

MEETING MINUTES OF HARBOR COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 5, 2020

The West Haven Harbor Management Commission held a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, February 5, 2020 in the Harriet North Room, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT at 6:30 PM

PRESENT: Commissioners Pacapelli, Flynn, McKeon, Potter, Pimer, Assistant City Planner Killeen, Commissioner of Planning and Development Messoro (arrived 6:45 PM), Parks and Recreation liaison Mark Paine and Consultant Geoff Steadman.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Commissioner McKeon made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of January 2, 2020, seconded by Commissioner Flynn and passed.

Regular Meeting

1. Update on Boat Launching Ramp Feasibility Study
 - a. Meetings/Discussions with City regarding use of Compost Facility
Mr. Killeen and Commissioner Messoro met with Lou Esposito from the Mayor's Office and Tom McCarthy, Commissioner of Public Works in early January to discuss the boat ramp and the conceptual plans that had been developed for the compost facility site. The main concern with the design is the remote location, which may raise security issues. It will be hard to monitor the site and to adequately police the area. They were especially concerned since the conceptual design would encourage people to congregate in this area. The other concern was the potential impact on the compost operation. They felt that the design would impact negatively on the operation and diminish the area devoted to compost operations. They felt that the original site on Kimberly Avenue should be looked at again. They felt that they may be able to gain the support of the State legislators to encourage DOT and DEEP to reconsider the original site. During the meeting, the group reached out to State Representative DiMassa to discuss this issue, and Mr. Killeen followed up with documentation of the process the Harbor Management Commission has been going through. At this point, Mr. Killeen has not heard anything back on the attempt to bring this before the remaining State legislators. Representative DiMassa did ask if the City had ever made any commitments to the Haven developers to possibly use some of the compost site for supportive parking to their proposed retail development along Elm Street and First Avenue. At this point, the feasibility study is on hold until additional feedback is received as a follow-up to those discussions. Commissioner Flynn made a motion to send a letter to the Mayor asking for her support in this matter and asking her to intervene to help reach a decision on this matter, seconded by Commissioner McKeon and passed. Mr. Killeen will draft the letter and send it to the commissioners for review.
2. Update on 2019 SHIPP Grant Application
 - a. Correspondence to State from WH HMC
Mr. Killeen distributed a draft letter that would be sent to key State officials if approved by the Commission. The draft letter asks the State to move forward with the SHIPP Grant process soon and not to let their review of the Port Authority get in the way of the grant program which is critical to West Haven's efforts to improve the Harbor Management Area and other municipalities managing small harbors throughout the state. After reviewing the draft, Commissioner Flynn made a motion to send this letter along with the addition of a paragraph requesting that questions be addressed to Commission Chairman Pacapelli or Assistant City Planner Killeen, seconded by Commissioner Potter and passed.

3. Discussion of Reclaiming Sand Erosion on Beaches

a. Capital Request for Sand Management program – Parks and Recreation liaison Paine drafted a five year plan for sand management due to erosion. There is no plan in place today to reclaim sand that has eroded, and only periodic sand replacement is provided, which is a more expensive process. Mr. Paine will work in conjunction with education personnel at area universities to come up with an approach to the program. He plans to submit this capital request for consideration in the coming year’s budget. He will keep the Commission informed so that they can support this request.

b. Discussion of past beach nourishment projects – It was reported that only the Army Corps project near Prospect Beach had included requirements that the City further maintain the beach after completion of the sand replenishment project. Mr. Pacapelli asked Mr. Paine to speak with the City Engineer to see if an emergency permit can be obtained for undertaking a program of beach sand reclamation.

4. REFERRALS:

a. The Planning and Zoning Commission proposes amendments to the Zoning Regulations to allow Active Adult Communities by Special Permit in Certain Districts. File # ZR 20-003.

Mr. Killeen explained that the P & Z is considering a zoning regulation for an active adult community in twelve zoning districts. Some of these districts have waterfront properties within their boundaries and therefore, the Planning and Zoning Commission is referring this application for the Harbor Management Commission’s comments. Commissioner Flynn made a motion to send a comment to the P&Z Commission that the Harbor Management Commission has no objection to this zoning regulation providing it does not interfere with the Harbor Commission’s review of site-specific applications in the future and that it does not diminish the potential for water dependent uses on affected waterfront sites, seconded by Commissioner McKeon and passed.

5. REPORTS OF STAFF AND COMMISSIONERS – Geoff Steadman reported on a lawsuit in the Town of Greenwich with respect to the authority of their Harbor Management Plan relative to State DEEP decision-making. He will keep the Commission apprised of future developments.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:41 p.m.

Commissioner McKeon made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Flynn and passed.