and positive on not only local surfing, but respect and enthusiasm for the Pacific Ocean. Also a positive economic contributor to the county, state, and even the world. In extensive world travel, I have seen his brand on the back of people far from California. KEEP HIS NAME on the building! This is the positive political wave now, and for decades - RIDE IT.

Steve Larson

From: [Tom](#)
To: scpd@SCPD
Subject: O'Niell building name change?
Date: Friday, September 20, 2024 11:39:26 AM

To Whom It Should Concern,

I have lived in Santa Cruz for over 50 years and in all that time Jack O'Neil and family have been providing jobs and income for city and county residents, along with support and funding for environmental and educational causes. The O'Niell family deserves great recognition for their innumerable contributions to our city, county, and world.

Please do NOT change the name of the O'Niell Building. Let it stand as the O'Niell Building as a permanent reminder of their contributions. In fact, let's find some other stuff to name after them; they certainly deserve it!

Sincerely,
Thomas Betts

Sent from my iPad



2222 East Cliff Drive Suite 222
Santa Cruz CA 95062
P: (831) 475-1561
oneillseaodyssey.org

September 18, 2024

Santa Cruz Port District
135 5th Ave
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Dear Chair Reed and Port Commissioners-

I am writing to ask you to rescind your decision made in haste during the August 2024 Port Commission meeting. The decision to erase the name "O'Neill Building," for the structure at 2222 East Cliff Drive is short-sited and is an attempt to erase an important part of Santa Cruz, and the Harbor history. The well-established though informal moniker "O'Neill Building" pays credit to the important history and contributions of Jack O'Neill and the O'Neill Sea Odyssey to the vibrancy of a Harbor community.

Words and names have power. The Simpkins Swim Center, McPherson Room at the Art and History Museum these are but two examples of how the community has honored and celebrated the contributions of important members of our community. The history between the Harbor and Jack O'Neill is long. To erase the contributions of any one person, dishonors the rich history of our community. The building at 2222 East Cliff Drive would not have been possible without the vision and foresight of Jack O'Neill, Harry Hind, and others.

The Santa Cruz harbor serves as a beacon for local mariners. I am excited about the work being done to create a diverse and welcoming Harbor Community. While names shift, (ex. London Nelson Center) they evolve based on community input, a strategic vision and following a period of review. While you have a right to determine much about the harbor's operations, your effort to erase the building's legacy should only be done if it is an option presented only be done after a thoughtful, community dialog.

Please consider re-opening this matter at a future Port Commission meeting and providing adequate time for members of the public to contribute to the larger conversation.

Thank you for considering my views.

In Community,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tracey Weiss".

Tracey Weiss

Executive Director O'Neill Sea Odyssey

O'Neill Sea Odyssey provides free and transformative ocean-going educational experiences to students from diverse backgrounds, igniting their scientific curiosity and empowering them to take action to protect our oceans and watersheds.