

**TOWN OF FAIRFIELD
HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 17, 2010**

A meeting of the Harbor Management Commission (HMC) was held on Tuesday, August 17, 2010 at 4:30 p.m. in Meeting Room II of the Honorable John J. Sullivan Independence Hall, 725 Old Post Rd, Fairfield, CT.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mary von Conta, Chairman; David Drabaski; John Zygmant; Louis Schueler; Hugh Smith; E. Hewitt Gaynor; James P. Bradley; Sandye Mann, and Nelson North. **ALSO PRESENT:** Patrick Carroll, Harbor Master; Geoff Steadman, Consultant; Richard White, Director of Public Works; Thomas Steinke, Conservation Director; John Roberge, Roberge Associates; Steven Klemenz and Thomas Rudkin, Country Club of Fairfield.

The meeting was called to order at 4:31 p.m. by Chairman Mary von Conta.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 20, 2010 MEETING:

E. Hewitt Gaynor *moved* and Louis Schueler *seconded* to approve the Minutes of July 20, 2010. *Motion passed unanimously.*

II. CORRESPONDENCE:

Chairman Mary von Conta reported the following correspondence:

From Harbor Master Pat Carroll to Town of Fairfield CFO Paul Hiller. Enclosed in each letter were checks for fees collected for the renewal of mooring permits in Southport Harbor, for mooring maintenance charges where required, and for Waiting List applications:

July 31, 2010: Check in the amount of \$50.00: (Waiting List application fee: \$50.00, Paolozzi, No. 129)
August 7, 2010: Check in the amount of \$100.00: (Perry Green mooring permit fee.)
August 8, 2010: Check in the amount of \$100.00: (Perry Green mooring permit fee.)

July 29, 2010: From Harbor Master Carroll to Mr. Thomas F. Paolozzi III, 10 Dogwood Lane, Weston, CT 06883 acknowledging receipt of a Waiting List application and fee in the amount of \$50.00 (#129). (Harbor Master Carroll also informed Mr. Paolozzi that the maximum length for a moored vessel in Southport Harbor is 50 feet.)

July 29, 2010: From Harbor Master Carroll to Mr. Michael Schramm, 55 Lantern Road, Fairfield, CT 06824 acknowledging receipt of a 2010 Waiting List application (# 130).

July 22, 2010: From HMC Chairman von Conta to Ms Toni Selmeski, CT DEP/OLISP, regarding Application No. 201000717-TS by Stuart Bell, stating that the HMC has reviewed the Notice of Tentative Determination to approve the Application and reiterates its earlier findings, stated in a letter dated January 25, 2010 and enclosed in this letter, that the proposed project is consistent with the Harbor Management Plan. In addition Ms von Conta also referred to and reiterated the comments and recommendations set forth in the January 25, 2010 letter and added a further comment, "that as an additional condition for approval of the applicant's proposal, that all

work be conducted in a manner so as not to cause any significant adverse impacts on the normal operation of Southport Harbor.”

August 3, 2010: An e-mail sent by Ms Tonia Selmeski, CT DEP/OLISP to Chairman von Conta acknowledging receipt of the July 22, 2010 letter mentioned above. In addition Ms Selmeski explained that the HMC’s comments related to the aesthetic issues reflective of municipal preferences will not be included as “conditions” in the permit to be issued. However, the comment that addresses the matter of lights on the pier being directed downward to protect navigation at the entrance to the harbor will be included as a special condition in the permit.

Early in August: A copy of the Shellfish Commission’s Agenda for its meeting on August 11, 2010 and a copy of the minutes of the Commission’s July 14, 2010 Meeting Minutes.

Early in August: A copy of an application by the Town of Fairfield for a COP to do repair work at the Henry C. Moore Fishing Pier at South Benson Marina, 471 Turney Road, Fairfield, CT (This is out of the HMC’s jurisdiction.).

Early in August: Notification from the Town of Fairfield’s Purchasing Department that it was necessary for the Town (the HMC) to go out to bid once again on the job to “provide labor, materials, equipment and all else necessary for the maintenance of vessel mooring tackle for the Town of Fairfield {Southport Harbor} as detailed in the attached specifications.” In addition, the Purchasing Department provided a copy of the previous specifications for the purpose of updating them prior to beginning the bid process. (Further comment on this will be provided in the body of the meeting under the agenda items “Organizational Matters” and “Mooring Report.”)

August 10, 2010: From Ms Tonia Selmeski, CT DEP/OLISP, to HMC Chairman von Conta: a copy of permit # 201000717-TS issued to Mr. Stuart Bell, 340 Willow Street, Fairfield, CT 06890 for work adjacent to this address including removing an existing timber crib and installing a boat lift, personal watercraft lift, and davit and ladder for private recreational boating access. The scope of work is more precisely described in the Scope of Authorization and the Special Terms and Conditions of the permit as well as in the remaining body of the permit.

August 16, 2010: Letter from HMC Chairman Mary von Conta to Lara Donahue, thanking Ms. Donahue for an outstanding presentation she gave to the HMC at its June meeting regarding the Town of Westport’s on-going Sasco Brook Watershed planning project.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS:

1. Chairman von Conta indicated that the Town of Fairfield Purchasing Department had requested updated specifications for the “labor, materials, equipment, and all else necessary for the maintenance of vessel mooring tackle in Southport Harbor”, so that this work could be put out to bid. Chairman von Conta noted that this matter had been referred to the Mooring Committee for its review.
2. Chairman von Conta reported that she had attended a meeting in Hartford on August 12 concerning the HMC’s Lower Wharf improvement plans and sand management issues with John Roberge and Geoff Steadman and representatives of the CT DEP/OLISP, and that Mr. Steadman and Mr. Roberge did a good job presenting the plans and issues. Chairman von Conta had requested this meeting on behalf of the HMC.
3. Following a request by Chairman von Conta, Hugh Smith *moved*, and John Zygmant *seconded* to revise the order of the agenda to have the mooring report placed at the end of “Old Business”.
Motion passed unanimously.

IV. OLD BUSINESS:

Sand Management Report: John Roberge provided the Commission with a summary of the findings of the hydrographic survey conducted by Roberge Associates Coastal Engineers (RACE) for the HMC and the discussion of those findings at the August 12 meeting with Tonia Selmeski, CT DEP/OLISP Permit Analyst and George Whisker, DEP/OLISP Dredging Analyst attended by Mr. Roberge, Mr. Steadman, and Chairman von Conta. Mr. Roberge discussed the findings with reference to past studies conducted by the Corps of Engineers and HMC, and noted the significant and consistent deposition rate of sand in the channel and on the shoal adjoining the federal jetty. The deposition rate, he calculated, is approximately 1000-1200 cubic yards annually. The HMC discussed their concern that RACE’s survey shows that sand is now encroaching into the 75’ channel width that was dredged by the Corps of Engineers in 2005 and which the CT DEP/OLISP has said is the maximum channel width that can be maintained to the authorized depth of nine feet. The HMC also discussed where the sand is coming from, and the need to establish where the sand can be relocated to after it is removed from the channel and the vicinity of the jetty – such as possibly utilizing the sand to re-nourish the nearby beach area and other beaches in the Town. It was the consensus of the HMC that the HMC should transmit, to the Corps of Engineers, CT DEP/OLISP, and State Dredging Coordinator, copies of the drawings presenting the results of the hydrographic survey conducted by RACE for the HMC. In addition, a letter should be sent to those agencies describing the survey, its results, and the HMC’s anticipated next steps for preparing and implementing a sand management plan for the Harbor. Mr. Steinke asked that a copy of these materials also be sent to the Conservation Department.

Lower Wharf Report – Mr. Steadman and Mrs. Von Conta: Mr. Steadman and Mr. Roberge provided the HMC with a verbal report of the matters discussed at the August 12 meeting with the CT DEP/OLISP analysts Tonia Selmeski and Kevin Zavoy. Mr. Steadman indicated that although the initial goal of this project was to dredge in the vicinity of the Lower Wharf to accommodate a new site for the Community Sailing program, the project has expanded over the years to include additional components, including dredging in the vicinity of the public boat launching ramp and south dock at the Town Boat Yard which is maintained by the Department of Public Works. Mr. Steadman further said that at least four different CT DEP/OLISP analysts have been involved with the review of the HMC's proposed project over the past 7-8 years. The CT DEP/OLISP's concerns for protection of natural habitat, tidal wetlands, and intertidal mudflats have been important considerations throughout the review of the HMC's project plans, but the HMC has always stressed that these considerations must be balanced with the need to have a fully operational and safe facility for public access to the Harbor.

It was noted that without dredging in the vicinity of the public boat launching ramp, the ramp will eventually become unusable and that public access to the Harbor will be substantially reduced. In addition, it was noted that the Police Department and Fire Department require continued access via the launching ramp to launch their boats for emergency services purposes. The only other boat launching ramp in Town is in the South Benson Marina which is on the other side of Town. Mr. Roberge presented three conceptual plans for modifying the HMC's proposed dredging plan based on comments from the CT DEP/OLISP analysts at the August 10 meeting. Following a review by the Commissioners of the three alternative dredging plans presented by Mr. Roberge, it was the consensus of the HMC that none of them are consistent with the goals of the Harbor Management Plan for the most beneficial use and enjoyment of the Lower Wharf and Town Boat Yard. Mr. Steadman and Mr. Roberge explained that these three most recent alternative plans were drafted in accordance with the most recent restrictions imposed by the CT DEP/OLISP representatives during the August 10 meeting. Mr. Roberge also said that a previous plan of the HMC for this project provided for greater public access and a more functional facility than the most recent alternatives but the CT DEP/OLISP representatives were not in favor of that plan.

Following considerable discussion, James P. Bradley *moved* and Sandye Mann *seconded* to find a) that the three alternative Lower Wharf improvement plans presented to the HMC and developed as a result of the recent meeting with representatives of the CT DEP/OLISP are not consistent with the goals of the Harbor Management Plan for beneficial use of the Lower Wharf and Town Boat Yard area; b) the HMC recommends that the HMC's previous Lower Wharf improvement plan that provided for long-term functional public use of the existing public boating facilities, including the boat launching ramp, should be supported so that the Town of Fairfield will have fully operational facilities for public access to Southport Harbor; and c) the HMC should seek municipal endorsement and support for that plan which includes provisions for a fully operational and safe facility. *Motion passed unanimously.*

The HMC will review the previous plan, revised as necessary, and give consideration to a strategy for pursuing the necessary approvals of the same at the September HMC meeting.

Mooring Report: Harbor Master Carroll and James Bradley: James P. Bradley reported that the Mooring Committee had met on August 7th; the following matters were reviewed:

1. Recent issues with mooring locations and need to re-establish straight lines and maintain spacing;
2. Harbormaster Carroll noted that there are only two unoccupied/vacant moorings –one will be occupied shortly;
3. General discussion on mooring “housekeeping”, including proper maintenance and securing of vessels;
4. Proposed bid documents for mooring maintenance services; it was agreed that the new bid documents shall provide for 100 moorings in lieu of 75 as well as a provision that the Pequot Yacht Club shall, at the direction of the Harbormaster, remain on call for local quick response emergencies;
5. Harbormaster reported on issues and proposed standards regarding improvements regarding mooring locations, and on the upgrades to the speed buoys at the channel entrance;
6. Review of upcoming 2010/2011 construction projects and non-interference with mooring maintenance– it was noted that the private channel dredging project would be scheduled for Spring 2011;
7. Review of draft mooring layout plans prepared by Geoff Steadman and review of latest surveys concerning sand encroachment into the entrance channel.

V. NEW BUSINESS: No new business reported

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT: None noted

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Commission, John Zygmant *moved* and James P. Bradley *seconded* to adjourn the meeting at 6:31 p.m. *Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Gabriel