

**CITY OF NORWALK
HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 23, 2019**

ATTENDANCE: John Romano, Chair; Dr. John Pinto, William Gardella, Dennis Santella, Tony Mobilia, John Crespo

OTHERS: Geoff Steadman, NHMC Consultant; Sue Prosi; Joe Schnerlein, Norwalk Water Quality; Sgt. Greg Scully, Steve Bartush, Shellfish Commission. Peter Johnson, Shellfish Chairman Debra Goldstein, Third Taxing District Commissioner; Christian Brown, HNTB; John Honafin, CT DOT; Julie Georges, A DeCesare Associates; Jeff Roig, CMJV; Lauren DiGiovanni, HNTB, Chris Samoragczk, CT DOT; Wes Oliver, Norwalk Yacht Club

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE

Mr. Romano, the Acting Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. Mr. Romano requested Dr. Pinto to lead those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL.

Mr. Romano called the roll. A quorum was present.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

There was no Chairman's Report at this time.

Walk Bridge Project; *The DOT will be at this meeting to discuss the Bridge Project and review the newly transmitted permit plates.* A brief overview of the permit plates will be provided (~ 15 minutes). The DOT will also meet with the Norwalk Shellfish Commission on February 7th. The NHMC encourages interested stakeholders to attend this meeting for more extensive coverage of the newly submitted permit plates. The CT DOT packet that was sent to NOAA for consultation on the WALK Bridge project was sent to us in seven installments due to its size. Everyone should have a copy sent last month. The diagrams in that document are representations of the work that will be required to complete the WALK Bridge replacement. CT DOT needs to start discussing the project and wants to vet out early concerns. CT DOT wants to develop workable solutions to any problems we may have on the project that impact the Harbor. 10 groups of permit plates have been distributed to the NHMC and NSC for review and consideration.

Mr. Chris Brown with HNTB introduced himself. He then narrated a Power Point on the project include overviews, permit plates and the permitting process.

Mr. Romano said that the Commission will not be commenting on the construction plans, but are concerned with the impact with respect to the Harbor Management Policies. He said that the Commission was hearing different plans regarding where the barge moorings will be placed and the level of safety during the construction.

Mr. Brown said that it was helpful for the Commission to give him feedback because it helps identify areas that may need containment during the construction for protection.

Mr. Joe Schnierlein asked why the decision was made to put the pilings in the river rather than place them in the river. Mr. Brown said that the longer span would require bigger foundations and the cost increases. The span is 240 feet and moving it back would put the east support behind the abutment, which would significantly increase

Mr. Johnson said that there was a riprap wall by the sewage treatment plan and wanted to know what would happen to the wall. Mr. Samoragczk from CT DOT said that they would not touch the riprap wall.

Mr. Schnierlein said that he felt it would be less costly if the supports were built on land because it would be less deterioration from the water.

Mr. Romano asked Mr. Schnierlein to speak about the email that he had sent earlier in the day. Mr. Schnierlein said that on the November 1st document, there was a statement about bubble nets being placed on the river. However, there has not been any further reference to them. Mr. Brown explained that right now, the thinking is to use marine enclosures and turbidity curtains instead of bubble nets.

Mr. Brown then gave a brief overview of the 18 separate construction activities. He explained plates number 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 will show the progress of the construction.

Sgt. Scully asked where the barges would be moored. Mr. Brown said that the currently moored vessels by the IMAX docks will be moved south. Sgt. Scully said that the further south that they move the vessels, the shallower the water is. Ms. DiGovanni pointed out that there would be two ramps for access to the docks.

Sgt. Scully asked if there had been a risk assessment done. Mr. Brown said that they had spoken with the pilots of the boats and they felt it was acceptable. Mr. Romano pointed out that one of the captains of the Maritime boats was no longer there.

Sgt. Scully pointed out that there would be construction cranes at the site. Mr. Brown said that in the event of a high wind event, the cranes would have to be laid down in the parking lot area. But he also reminded everyone that in the event of a high wind incident, the boats would not be going out. The plan is to have an open dialog with the various parties involved.

Sgt. Scully asked how many barges would be on site during the construction. Mr. Brown replied that he believed it would be one but during some periods such as the installation of the span, the waterway would be blocked completely for a period of time during the installation.

Sgt. Scully pointed out that when the vessels come into dock by the IMAX, they have to make a wide U turn to bring the vessel up alongside of the dock.

Mr. Oliver pointed out that another factor would be the tides since there is very little water in that area during low tide.

Mr. Brown then gave a brief overview of how to read the Construction Sequence section on the Construction Plates. He noted that there would be an X in the box next to the sequence that the Plate illustrated.

Mr. Steadman said that the construction site on Water Street that will be south of the Stroffolino bridge will have trestle in the federal channel. Mr. Brown explained that the truss spans would be constructed on the barges there and then moved to the bridge installation site. He noted that the Federal Navigation channel lines were not included on the drawings.

Mr. Schnierlein said that when vessels are trying to dock at the Visitor's Dock and other vessels waiting for the Stroffolino Bridge to open will be quite tight. Mr. Gardella said that the construction yard would be on the old Harris and Ganz station.

Sgt. Scully asked if there would be a diver on site in the event of a problem. Mr. Roig said that there would be a vessel in the water.

Ms. Goldstein asked about the plans for inclement weather. Mr. Samoragczk said that they would have a plan but it was not completed yet.

Sgt. Scully said that there were a number of rowing clubs on the river and they are out from early morning to early evening. Mr. Romano said that they had discussed this and that they would know in advance when they would have potential issues. Mr. Schnierlein said that in the past, the rowers have thought they have right of way, but Sgt. Scully will have to warn the rowing clubs that barges can not turn easily. Mr. Honafin said that there

would have to be strong communications with the barge captains and the clubs. He said that the construction company will be handling that and they will be out on the river during the construction.

Mr. Romano said that it would be important to decide how to move forward. The next meeting will be on the 7th but there needs to be a meeting for moving forward. Mr. Johnson said that having a joint Shellfish and Harbor Management meeting might be worthwhile.

Mr. Santella asked what the Walk Bridge Program staff was looking for from the Harbor Commission. Mr. Brown said that they were looking for a positive recommendation from the NHMC.

The Power Point presentation will be posted on line.

STAFF REPORTS.

• **Harbor Master** - Sgt. Scully said that he had researched the various drones and the particular model is only available for government agencies. He then gave a brief overview of the drone, which has a spotlight, a speaker and an infrared camera. There is a three year insurance complete replacement policy. Discussion followed.

Mr. Romano pointed out that Harbor Commission and Shellfish Commission had agreed to purchase one not to exceed \$3,500 a year ago.

**** MR. ROMANO MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE HARBOR COMMISSION AND THE SHELLFISH COMMISSION TO SPEND UP TO \$4,000 FOR A DRONE.**

**** DR. PINTO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Sgt. Scully said that he would be sitting down with Mr. Santella and Mr. Norm Edwards regarding the location of the moorings.

The discussion then moved to the transient moorings. The Five Mile River will be using dockwa.com, which is the gold standard.

Mr. Santella was asked how many moorings that they were considering. He answered that there were about 250 moorings, which was down from years ago when there were around 700. Mr. Romano said that he would like to have ideas for adding to the mooring fees. Sgt. Scully said that the funding could be used for derelict vessels, the repair of the Harbor Master's boat and replacement of drones. Discussion followed about possibly having the commercial vessels such as barges for special projects.

4 Meadow Street. CAM application. Highland Property Ventures, LLC (Applicant). The applicant proposes to re-purpose the facility previously occupied by Federal Express package distribution center. Planned construction involves addition of a 6000 sq. ft. storage area (southwest side of the existing structure) and a 2400 sq. ft. storage area (north east side of the existing structure). In addition, the applicant proposes to add a second floor to the existing structure (100,600 sq. ft.). Revisions to parking area will involve retrofitting catch basins with filter inserts for retaining oil and grit. As the building is within a flood plane and is non-residential, floodproofing is an acceptable method for compliance with National Flood Insurance Program standards.

Dr. Pinto gave a brief summary of the Application Review Committee's finding and recommended approval.

**** MR. ROMANO MOVED TO APPROVE THE CAM FOR THE PROPERTY AT 4 MEADOW STREET WITH THE STANDARD STIPULATION LANGUAGE.
** MR. GARDELLA SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Norwalk Seaport Association Inc., 213 Liberty Sq., East. Norwalk (Applicant). CAM application. The applicant proposes to construct a 30' x 50' open-air education pavilion on Sheffield Island. The pavilion will be located east of the lighthouse keepers cottage and will be constructed using a classical timber frame design. The floor will be stone pavers using a Helican screw tile anchoring system for foundation piles. No additional excavation nor landscaping will be required. Design is expected to complement existing historic structures on the island.

Dr. Pinto gave a brief summary of the Application Review Committee's finding and recommended approval.

**** MR. ROMANO MOVED TO APPROVE CAM APPLICATION FROM THE NORWALK SEAPORT ASSOCIATION FOR A STRUCTURE ON SHEFFIELD ISLAND BECAUSE THE PLAN SUPPORTS THE PUBLIC USE OF THE ISLAND.
** MR. GARDELLA SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Eversource Transmission Line relocation proposal. *Eversource will present their proposal at this meeting and discuss the transmission line relocation.* Eversource proposes to relocate a +/- 4000 foot of the two 115 kV transmission lines by converting the re-routed section from an overhead to an underground configuration, primary through local streets. The transition would begin from the Norwalk Police Department, head east towards Water Street, traverse the Norwalk Harbor to Veteran's Memorial Park and

reconnect east of Fort Point Street to reestablish connections to the existing rail corridor. Traversing Norwalk Harbor will entail using horizontal direct drill (HDD) technology to extend cables below the Norwalk River between the shoreline of 90 Water St. and Veteran's Memorial Park. The HDD Crossing and proposed location under the north end of the Norwalk Visitor's docks are the prime objectives of the LWRD permit and this consultation request.

Dr. Pinto said that they should not sign off on the Eversource application until they have received written clarification on the limitations that the buried transmission lines will have on the Visitor's Docking area.

Mr. Steadman said that Eversource had requested that the Commission to sign off on the application for the DEEP.

**** DR. PINTO MOVED TO NOT SIGN OFF ON THE APPLICATION UNTIL THE COMMISSION HAS RECEIVED SUFFICIENT INFORMATION AS FAR AS THE LIMITATIONS WHICH EVERSOURCE INDICATED TO THE COMMISSION AND REVIEWED THE ADDITIONAL MATERIAL.**

**** MR. GARDELLA SECONDED**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Sgt. Scully left the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

SHELLFISH COMMISSION.

Mr. Bartush distributed copies of the Shellfish Report. (See attached)

Mr. Romano asked about activities that were happening on Manresa Island. Mr. Schnierlein said that there was a layer of coal tar about 10 inches below the surface and as long as it remains undisturbed, it will not leach.

Dr. Pinto said that he had received an application from 197 Rowayton Avenue and forwarded it to Steve.

Mr. Bartush said that he had emailed Eversource with a number points and none of them were addressed during the presentation. He pointed out that the Visitors Dock was a known evacuation spot. Mr. Bartush said that they do not have a bond in the event of something going wrong.

Mr. Bartush said that he would like the Commission to weigh in as Senator Duff's declaration of Calf Pasture Beach as a Wildlife Refuge, which appears to be a thinly disguised anti-gun proposal. However water fowl management depends on hunting for both population control and for the revenue produced by the license and game tags.

POCD MEETING

Mr. Romano said that he had made several comments to the Planning and Zoning. Mr. Steadman said that the COPD should come to the Harbor Commission for review. Dr. Pinto said that he knew that a rebuttal was being drafted.

**** MR. ROMANO MOVED TO AUTHORIZE A LETTER TO BE SENT TO PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSIONER REGARDING THE HARBOR MANAGEMENT PLAN TO CLARIFY THE NHMC'S PURVIEW WITH THE APPROPRIATE REFERENCES TO THE STATE STATUTES AND WHAT MATERIAL NEEDS TO BE REVIEWED BY THE NHMC BEFORE THE POCD IS APPROVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL.**

**** MR. MOBILIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Mobilia said that Steve Kleppin sent an email which suggested a meeting at the end of next week. Mr. Mobilia then read the following into the record:

I want to make sure that I have all of your comments so that I can reply properly. I have this email, the CAM report from 5/1/18 and the Coastal Vision from 1/31. In addition, we have John Pinto's testimony from the last two hearings. What do you think about a meeting at the end of next week if people's schedules align? I would like to have Larissa by phone and I haven't checked with her about availability yet. I was also thinking of inviting Steve Bartush and Pete Johnson from the Shellfish Commission as well, but I will reach out to them separately.

Ms. Lauricella said that because the Shellfish Committee and the NHMC are on the Mayor's Committee, the comments will be sent to StanTech and then it will be brought back to another Committee before it goes to the Common Council. Mr. Mobilia pointed out that they had spoken with the POCD StanTech representative with no results. Discussion followed.

Mr. Romano said that he would inform Mr. Kleppin that Ms. Schaefer was no longer on the Commission and that he would have further communications sent to Dr. Pinto.

Mooring and Harbor Safety – Mr. Santella presented his report. (See attached)

Finance – Mr. Mobilia thanked everyone for voting by email. He said that because time was short, they requested the same amount as last year. However, the balance is low and there are still a few larger bills outstanding.

Plans and Recommendation - Mr. Steadman talked to Mr. Salvatore and another Grant has been approved. He added that it could be used for engineering consultants.

Newsletter/Website - Mr. Romano said that the Commission is currently two members short.

Water Quality – Mr. Schnierlein said that he did not have a report at this time.

Bridges – This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS/OLD BUSINESS

New Business – Mr. Mobilia said that the elections need to take place next month. Mr. Romano appointed Dr. Pinto, Mr. Crespo and Mr. Mobilia are appointed to work on the slate.

MINUTES.

Mr. Mobilia said that he had not received the State of the Harbor minutes. These will be re-send to Mr. Mobilia.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. GARDELLA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MR. MOBILIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes

Telesco Secretarial Services