

March 3, 2014

City of Austin Board of Adjustment

Jeff Jack, Chair
Melissa Hawthorne, Vice Chair
Sallie Burchett
Ricardo De Camps
Stuart Hampton

Bryan King
Dr. Fred McGhee
Will Schnier
Michael von Ohlen

Re: 5219 Tortuga Trail (C15-2014-0011)

Dear Chair and Board of Adjustment Members:

We are the owners of the property located next door to the above referenced application, which is owned by Mr. and Ms. Archer. We are concerned about the variance to fill in the existing boat slip and recapture additional land, since the owners are proposing to recapture land so that they may construct a new boat dock that extends 30 feet into the lake, as shown on attached Exhibit A. Based on the plans provided by the owner's engineer and architect, the new boat dock will be located 10 feet from our shared property line. If the variance to recapture additional land is granted, we ask that any future boat dock be required to offset at least 40 feet from the property line that is shared between our two properties, based on the following information.

Today there are two adjoining slips, neither of which protrude into the main body of Lake Austin. Significant winds are present throughout the year from either down lake (from Pennybacker Bridge towards Mansfield Dam) or up lake (from Mansfield Dam towards Pennybacker Bridge). When backing out of the slip with the prevailing wind coming from up lake (Pennybacker Bridge towards Mansfield Dam), safe navigation requires turning and allowing the bow of the boat to swing downwind about the propulsion outdrive axis. With parallel boat slips, sufficient navigating room is provided, as shown on Exhibit B. Our concern is that the proposed boat dock will create a potentially hazardous obstruction to the existing safe and recommended navigation into and out of the slips.

Prevailing winds run with the lake in either direction towards or away from the Pennybacker Bridge. They can be unpredictable and accompanied by strong gusts which create significant lake "chop". Standard navigational practice when entering the slip under such conditions is to approach the boat slip moving into the wind using the force of the wind to turn the boat while making the final maneuver to dock the boat into the slip off the main body of the lake. An approach into the wind provides the maximum amount of control of the boat for increased safety during the docking process, as shown in Exhibit C. Approaching the boat slip with the wind or "running with the wind" is not recommended, since the ability to turn the boat into the slip with the wind aft is extremely challenging. The increased momentum with the wind results in overshooting the slip and movement of the boat further down lake.

The Archer's proposed dock will protrude from the shoreline and run directly parallel to our existing slip line of travel. The new structure will act as an obstruction making a safe approach to our slip with the wind extremely difficult and dangerous. The risk of being blown directly into the new structure is highly probable and the existing safe approach into the slip will no longer be possible, as shown in Exhibits D and E. A new safety hazard will exist while backing out of our slip and this safety hazard will be magnified for single passenger water craft such as a jet ski. There will be no room to provide power to move away from the proposed new dock and into the wind resulting in the boat or watercraft striking and potentially running underneath the new structure.

For these reasons, we ask that if the variance to recapture the additional land is granted, that the variance be conditioned so that any future boat dock is required to offset at least 40 feet from the property line that is shared between our two properties.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. If you have any questions, comments, or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jeff Swickard and Chris Hattasch".

Jeff Swickard and Chris Hattasch

Today's Parallel Neighboring Slip Arrangement
Google Maps

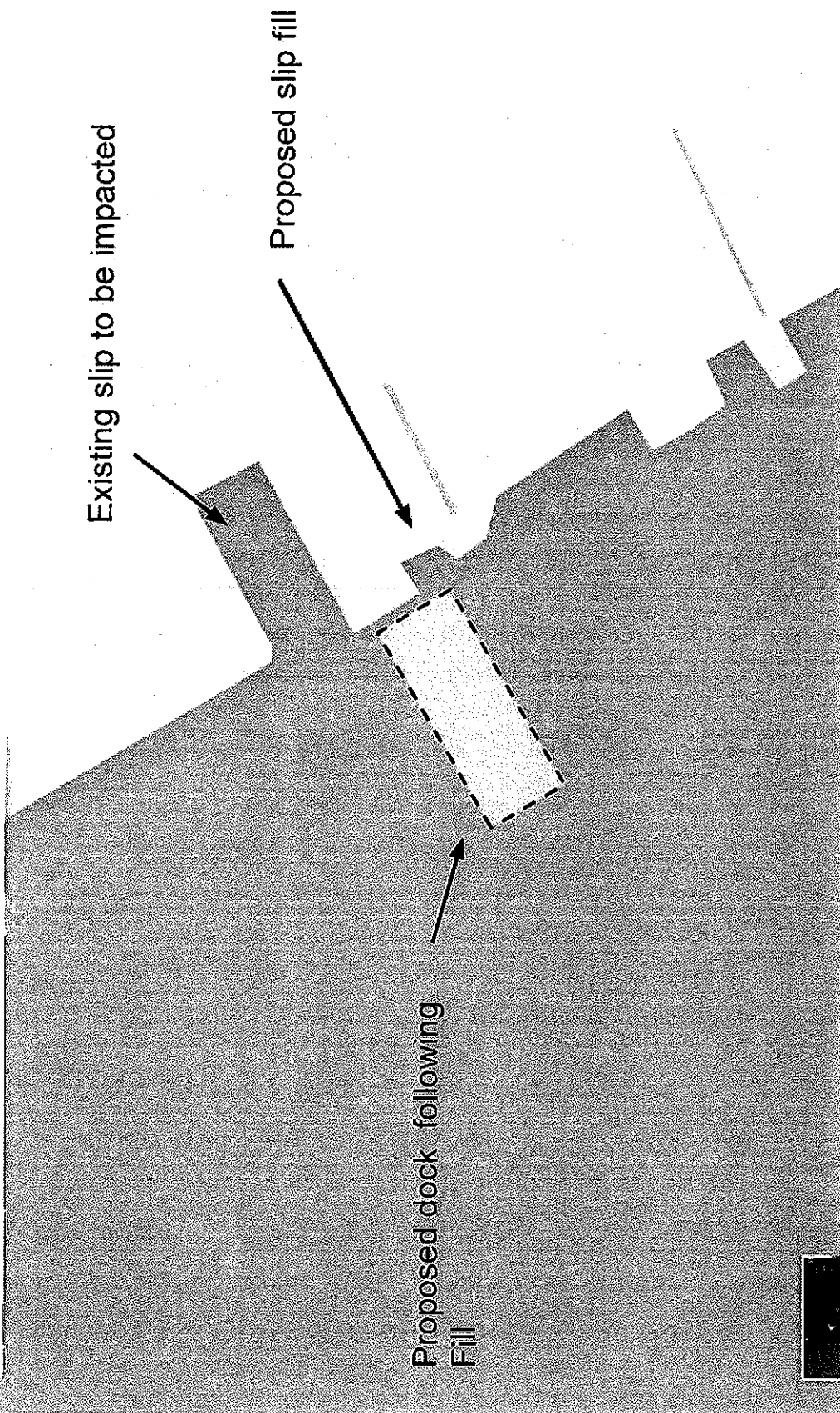
Tortuga Trail, Austin, TX

X

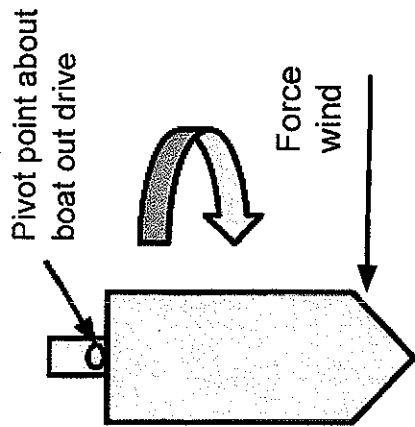
Q

Tortuga Trail, Austin, TX 78731

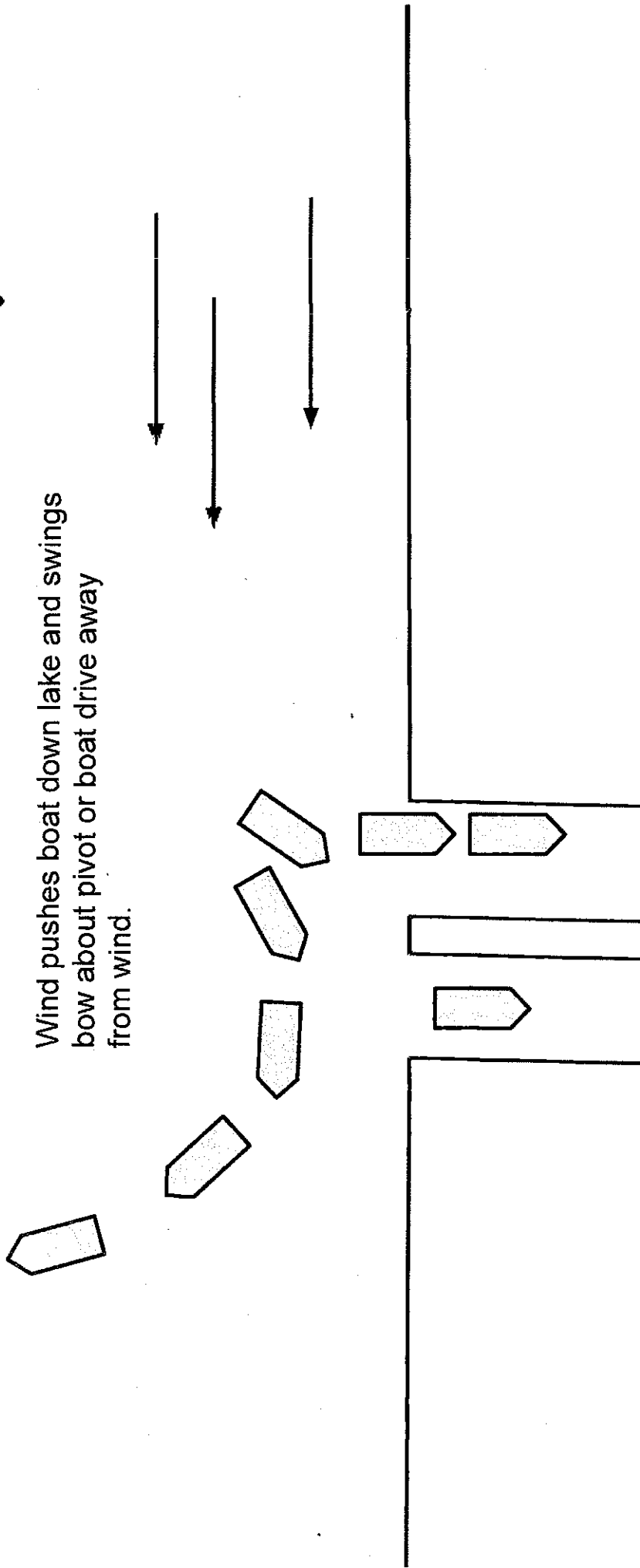
Explore this area · Traffic · Bicycling · Terrain



Mansfield Dam ← Pennybacker Bridge



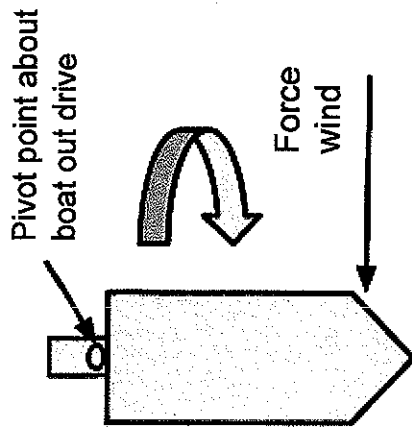
Wind pushes boat down lake and swings bow about pivot or boat drive away from wind.



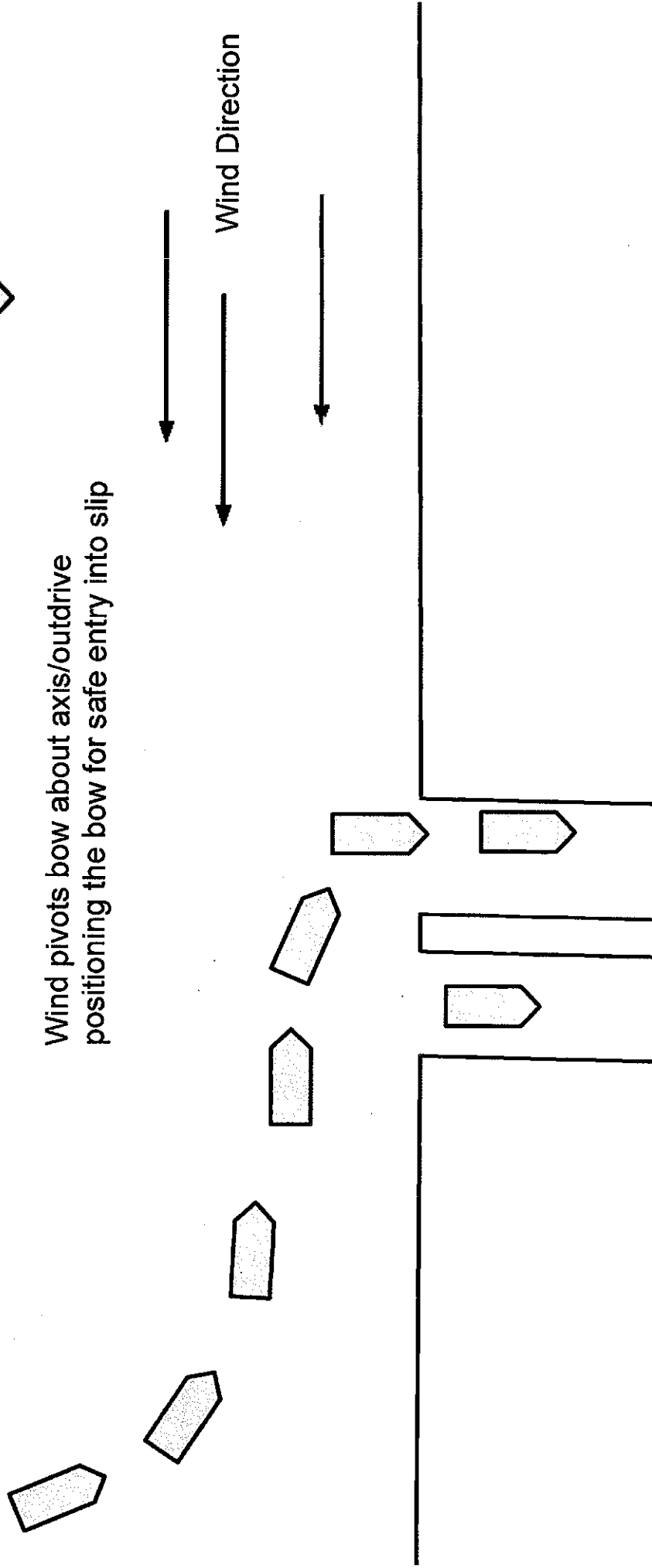
Boat Slips Today, Leaving Slip Wind Direction From Up Lake

EXHIBIT B

Mansfield Dam ← Pennybacker Bridge



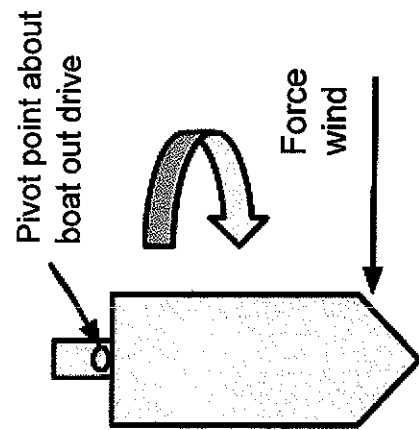
Wind pivots bow about axis/outdrive
positioning the bow for safe entry into slip



Boat Slips Today, Entering Slip Safe and controlled entry Into
Wind Direction From Up Lake

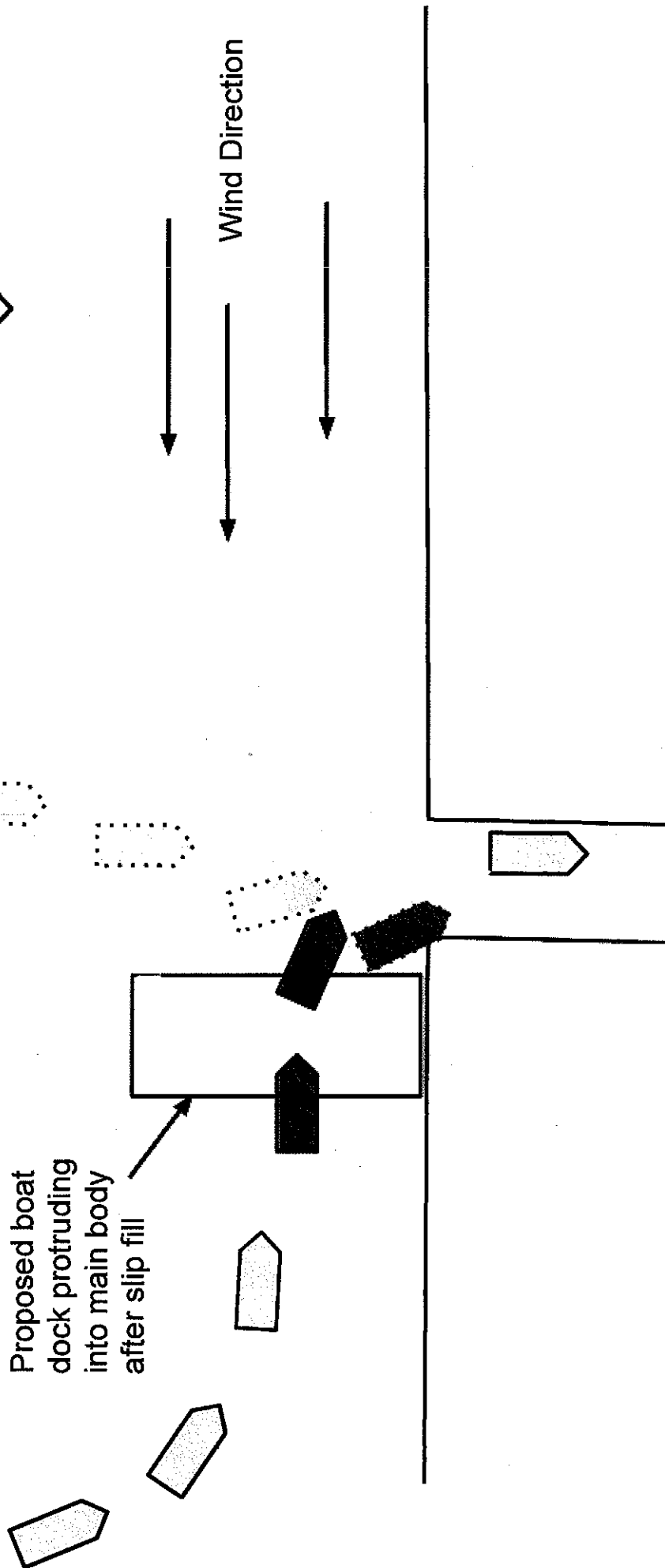
EXHIBIT C

Mansfield Dam ← Pennybacker Bridge



Safe approach into wind no longer possible.
Other approach scenarios do not allow for
safe entry into slip or ability to remaneuver.

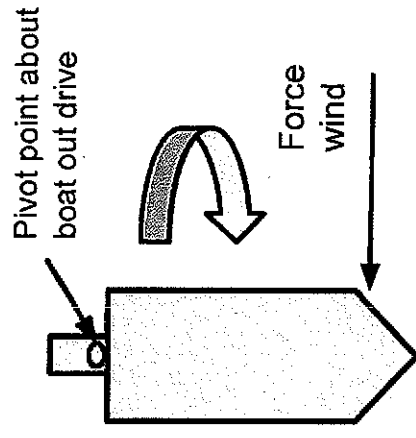
Proposed boat
dock protruding
into main body
after slip fill



Proposed Arrangement, Entering Slip with safe and controlled
entry Into Wind Not Possible Direction From Up Lake

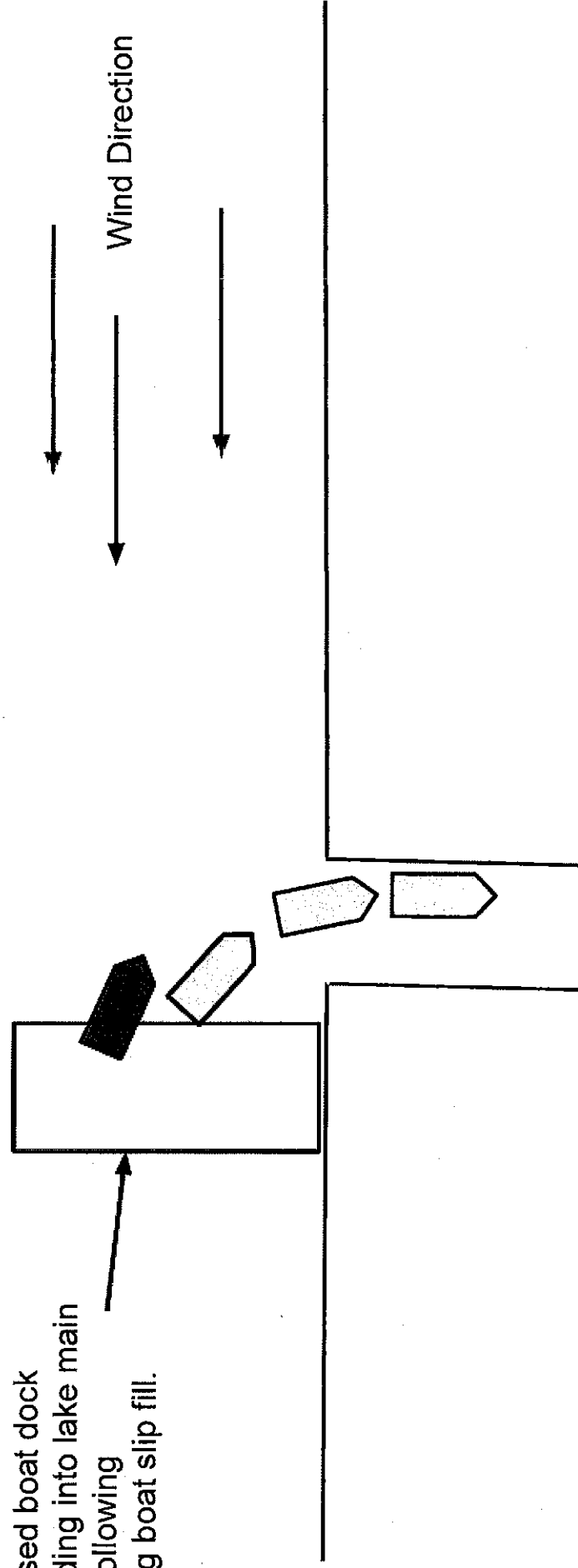
EXHIBIT D

Mansfield Dam ← Pennybacker Bridge



Leaving the slip would require turning the bow into the wind which would swing the stern into the proposed dock potentially resulting in property damage and/or injury.

Proposed boat dock protruding into lake main body following existing boat slip fill.



Proposed Arrangement, Existing slip filled and proposed boat dock protruding into main body. Leaving slip requires unsafe maneuver turning the bow into the wind.

EXHIBIT E