

**CITY OF NORWALK
HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
JUNE 30, 2015**

ATTENDANCE: Jose Cebrian, Chair; Dennis Santella, Bill Gardella, John Romano, Dr. John Pinto, Tony Mobilia, Dick Stumpf, Jan Schaefer, Tony Aitoro

STAFF: Harbor Master Mike Griffin; Geoff Steadman, Consultant

OTHERS: Tony D'Andrea, Norwalk Mayor's Water Quality Committee; Captain Mark Schlege, Master C.J. Toth Quest

CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Cebrian called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Cebrian said that there were three bridge projects that were about to commence, the Walk Railroad Bridge, the Straffolino Bridge (Rt. 136) and the Yankee Doodle Bridge (I-95).

Mr. Cebrian then announced the members of the newly formed Bridge Committee along with the members of the Planning and Recommendations Committee, the Finance Committee and Application Review Committee.

HARBOR MASTER/MANAGER REPORT

Harbor Master Griffin said that he did not have much information on the bridge projects, but has been forwarding the information he received.

I-95 Bridge Repair and discussion (Yankee Doodle Bridge) - Harbor Master Griffin said that he was somewhat disappointed that none of the Harbor Commissioners were present at the DOT meeting about the I-95 (Yankee Doodle) Bridge hearing because the DOT did not notify the Harbor Commission and relied on the newspaper notification. He said that it would have been important to contact the Harbor Commission about events. Mr. Mobilia said that he had made copies of the Hour article, along with a commentary about it and a copy of an article from Nancy on Norwalk. Mr. Steadman then reviewed the comments that the DOT had made in prior meetings when the CAD cell was required during the dredging. The DOT claims that their priority was to get the water off the decking of the bridge. The DOT and the ACOE both claimed that the source of pollution was not from the thruway bridge. Dr. Pinto said that he had a CD with test results from the Trumbull bridge and the Greenwich bridge which show the same levels of pollutants in the waters underneath those structures.

Harbor Master Griffin said that it was important to tighten up the communication, remind everyone about the 38 downspouts from the bridge and point out that there would be two major bridge projects underway at the same time.

Harbor Master Griffin said that the State has announced that there would be no impact on navigation, or traffic and no debris would enter the water. They also do not believe that there will be any conflict working on two bridges at the same time. There will be work done on the drainpipes and scuppers. Mr. Mobilia suggested the Commission invite the DOT to a meeting to hear all the details. Mr. Cebrian said that the Commission needed to reach out. Mr. Romano said that he remembers discussions about the possibility of installing filters on the drains. Harbor Master Griffin said that he was fortunate that his wife saw the article about the hearing or he would not have been able to attend.

Walk Railroad Bridge Repair Update and Discussion - Harbor Master Griffin said that there was an Walk Bridge informational meeting held recently and that the discussion focused on the equipment and how it would be scheduled. Mr. Steadman was able to attend. Since then, the barge has been anchored at the base of the bridge. Harbor Master Griffin passed around photos showing the barge in place. All the water dependent users received an alert about the anchorage. Because of a serious accident on the Hudson, Harbor Master Griffin requested that the barge have lights at all four corners, which has been done. Mr. Romano said that he had heard that there were over 400 trips made across that bridge in a day. Harbor Master Griffin said that he had heard that the boring project might take up to two months over all. Mr. Romano said that they had already started. Discussion followed about potential repairs of the fendering system.

Washington Street Bridge Repair Update and Discussion - - Harbor Master Griffin said that he had not received any additional information about the Washington Street Bridge (Rt. 136) but would let the Commissioners know when he did.

Harbor Master Griffin reported that Mayor Rilling had been approached by the Coast Guard regarding potentially adopting Green's Ledge Lighthouse. There was a meeting about this recently. The Mayor said that he did not think that the City would be interested in being the sole owner of the lighthouse, but might be interested in partnering with another entity such as the Seaport Association or one of the historical societies. Harbor Master Griffin said that the City needed to be careful not to get into a conflict of interest because the Seaport is involved in Sheffield Lighthouse. The Seaport Association was not in attendance at the meeting. Harbor Master Griffin said that the Coast Guard had attempted to market Peck's Ledge with no response. They are now trying to attract a private buyer.

Regarding the Visitor's Dock, Harbor Master Griffin said that he had contacted Mr. Mocciae about a statement regarding the status of the dock. Mr. Mocciae said that there was a million in his budget for the visitor's dock. The design has not been finished and the bids have not been received, so there is not a firm start date.

STAFF REPORTS.

Consultant – Mr. Steadman said that there was no report at this time.

Harbor Master Report – This was presented earlier in the meeting.

Harbor Master Griffin and Mr. Romano left the meeting at 8:11 p.m.

REPORTS.

Waterfront Advisory Report - Dr. Pinto said that there had been a discussion of the SoNo Transit Orientated Plan. He said that the Harbor Commission and the Harbor Management Plan had not been considered. Therefore he felt that the Commission should send a letter to the Mayor about the need for the Redevelopment Agency to keep the Harbor Commission informed of their plans.

PUBLIC COMMENT.

Mr. D’Andrea said that he had attended the Transit Orientated Development (TOD) meeting and had asked Mr. Sheehan why the Harbor Commission had not been consulted about this. Mr. Sheehan said that he had spoken to the Chairman of the Harbor Commission about this in 2011 and had received approval. Mr. D’Andrea replied that he had been the Chairman of the Commission in 2011 when the original plan had been developed and knew nothing about this. Mr. Steadman said that the Redevelopment Agency was proposing three zones for South Norwalk, one of which would be a Transit Orientated Waterfront District. However, this is in conflict with the Harbor Management Plan. Apparently, the Redevelopment Agency was working on this in isolation from the Harbor Commission. Mr. Steadman said that one major concern was that the State might use eminent domain to take the land and use it as a non-water dependent use.

**** MR. SANTELLA MOVED TO SEND A LETTER TO THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY, MAYOR RILLING, THE CORPORATION COUNSEL AND PRESIDENT OF THE COMMON COUNCIL REGARDING THIS ISSUE.**

**** MR. STUMPF SECONDED**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Application Review Committee -

i. Discussion of the Norwalk Visitor’s Dock proposal at Veteran’s Memorial Park.

Dr. Pinto said that the application for the Visitor's Dock had been received late. He said that there were still questions about items such as the placement of pilings. The Commission will still have time to comment.

ii. - 4 Norport Drive, Norwalk, CT: Certificate of Permit application. The proposed work involves retention of an existing stone seawall, 105' long x 6' high x 1.5' wide. The structure has been in place ~ since 1980, based on an IR aerial photo dated 7/31/80. Submitted by James J. Bajek, LLC on behalf of applicants: Estate of Janet E. Newman.

This is a new application for 4 Norport Drive. Dr. Pinto said that the owner was selling the place and the new buyer wanted to confirm that everything was in compliance. It is not. They are requesting a certificate of compliance. The Harbor Management Plan would allow the seawall to be grandfather in. He recommended that the Commission approve the request.

**** DR. PINTO MOVED TO PERMIT THE EXISTING SEAWALL WHICH PRE- DATES THE HARBOR MANAGEMENT PLAN.**

**** MS. SCHAEFER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH SIX IN FAVOR (PINTO, SCHAEFER, MOBILIA, SANTELLA, STUMPF AND AITORO) AND ONE ABSTENTION (CEBRIAN).**

iii. – 11 Tonetta Circle, Norwalk, CT: Permit application. The proposed work involves installation of a 3' x 30' aluminum ramp, a 7' x 14' timber float restraint pilings and a float stop system consisting of 3" x 10: timber planks attached to the 4 pilings which will keep the float at a minimum of 18" above the harbor bottom at all tides. This work will also require cutting out a 3' x 4' section of timber deck that overhangs the seawall so the ramp can be secured to the existing seawall. The pilings will be driven using a barge and crane with a hammer-type pile driver. The float will be installed and the ramp last to complete the project.

Dr. Pinto said that the application was sent to the Commission last month with a COP. He spoke about a deck that was not noted on the Harbor Commission Plan. The applicant wants to be construct a 3 ft. (from detailed agenda) Comments will need to b

**** DR. PINTO MOVED THAT IT WOULD BE APPROVED WITH THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS:**

- SUPPORTS WATER DEPENDENT USE.**
- NO VESSEL SHALL BE ATTACHED OR DOCK**
- NO VESSEL SHALL SIT ON BOTTOM.**
- NO COMMENT FROM SHELLFISH COMMISSION.**

Dr. Pinto said that he would forward the application to the Chairman of the Shellfish Commission.

**** MR. STUMPF SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

iv. - 23 Channel Avenue, Norwalk, CT: Merrill & Crowther, proposed activity includes the retention of a stone and mortar bulkhead; removal of existing structures and installation of a new dock structures. Coastal resources will be affected. Application No: 201409531-KB.

Dr. Pinto pointed out that the work that had been reviewed years ago. Previous comments were submitted. The pre-application was reviewed and the Commission had no objection to submitting the application to the DEEP at that time. Dr. Pinto said that the comments are not due until July 21st. Discussion followed about the details. The Commission agreed to let their earlier comments stand as submitted.

**** DR. PINTO MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH THE PREVIOUS SUBMITTED COMMENTS.**

**** MR. STUMPF SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

v. – 7 Edgewater Place, Norwalk, CT 06855. Norman Bloom, proposed activity includes installation of long lines and associated gear for kelp farming. Coastal resources will be affected. Application No.: 201408307-KB. Comments by July 22, 2015.

This application by Norm Bloom is to install long lines for kelp farming. The application is on the DEEP's website. One issue that was brought up was the need to establish the location of the structure. A comment was made that there might need to be a public hearing on this. Dr. Pinto said that he would like to have confirmation of the structure location and having the plans stamped by the licensed engineer or architect. There will be anchorage in the area, and this should require lighting and lines. At this time, there is no action needed.

Captain Mark Schlege commented that the area was used by recreational fishermen and the seals love kelp and they frequently sun themselves on Great Reef from December to May.

Mr. Steadman pointed out that the structure would need to be constructed and maintained to prevent adverse impacts on marine life and mammals, recreational fishing and public access. Discussion followed about the details of the design.

**** DR. PINTO MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION PROVING THE STRUCTURE IS CONSTRUCTED AND MAINTAINED IN SUCH WAY THAT**

City of Norwalk
Harbor Management Commission
Special Meeting
June 30, 2015

IT IS DETERMINED IT WILL NOT HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE MARINE LIFE AND MAMMALS, RECREATIONAL FISHING AND PUBLIC ACCESS AND THE PLANS ARE STAMPED BY A LICENSED ARCHITECT OR ENGINEER.

Ms. Schaefer asked if it was approved, was there a way to review it after a year. Dr. Pinto said that it was renewable in 2018. Mr. Cebrian pointed out that the application was consistent with the Harbor Management Plan. Mr. D'Andrea pointed out that in 1998, there were many, many lobster traps in the area.

**** MR. STUMPF SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

vi. - South Norwalk Boat Club; Bulkhead Improvement project. The applicant seeks authorization to oversheet an existing steel battered bulkhead (“420 ft. length). Oversheeting for a 385 ft. section will be at the same angle as the original section. Oversheeting for a 65 ft. section will be placed vertically. Wale and anchoring system will be used to aid in resistance of lateral loads. A floating dock adjacent to the 385 ft. section will be relocated 3 ft. waterward and a floating dock adjacent to the 65 ft. vertical section will be relocated 5’ waterward.

The Commission has previously reviewed this application. The Commission agreed to resubmit previous comments regarding establishment of the bulkhead.

**** DR. PINTO MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION WITH THE PREVIOUS SUBMITTED COMMENTS.**

**** MR. STUMPF SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Finance - Mr. Cebrian said that he would be giving the financial books to Mr. Aitoro. Mr. Cebrian reviewed the revenue from the Mooring fees and also listed the reoccurring expenses and fees from last year. He requested that all bills be submitted as soon as possible.

Mooring & Harbor Safety -

i. Mooring Status Report - Mr. Santella then presented his report. (See attached). Mr. Cebrian said that he appreciated all the hard work that Mr. D'Andrea, Mr. Mobilia, Mr. Stumpf and Mr. Santella have done on this Committee.

ii. Discussion and vote on training dummy funding for Norwalk Harbor – Mr. Santella presented his report. (See attached). Mr. Cebrian said that the Marine Police had been maintaining the buoys in the past. Mr. D'Andrea offered to pick up the two stored buoys at the South Norwalk Boat Club and install them at the proper stations. A

discussion followed about the placement of the speed buoys on the previously approved stations.

Captain Schlege came forward and distributed copies of a dated June 22, 2015 regarding the purchase of a Water Rescue Training Dummy, which has been referred to as "Oscar". (See attached) He said that he had spoken to the Marine Police and the Fire Department about this and they were both in favor of the purchase. A discussion followed regarding the details.

**** MR. STUMPF MOVED TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE TO BE STORED BY THE MARINE POLICE FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$700.00**

**** MR. AITORO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Plans and Recommendations – Mr. Mobilia said that there was no report at this time.

Water Quality –

i. Norwalk/LIS Ecosystem Health Report Cards.

Mr. D'Andrea came forward to present his report. He said that he was temporarily serving as the Chairman of the Mayor's Water Quality Committee Report. He announced that he would be meeting with the Mayor in the near future to confirm his appointment.

Mr. D'Andrea said for the record that Mr. Hal Alvord had been a staunch supporter of the Water Quality Committee and was very helpful. Mr. D'Andrea said he would like to thank Mr. Alvord for all his cooperation and help during the years.

Mr. D'Andrea distributed copies of the Norwalk River and Harbor Bacterial Data Analysis Technical Report, dated 2015. (See attached) Mr. Steadman said that after the analysis was done, it was clear that the trigger for the closure of the beds based on the amount of rainfall.

The discussion then moved to the recent meeting at Sherwood Island regarding the Report Card for the Norwalk Harbor Water Quality. The data that was used to grade the water quality was from one location at one point. However, the Commission has 20 years of data from a number of locations.

Mr. Steadman said that the Bureau of Aquaculture was very impressed with the report and would like to use the analysis model in other areas. Mr. D'Andrea said that he would like to release the Data Analysis report to the State in exchange for the right to use the Shellfish Area Classification and Beds map.

Mr. Steadman said that he felt that Earth Place had an obligation to include the Norwalk Harbor Commission in future projects. Mr. D'Andrea said that the new management is

aware of this. Dr. Pinto said that based on the data, he would give the Water Quality an A-. Mr. D'Andrea said that he would like to have a number of quotes from a variety of agencies supporting the water quality in the recent past. Discussion followed about the methodology and best practices.

Newsletter/Website – Ms. Schaefer said that there was no report at this time.

Approval of May 2015 Minutes – Mr. Cebrian said that he had not sent out May minutes yet. There was no approval of the April minutes due to the need to be corrected.

ADJOURNMENT.

**** MR. SANTELLA ROMANO MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MR. STUMPF SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services