SAVE OUR BOATYARD – CONCERNS REGARDING 205 MAGEE AVENUE

I.

The State of Connecticut Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Aquaculture notes in their review of this proposal that this site is "adjacent to productive shellfish beds".

A. A significant impact can be avoided if the following conditions are met:

1. Recommend that the dredge area be sheet-piled and dewatered.

2. Sampling must meet regulations for shellfish.

3. Toxicity results need to be evaluated.

II Boaters fish from this channel running bait -wells and fish-wells as they pass in and out.

A. Fishing is done from either shore of this channel.

B. A previous occupant of the site (American Cyanamid) worked with toxic chemicals and metals.

C. The salvage yard operator north of the site was not so careful in the past with his handling of waste oils and lubricants, metals, and other by-products of his business.

D. Nowhere in this proposal are these issues taken up and their concerns answered.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
OFFICE OF ADJUDICATIONS

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II.



Save Our Boatyard

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Safety concerns in the East branch channel:

A. Two businesses presently use the channel for commerce via barge and tugboat.

1. There is no limit for the number of barges in a tow.

2. There is no set schedule for this traffic.

B. This site is at the beginning of the narrowest part of the east channel at the apex of a curve.

1. Most traffic will tend outboard on this curve, even without a northwest or west wind.

2. ~~No soundings are provided to indicate that the published depth of this channel is till current throughout its breadth here.~~

3. Army Corps of Engineers guidelines governing channel width and boating traffic indicate that the existing channel as published is barely adequate for the projected uses from this site proposal.

C. The proposed 20' set back from the Federal channel in this area can pose some safety concerns for boaters and anyone at or on the floating docks or boats therein.

1. If only 15 percent of only 150 boats in the dry sail system averaging just 20' in length were to be launched or recovered on a typical good weekend they would:

a. Overwhelm the entire 310' of dock as they would require well over 450' dock space.

b. This would likely result in "rafting" boats together and encroaching closer to the Federal channel.

c. Owners and workers climbing from one boat to the next, possibly encumbered by gear are now at risk.

2. Moving barges and prop-wash from tugs can have a serious effect on this situation.

a. Sited on a curve as it is, visibility from either direction is reduced for all navigation.

b. There is little room for error on the part of commercial navigators under the best of conditions (novice boaters beware).

c. Tugs and barges in close proximity to the planned dredging will likely refill it quickly – especially when operating off high tide, particularly a tug's prop-wash.

3. There is no system of dolphin pilings proposed at either end of this "marina" to offer even minimal protection.

a. Czezyk Marina, just south and in a wider portion of the channel has several in place.

b. There is no plan presented to control operation here (hours of operation, number of boats at docks, how they are to be controlled – coming and going).

III.

Economic viability of this proposal:

A. No in-water summer or winter storage to provide a customer base and capitol to operate.

B. It presumes to replace an active, full service, robust 14 acre business ~~on 3.5 acres~~. with slips for some 300 boats,

C. Among the 9 boatyards that operated in the City of Stamford in its past, none engaged a dry-sail system of boat storage.

D. The majority of boats berthed or moored in Stamford waters are over 30' and may number 2 fifths of their make-up of sail boats.

E. Coupling this proposed business with a marina aspect elsewhere in the Harbor would only create logistical challenges resulting in greater cost to the boater.

F. There is no fueling offered at this site or at the proposed Bridgewater site.

1. Boats queuing up for fuel in this area would challenge navigation even more.

2. Fuel ~~availability~~ would be available in only one area in Stamford.

IV.

Concerned that this proposal is setting a dangerous precedent:

A. From Department of Agriculture, Attachment F, "Water dependent use fact sheet". "Evaluating adverse impacts to future water dependent development opportunities":

1. "Is site physically suited for a water-dependent use for which there is reasonable demand, or has the site been identified in the plan of development or zoning regulations for water-dependent use?"

a. The site is not physically suitable on this curved, narrow channel for a dry-sail operation.

Part of

b. The site was purchased by the City of Stamford as open space with an eye toward a park area.

2. "Will a non-water dependent use replace an existing water dependent use as part of the proposed development or redevelopment?"

a. This site is proposed to replace an active, full service, fully functioning boatyard on a 14 acre site in Stamford Harbor which was razed by the developer in spite of a signed zoning agreement with the City of Stamford that it remain a boatyard.

b. The developer intends to replace the 14 acre boatyard and marina with a large office complex for a hedge fund (Bridgewater).

c. This exchange of a 14 acre boatyard –marina operation for a 3.5 acre dry sail system for boats 30' and under is also against the City of Stamford development plan and Harbor Management plan.

3. "Will a non-water dependent use inhibit or restrict existing public access?"

a. Yes! The Bridgewater proposal will remove the ability to store over 500 boats of 30' or more. It will reduce slip space at the marina at the 14 acre site by 2/3 of its capability and will close down the present fuel dock.

b. Allowing this concept of taking away a large, full service boatyard and reducing marina space in favor of a hedge fund office that can go anywhere ashore will definitely reduce Stamford's water access as well as that of area boaters. A 3.5 acre dry sail operation, aimed at primarily 30' power boats and under, poorly situated in the inner harbor with no marina aspect is not a substitute.

B. We understand that this non-conforming, inconsistent, incomplete proposal is being fast-tracked through the D.E.E.P. and other State commissions. Why:

1. 115 million dollars of economic incentive proposed by the Governor to Bridgewater to move one of the wealthiest hedge funds 15 miles west to afford Stamford quality jobs. Jobs already secure in Westport.

   a. What incentive will be given to replace the boatyard? There is no word.

   b. What about the jobs and skill sets of those lost at the boat yard and its related industries in Stamford?

   c. Is this an attack on blue-collar jobs?

2. If economic development was truly the nature of the Governor's aim, why not give 115 million dollars in incentives to Conn. Vocational and Technical schools instead of corporate welfare to this developer and a hedge fund?

C. Will "fast tracking" proposals through the D.E.E.P. and other commissions now be the norm?"

1. Simple re-dredging for Ponus Yacht Club Marina took 3 years; the Town of Greenwich is waiting now for re-dredging at 4 years; some communities are at 7 years.

   This is before us in 4 months!

2. Rules, regulations, and guidelines are in place for everyone to operate on an even playing field.

3. "Save our Boatyard" has found many inconsistencies between Hartford and Stamford that are not in keeping with the intent of the law.

All of us should "play by the rules" – Governors, elected and chosen officials, and even corporate America. You need to get this done in "the light of day" and it must be done right!