

HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION MEETING

The Harbor Management Commission Meeting of October 28, 2008 was held in the City Manager's Office. Mr. Aliano called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Attendance was as follows:

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ron Aliano, Chairman
Alderman Mark Bettencourt
Alderman Pete Desaulniers
Alan Bergren, City Manager
James Paulsen
Edward Seder
Richard Benoit

OTHERS PRESENT

Geoff Steadman, Harbor Management Consultant
Thomas Cummings, P.E., CLA Engineers, Inc.
PRA Development & Management Corp. Architects/Engineers
Resident - Mr. Seder's Grandson
Claire Bessette, The Day

2. Determination of Quorum

It was determined a quorum was present.

3. Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Richard Benoit, seconded by Alderman Desaulniers, the minutes of the Special Meeting held September 15, 2008 were unanimously approved.

Mr. Aliano requested the agenda be moved to address Item 8c. first so that the PRA Development Corporation representatives could give their presentation of the proposed Marina Hotel Hilton Project. All members agreed.

4. Citizen Comment

Mr. Seder introduced his grandson who came to observe the meeting.

5. Correspondence

- a. Harbor Management Fund Report
- b. RACE Invoice (addressed under New Business)
- c. Mr. Aliano's Letter to Commission on City Plan –Transportation Center
This letter was drafted with the assistance of Geoff Steadman, Harbor Management Consultant, which included the Commission's recommendations relative to the Transportation Center Project.
- d. Letter from DEP to City Planner –
Review and recommendations of NCDC's application for Intermodal Transportation Center.

6. Harbor Master Report

Mr. Aliano reported that Mr. Harrison could not be in attendance at this meeting.

7. Old Business

a. Cadle Mill

City Manager Bergren stated that he was aware that the roof had been done but that the project has considerably slowed down.

b. Community Boathouse/Boat Launch

This item addressed under New Business.

c. Harbor Management Plan Update – Mr. Steadman

Mr. Steadman reported that he has made significant progress with the mapping portion of the plan. He was able to obtain aerial maps taken from 1990, which were helpful.

d. City Pier/City Dock/Seawall

Mr. Aliano reported that he approved the contractor's request to remove F & G docks during the construction phase of this project. The contractor assured him these docks would be properly reinstalled when the work is completed.

Mr. Seder inquired as to how many coats of paint would be applied to the steel beams or what means of protection is being taken as this was the main reason for deterioration in the past. This information will be provided from the Public Works Department.

e. Harbor Condo Project Update

It appears that is project has gone bust.

f. Yantic River Dredging Update

Mr. Steadman reported that Roberge Associates has defined 6 locations where the testing would be conducted from. The total length of the area is 3800 ft. in length, and the testing would be done approximately every 600 feet with a cost of \$14,000 for this sampling and testing. Mr. Steadman will be preparing a letter of request to submit to the DEP outlining the City's intention to proceed with this testing.

g. Proposed Marinas/Boatyards along the Thames River Basin

This is on hold for the time being.

8. New Business

a. 2009 Meeting Schedule

Meeting dates for 2009 were reviewed for the fourth Tuesday of each month. There appeared to be no conflicts, therefore the Commission agreed on a new schedule. On a motion by Richard Benoit, seconded by City Manager, Alan Bergren, the 2009 Meeting Schedule was approved.

b. RACE Invoice – Discussion and Action

Mr. Aliano presented an invoice to the Commission from Roberge Associates Coastal Engineers, LLC in the amount of \$720. Mr. Steadman informed the members that this invoice was for the preparation of revised drawings to display cross-sections of the proposed dredging areas and for revised calculations in connection with this. On a motion by Richard Benoit, seconded by Alderman Desaulniers the members unanimously agreed to have this bill paid.

c. PRA Development/Marina Hotel Project

Mr. Aliano recused himself from the presentation as he is the owner of the Marina at American Wharf and is involved in the hotel project. Vice Chairman, Richard Benoit assumed his position for this portion of the meeting.

Tom Cummings, CLA Engineers, gave a brief overview of the proposed full-service Hilton Hotel to be built on the City's waterfront at the Marina at American Wharf site. He introduced Leonard Ciccotello, Architect from PRA Development & Management Corp., who presented colored drawings displaying the 20-story, 324-room hotel with an attached parking garage to accommodate 417 cars. There will be 16,000 square feet of banquet space above the parking garage which can be divided into three sections. An arched bridge and pedestrian walkway will span across the Yantic River to the Main Lobby Entrance to be located on the 3rd Floor. The ground floor will host a pool and exercise room with a service area to the rear of the main building. The 20th Floor will have 2-floor penthouse suites with sprawling views of the river. The main hotel entrance will be the existing one coming in from West Main Street. An additional entrance/exit is planned for the Chelsea Harbor Drive side. The building will have a red brick facade with pre-cast limestone pillars and accents with a green metal roof. The design is being developed so that it compliments existing Norwich architectural design. The exterior facade is being designed such that there are horizontal and vertical separations and various peaks and levels creating an overall appealing structure. Mr. Ciccotello pointed out that the back half of the Marina as stands would not be touched.

Alderman Bettencourt voiced concerns whether public access and water dependent use were taken into consideration as these requirements will be taken into consideration when going through the DEP permitting process. This will be the same for the Transportation Center he pointed out. Mr. Ciccotello stated that the hotel being situated on the waterfront, in general, lends itself to the public and water access availability in addition

to walking paths around the hotel and intended passage walkway to the Transportation Center. Mr. Aliano reluctantly interjected that the water-dependent and public access requirements were satisfied when the initial Marina was built in 1987. This aspect was satisfied up front and should no longer be an issue on the waterfront. The hotel project will only enhance existing access. All members expressed enthusiasm towards the project. Final design plans and a traffic study are being worked on and formal plans should be forthcoming to the Commission on the City Plan in about one month.

9. Other - FOI Meeting

Mr. Aliano reported that he was unable to make the FOI meeting. The City Manager reported that he would be hosting another one in early December for those who were unable to attend the last one.

Shipping Street

Brief discussion took place regarding the Norwich Bulletin's article regarding Shipping Street and the prior day's meeting held by the Norwich Redevelopment Agency which discussed ideas how this land between West Thames Street and the River could be developed. It is primarily empty industrial buildings. The RDA is calling this the Shipping Street Waterfront Redevelopment Study. This study will require extensive review of zoning laws as some land is owned by the City and the remaining which is privately owned could be purchased thru eminent domain.

Alderman Bettencourt stated that the Agency must come up with a plan and that procurement of any property would be the decision of the City Council. City Manager Bergren clarified that a plan must be assigned to the RDA for them to begin the process. Mr. Seder suggested that the land be industrially developed in order to create jobs for Norwich which are so desperately needed. The availability to the water and railroad would be ideal for industrial development. Mr. Aliano stated that the DEP would be looking to satisfy a water dependent use and public access requirement within the plan. The trucking industry has captured the transportation market, and the DEP would not want to see anymore pollution to the water or land stemming from an industrial development.

DEP Permits

Mr. Steadman brought to the attention of the members that the DEP has changed their permitting procedures so that the permits required by the Hilton and Transportation Center projects will have to come through the review of the Harbor Management Commission due to their being on the waterfront and for the review of stormwater requirements. In addition, all project plans must be stamped with the approval from a licensed engineer.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Richard Benoit, seconded by Alderman Desaulniers, the Harbor Management Commission Meeting of October 28, 2008 was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

