

Zoning Determination Request
For use of the Maine Yacht Center
100 Kensington St., Second Floor, Portland, ME
CBL: [429 G001001](#)
by the Maine Island Trail Association

The Maine Island Trail Association (MITA) is a nonprofit membership organization serving boaters along the coast of Maine. Established in 1988, the Association developed and manages the Maine Island Trail – a system of over 200 wild coastal islands from New Hampshire to Canada that are accessible by boat for recreational purposes. Thirty-six trail sites are in Casco Bay. MITA volunteers provide physical stewardship of the islands in order to manage their use and ensure their accessibility to boaters. MITA’s primary product is an annual guidebook to the Maine Island Trail of approximately 275 pages. Over time, MITA has grown to become the largest recreational boating organization in Maine with over 5,400 members.

Located in the Portland Yacht Services complex at 58 Fore Street for the past 15 years (and Union Wharf before that), MITA must now relocate to an alternative waterfront site given plans for the redevelopment of its current home. The organization relies on water access and dockage for its island stewardship skiffs. (MITA currently docks two of its six skiffs at Portland Yacht Services and keeps the others elsewhere along the Maine coast.)

Incidentally, the City of Portland is one of our island-owning partners, with Fort Gorges being a stop on the Maine Island Trail. MITA makes its work boats available to the city upon request for transportation of Parks Department personnel and equipment to Fort Gorges.

MITA has been in discussion with the Maine Yacht Center over the possibility of joining them at 100 Kensington St., and has reached a tentative agreement for a 10-year lease. The second floor of the Maine Yacht Center building has been vacant since the building was constructed. The lease will include 2,400 ft.² of open space for back-office by MITA’s staff of eight.

100 Kensington is a Division 13 “IL” zone. The proposers believe the use is compatible with the adjacent residential neighborhood, involving no impact outside the existing building envelope other than two skiffs being docked at the facility during the boating season.

MITA’s activities fall within the permitted uses for the IL zone, according to the City of Portland Code of Ordinances:

- The organization’s primary activity is **publishing** of its annual guidebook, a semi-annual newsletter, email communications, an app, and a webpage (14-232-a).
- MITA’s activities will support the existing permitted use of the Maine Yacht Center as a **marina** (14-232-n), providing ancillary services to their recreational boaters.
- The proposed use is compatible with **back-office** uses (14-232-p). MITA is not a business visited by the public, except for a low volume of occasional business meeting attendees.
- The organization hosts occasional (annual) **accessory uses** (14-232-q.2.b) in modest educational and fundraising gatherings often associated with boat shows.

The sublease of space to a marine non-profit is a typical incidental accessory use for a marina with vacant upper floor space. The proposed 2,400 ft.² of leased space is incidental to the 3.6-acre parcel's primary use as a marina, which includes 35,000 ft.² of interior space (office, boat storage, and boat service). Additionally, the parcel includes some 12,000 ft.² of outdoor boatyard space (60 boats). The marina itself features 2,000 linear feet of dockage (80 boat slips and 400 feet of "along-side" berthing). MITA's proposed use is accessory to the marina use in that:

- MITA would be a berthing tenant of the marina.
- MITA needs direct and immediate access to berthed vessels to conduct its day to day activities as the manager/steward of 36 island and mainland properties in Casco Bay.
- Co-location and complementary use by marine non-profits in marina facilities is typical for the industry (including sailing schools, boating safety organizations, environmental stewardship organizations, boat-related event organizers, boat clubs, etc.).

The proposed use involves no prohibited uses, no additional dimensional requirements, and no environmental impacts subject to environmental performance standards outlined in the Code of Ordinances.

* * *