

Comment submitted to the National Park Service on March 30, 2012, by John Wheeler of Washington D.C.:

First, I think there should be no private development of the C&O Canal National Historical Park. If the decision is to allow private development in the boathouse zone, it should be down-river from Key Bridge.

I think it's also important to separate the launching areas for boats that are paddled forwards (e.g., canoes and kayaks) and boats that are paddled backwards (e.g., shells and sculls). Because of the size of shells, where they managed on-shore is limited. Vehicle access is critical for them. If at all possible, they should be located where there is limited other public use of the area. This is definitely not the area where the Capitol Resent Trail exists. Allowing shells along that portion of the waterfront is just asking for life threatening disaster. Canoes and kayaks can more easily be accommodated in that area.

I think the Park Service should also not limit this study to original boathouse zone area. It certainly should include down-river areas, especially the existing Thompson's Boathouse. E.g., can improvements be made there to accommodate more boats?

I think the Park Service has placed too much interest in accommodating private uses on the river. It should place more emphasis in public use. To that extent, any uses that it allows on the river, especially above Key Bridge, should be public uses and all facilities that may be built should be publically owned and accessible to all members of the public.