

MINUTES OF THE WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT COMMISSION MEETING

Thursday, October 27, 2016 - 5:30 p.m.

A meeting of the Waterways Management Commission was duly scheduled for Thursday, October 27, 2016 in Room 315. The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Gerald Hickey. Present were members: Joseph Hannon, Roger Race, Geoffrey Marshall and Andrew Herlihy. Also present was Mr. Steven Melo, Harbormaster.

Mr. Hickey reviewed the Agenda for the meeting. It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda.

The minutes of the last three meetings were reviewed and discussed. It was agreed to correct the reported ending to the meeting of Monday September 12, 2016 to reflect that the meeting was not adjourned, but no further Waterways Commission actions were taken after suspending to attend the joint meeting with the Select Board and Community Preservation Committee. All three meeting minutes were approved as indicated.

A. Waterways/Harbor Master Plan:

The concept, purposes and history regarding getting a harbor or waterways master plan was explained and discussed. A prior meeting between the Commission and Steve Bliven for the purpose of undertaking a master plan was reviewed for all Commission members. The history of a much earlier meeting (10/07/2008) between Mr. Bliven and Waterways Commission to first discuss management plans was explained. The fact that larger priorities for funds and energies interfered in 2008 was given as the reason for not pursuing a plan at that time. After review of the materials provided by Mr. Bliven for tonight's meeting (he was unavailable – traveling), it was asked if the current, or a subsequent Seaport Council grant might be used to pay for a management plan? Mr. Hannon would like to see the Town's General Fund used to fund any 20% co-pay grant match required since the Town seems to be inserting themselves into waterways business. Mr. Melo added that if natural resources/shellfish were to be part of any master plan, funds from the general fund would be required to cover that portion of the plan, not boater fees. Mr. Hickey noted that we are not in a position to apply for the upcoming November application deadline of the Seaport Economic Council. The next deadline of January 2017 should be the goal for seeking Seaport funds for the waterways master plan. Someone asked if Mr. Bliven and Urban Harbors Institute (UHI) would be able to process the grant application? It was moved (R. Race), seconded (A. Herlihy) and unanimously voted to invite Mr. Bliven to the next waterways meeting, along with Deborah Melino-Wender, David Cressman and any other stakeholders that should be involved in developing whatever level of master plan is desired. It was asked if Conservation, Planning or parks would be interested in such a project. The prospect of incorporating Community Preservation grant funds for a master plan was briefly discussed.

B. Maritime Center:

R. Race moved, G. Marshall seconds a motion to send an updated letter of support for the Maritime Center "Plan C" as endorsed by the recent Town Meeting and co-funded at that same meeting with CPC funds. Mr. Hannon wants to include a specific thank you to the Seaport Council within that updated letter for their patience and understanding as the Town worked through the public process for plan development and acceptance. That letter of support would be prepared by HM Melo and sent to Ms. Wender for inclusion in her grant correspondence with the Seaport Council.

C. 12 Rogers Street:

Following a review of the history of the land need and building at 12 Rogers Street, a discussion followed regarding the possibility of a licensed, shared use of the house with the Community Boating Center (CBC). Mr. Hannon confirmed that the property deed was to the Town of Dartmouth. He stated that the Select Board has ultimate custody and control based upon that deed, but it was noted that all costs related to the property have been paid from waterways enterprise funds since purchase in 2005. The bond issued for the purchase will run through 2025. A. Herlihy, stepping out of his role on the Commission, described the potential uses CBC sees with shared use of

the house. It is envisioned that daily administrative presence, as well as small equipment storage needs would be met with shared use. HM Melo read from a “request for Town Counsel services” form that Chairman Hickey filed with Mr. Cressman in order to start exploring this possibility. It was done in advance of the Commission discussions to ensure that the process was being done properly and legally. That request was denied or deferred with Mr. Cressman instructing the Commission to work with Treasurer Barnes instead. R. Race moved, J. Hannon seconded a motion to move forward and have discussions with Mr. Barnes consistent with Mr. Cressman’s instructions. Mr. Hannon wants to add discussions of all options – licensed, shared use; long-term rent, and sale with Mr. Barnes as possibilities. Mr. Hannon also wants discussions of mutual exchange of licensed uses with CBC as possible quid-pro-quo. There was a unanimous vote of approval for the motion, with A. Herlihy abstaining.

D. Harbor walk/Chapter 91 Issues:

None of the Commission members had been approached by anyone regarding a harbor walk, or anything like that. No requests for comment, support or inclusion in whatever the project entails being made, no position was taken. It was noted that the group involved was supposed to be formed for the purpose of connecting bicycling pathways. It was unclear how Chapter 91 waterways issues would be explored without any involvement of the Town Waterways Management Commission.

E. DMF Fishing Access:

Stemming from State interest in the above Chapter 91 issue, HM Melo met with Ross Kessler, Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) Public Access Coordinator on Friday 9/30/16 in Padanaram. Mr. Kessler oversees distribution of ear-marked funds from State Fishing licenses. A certain percentage of each salt-water license fee must be dedicated to improving access to fishing opportunities. HM Melo would like to start the public process possibly leading to the construction of a dedicated fishing pier perpendicular to the SW bridge abutment. He sees this is as a possible solution to a growing safety problem. The narrow bridge sidewalks are not adequate for sharing between fishing poles and pedestrians. There is no safety barrier between individuals fishing and passing autos. More frequent conflicts between fishermen and vessels navigating through the bridge are reported. Moving all fishing from the bridge sidewalk to a designated pier built for fishing, paid from State fishing license funds sounded like a good prospect to all. Mr. Race knows Mr. Kessler and will explore the required next steps in this process.

F. Waterways Commission Membership update:

Mr. Hickey will email Mr. Cressman for an update on the one open vacancy on the Commission. The vacancy has been posted on the Town website since July 26, 2016, but there has been no information shared regarding any interest expressed by the public. Mr. Hannon also asked that Mr. Hickey include an update on the Bouchard Grant funds successfully applied for by HM Melo for a boat ramp at the end of Rogers Street.

G. Upweller Update:

HM Melo provided an update on another of his successful Bouchard grant applications. The State DMF has ordered the upweller kits from Atlantic Aquaculture, one each for Dartmouth, Wareham and Fairhaven. Wareham has been generous enough to allow all three floats to be built at an indoor facility in Wareham. Given the land and building shortage available to waterways, it seems like the best alternative for economical construction. Labor will be done by staff, and the grant includes several years of seed purchase to stock the upweller in Dartmouth. Quahog replenishment will be the initial focus of this grant-funded project.

There was no public comment.

The next meeting of the Commission was set for November 29, 2016 at 5:30 p.m.