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CONTACT: Dan Haifley, O'Neill Sea Odyssey (831) 465-9390
Brian Foss, SC Port District, (831) 475-6161

AFTER 37 YEARS, O'NEILL BUILDING GETS FACELIFT
O'Neill Sea Odyssey to occupy temporary quarters during renovation, Starbucks employees volunteer to move classroom

(SANTA CRUZ) – Facing sunsets over two lighthouses from its perch on the sands of the east harbor jetty, the O'Neill building has seen much since it was built in 1966 by Jack O'Neill.

Starting October 1, the Santa Cruz Port District (SCPD) and O'Neill Sea Odyssey (OSO) will jointly renovate the building, adding an outdoor plaza on the beach, expanded restaurant space, a modern education center for OSO, an elevator for access for the disabled, and the addition of space upstairs – while minimizing impact on neighborhood views of the ocean.

“This building has been a social and economic anchor for the Harbor, and now it's time for a face lift,” said Jack O'Neill. “The O'Neill Sea Odyssey program will own the upstairs of the building with a first class education center and rental space to provide revenue for the program.”

OSO is a non-profit organization, founded by O'Neill in 1996, that provides watershed, ocean science, and navigation program primarily for underserved youth. O'Neill and his business partner, Harry Hinds, donated the building, the remaining years of its land lease with the SCPD, and a \$250,000 fund to OSO in 2000. The program has served over 23,000 youth so far.

“This will be a beautiful building with an exciting mix of activities,” said Brian Foss, Director of the Santa Cruz Port District, which runs the Harbor. “It will serve the local community, will provide for youth, and it will generate revenue for the Harbor.” The Port District owns the land and will also own the first floor of the building.

The first floor will contain restaurant and retail uses. The upstairs will include business tenants, bathrooms, deck space, and an expanded education center for O'Neill Sea Odyssey.

“Our new education center will provide a modern, clean space for the kids to learn,” said Dan Haifley, OSO's Executive Director. “The elevator for people with disabilities is a necessity.” The education center and the elevator are being supported by grants from The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the California Coastal Conservancy, the Wildlife Conservation Board and Jack O'Neill and Harry Hinds. Former Assemblymember Fred Keeley and current Assemblymember John Laird have worked hard to secure state funding.

The primary building team consists of Devcon Construction, Engineer Mark Meisiti-Miller, and Architect Gary Garmann. On October 1, the OSO program will move to temporary quarters on US Coast Guard property on the west side of the Harbor, near F dock where the Team O'Neill catamaran is berthed. A team of volunteers from Starbucks Coffee will move OSO to its temporary facility on Saturday, September 27. Save Our Shores will permanently re-locate to 345 Lake Avenue in the Harbor, and the Kind Grind pastry and coffee shop will temporarily locate in “the hut” near Shamrock Charters. Temporary trailers near the building will house Mariner's Rug, RE-MAX Real Estate, InSight Agency and O'Neill Yachts. The building will be finished in spring.