

**CITY OF NORWALK
HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
APPLICATION REVIEW COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 26, 2020**

ATTENDANCE: Dr. John Pinto, Chairman; Alan Kibbe

STAFF: Geoff Steadman, Consultant; Steve Bartush, Shellfish Commission

OTHERS: Christopher MacDonnell; Village Creek, Tony Mobilia; Colin Thom, Associate Director of Vessel Ops, Norwalk Maritime Aquarium; Lou Zicari, Senior Captain R/V Spirit of the Sound, Norwalk Maritime Aquarium

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m. by Dr. Pinto.

1. Village Creek Harbor Corporation

This is a pre-application requesting permission to modify pre-existing structures and to re-configure existing docks. The applicant proposed to add one additional 3'x30' finger dock and piling on the west side of the main dock and four 2'x12' finger docks on the North side of the facility. An 8' x 10' sail float that was shown in the 2016 permit on the north side of the facility has been removed to make room for a net gain of 106 SF of float area.

Mr. MacDonnell, representing Village Creek, said DEEP had been contacted. Mr. Steadman said he didn't see anything to not allow the permit to move forward.

**** MR. KIBBE MADE A MOTION TO SEND THE APPLICATION TO THE COMMISSION.**

2. Action Item: Open Discussion of Walk Bridge proposals regarding placement of transmission cables by Eversource and DOT, DOT's plans for relocating Maritime Aquarium and Seaport Association excursion vehicles, DOT's plans for stationing work barges in Norwalk Harbor and DOT's plans to monitor water quality.

Mr. MacDonnell said his concerns are the demolition of the existing bridge and the lead paint that would result from this activity. He said the existing swing bridge will be slid north and floated up the river. He said they will have to moor it on a barge and cut it up and nothing should happen without lead paint containment.

Mr. Steadman said they were told DEEP would schedule a meeting to discuss water quality matters. He said this project was proposed without any monitoring. Mr. MacDonnell said there has been no discussion at all concerning the lead paint.

Dr. Pinto said DEEP was supposed to address each issue as it came up.

Mr. Thom introduced himself and said that Vessel Ops had a meeting with DOT in January regarding the moving of their dock and the Seaport Dock forward. He said that they were okay with the plan. He added we did not hear anything regarding the safety of vessels turning.

Mr. Romano said it looked good on paper, but it took several months to get the exact coordination. Mr. Romano said a smaller vessel was used to do the test with a drone to view the activity from above. He added the Coast Guard also performed a test that concluded it would not be safe.

Mr. Romano said they did it with a 32-foot boat and taped the whole thing with a drone. Mr. Zacari said they were willing to cooperate with the placement of the buoys and were excited to do it. He said DOT asked him 6 weeks ago if this plan was doable and he replied to them that it was.

Dr. Pinto pointed out the Commission had requested a risk assessment by DOT, however, none has been done to date.

Mr. Zacari said: "this is all news to us". Dr. Pinto said the buoy positions were adjusted many times. Mr. Thom and Mr. Zicari were confused about language in the January 22 meeting minutes (since amended). Mr. Steadman said that was referring to a vessel relocation study 2 years ago.

Mr. Steadman asked how passengers would get on vessels during the construction. Mr. Thom said they would be able to board at the dock.

Dr. Pinto and Mr. Steadman were concerned about the positioning of vessels as a safety issue. Mr. Steadman said the Harbor Master has the authority to station all vessels and we want to protect ourselves in case of an accident. He said the Commission would go by the recommendation of the Harbor Master and even the Coast Guard is willing to follow the Harbor Master in terms of safety.

Mr. Zicari said they had a meeting with DOT in January.

Mr. Bartush asked Mr. Zicari if they were under any pressure from their organization to accept the DOT plan. Mr. Zicari replied No. He said: “we were asked our opinion as mariners and gave it”. He added that he wished he would have been present for the final buoy placement.

Dr. Pinto said it’s on the DOT’s table now and that: “we gave them our information and our assessment”

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

G. Venuto

Telesco Secretarial Services