

**CITY OF NORWALK
HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 26, 2025**

ATTENDANCE: Alan Kibbe, Chair; Matt Gifford; Laurie Jones; Chris MacDonnell; Jeff Mangels; Mike Matthews; Dr. John Pinto; Donald Remson; Chris White

STAFF: Amelia Williams

OTHER: Sgt. Justin Bisceglie, Marine PD; Officer Owen Lee, Deputy Harbor Master; Steve Bartush, Chair Shellfish Commission; Geoff Steadman, Consultant; Liz Suchy, Carmody Torrance Sandak & Hennessey

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kibbe called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M. There was a quorum present.

ROLL CALL

A roll call of those present was performed.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Glen Pushino came forward for public comment representing the South Norwalk Boat Club. He expressed concern regarding the proposed expansion of 26 Shorefront Park. He went into detail as to why this was an issue and a potential safety concern for them.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING: FEBRUARY 26, 2025

**** MR. GIFFORD MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2025, AS SUBMITTED.**

**** DR. PINTO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

APPLICATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

TEXT AMENDMENT REFERRAL - ALLOW "CAR CLUBS" IN THE SD-LI ZONE

This item was handled out of order.

Dr. Pinto explained that the purpose of the text amendment is to clarify and include the definition of Car Clubs and explained that there would be no impact on the harbor of the proposed vehicle storage. Discussion followed. The Harbor Management Commission reserves the right to review any application within their jurisdiction that this text change would allow.

**** MR. MANGELS MOVED THAT THERE IS NO OBJECTION**

**** MR. MACDONNELL SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

138 WATER STREET
PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION: THE APPLICANT PROPOSES TO REPLACE
AND RECONFIGURE FLOATING DOCKS AT A PRIVATE BOAT CLUB MARINA.
CONTINUED FROM LAST MEETING.

Mr. Hilts came forward to discuss this item. The plans were provided for review. The new plan is a redesign. There is a lease agreement with 132 Water Street in place that can be renegotiated on an annual basis. Review of the pre-application followed using the provided maps on the application.

**** MR. GIFFORD MOVED THAT THERE IS NO OBJECTION.**

**** MR. WHITE SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

26 SHOREFRONT PARK
PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION: THE APPLICANT PROPOSES TO ADD A 3' X
20' FLOAT EXTENSION AND ELIMINATE A 2' X 30' SECTION OF THE MAIN
DOCK.

Chair Kibbe recused himself from this item.

Dr. Pinto explained that these are modified plans since the original plan for dredging as a solution was opposed by the Shellfish Commission and the Bureau of Aquaculture. The plans were presented for review along with maps of the property. Discussion followed regarding dredging rights and issues of littoral rights.

**** MR. MACDONNELL MOVED THAT THE PRE-APPLICATION IS NOT CONSISTENT WITH THE HARBOR MANAGEMENT PLAN.**

**** MR. WHITE SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH SEVEN (7) IN FAVOR (GIFFORD, JONES, MACDONNELL, MANGELS, MATTHEWS, PINTO, WHITE) AND TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS (REMSON AND KIBBE).**

REPORTS

CHAIRPERSON

Chair Kibbe returned to the meeting at this point.

Chair Kibbe came forward to give his report. He said that Secretary Laurie Jones and he had responded to an FOI request earlier in the month which involved a lot of sorting through emails.

He also addressed a suggestion for signage honoring deceased members of the Harbor Management Commission. He had reservations about doing such a thing due to maintenance costs and potential degradation over time. Further discussion followed.

**** MR. MACDONNELL MOVED TO TABLE DISCUSSION UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING.**

**** MR. MANGELS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

He also reminded the Commissioners to keep the Harbor Management Plan goals in mind as our prime mission and helping to decide where to put our time and efforts.

SHELLFISH COMMISSION

Mr. Bartush came forward to present his report.

Mr. White left the meeting at 7:10 P.M.

He said they had moved forward the 46 Shore Haven Road project presented by Mr. Hilts and Ischoda Yacht Club at 138 Water Street. They tabled the 26 Shorefront Park application due to the objections of the South Norwalk Boat Club. Shellfishing permits are on sale as well.

STAFF

HARBOR MASTER

Mr. Owen Lee came forward to deliver the report. He said the only thing to report was someone requested to put a mooring at 16 Nathan Hale Road which was denied since it would be on lot 201 owned by Norm Bloom. They are looking for an alternate location for the mooring.

CONSULTANT

Mr. Steadman came forward to deliver his report.

He provided an update on the funding for the East Norwalk Marina. The next Bond Commission meeting is scheduled for 03/28/2025. He expects it to be cancelled and funding allocated at the April meeting.

The Norwalk River Watershed Initiative met on March 20th. They have hired a consultant to update their policies. Further discussion followed regarding these plans. Mr. Steadman stated that the Harbor Commission should be very involved in the plan update process.

An interesting and informative Stamford state of the harbor event was organized by Soundwaters. There were several good presentations.

He attended the presentation by the Manresa Island Association.

The 2025 Long Island Sound summit is upcoming in Bridgeport. Mr. Steadman reviewed what was expected to happen at the summit.

There are continuing issues with legislative initiatives regarding the Cohen v. DEEP court decision which among other things declared that Harbor Commissions have no legal authority to review and comment on matters before DEEP and other state agencies.

COMMITTEE

MOORING AND HARBOR SAFETY

Mr. Mangels came forward to deliver his report. The first transient reservation is in. Online moorings paperwork is coming in as well. Managed field letters are going out. Sprite Island has already paid up. He provided an update on the repairs to the Harbor Master boat. He also updated the cleaning situation on the islands with Recs and Parks and the boy scouts. The new drone has been delivered.

FINANCE

Mr. MacDonnell came forward to deliver his report. There was a meeting with the Board of Estimation and Taxation to go over our finances. He provided a recap of the meeting including in terms of the city grant to the HMC. There is a large amount of uncertainty due to issues at the federal level. Further discussion followed.

PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Ms. Jones came forward to deliver her report. She said there was no report at this time.

Mr. MacDonnell said that he had looked into the Public Trust doctrine and recommended that a tutorial be put together for onboarding new Harbor Management commissioners. Mr. Kibbe

reminded everyone that the first step in that process is the meeting with the law department. Discussion followed.

NEWSLETTER/WEBSITE

There was no report at this time.

WATER QUALITY

There was no report at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. MACDONNELL MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MR. GIFFORD SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:48 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ian A. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services