

Review and Recommendations by the Harbor & Waterfront Committee of the Long Term Management and Operations Plan for the Harbor

May 26, 2009

The Harbor & Waterfront Committee has reviewed the plan as presented by Milone & MacBroom, Inc., at several meetings and would like to provide the following information to the Town Council. Since the Town Council has previously received a copy of the consultant's report, it is not the intention of this memo to review it in its entirety. Rather, the committee feels that it is sufficient to make recommendations concerning the four major issues that need to be addressed in regards to the future of the anchorage.

1. Anchorage-wide repositioning of the moorings
2. Anchorage access and parking requirements
3. Dinghy utilization
4. Launch service

Item 1 - Anchorage-wide repositioning of the moorings

Goal

- Long range management plan for safe alignment of boats by length and draft
- Provides a grid work for placement of moorings that would provide us with information on maximum number of boats that could be moored

Concerns/benefits

This component of the report will be the most difficult for the mooring holders to accept for many reasons. The factors that need to be considered are:

- Will the cost of moving the moorings be borne by the town or the mooring holder
- Will all the moorings be moved or just a percentage, and who decides which are to be moved
- General political upheaval that may be generated by a complete reassignment of moorings
- This will improve the protection of the boats with a greater distance between moorings
- If moorings are moved further away from Town Landing, this may create a need for a launch service (safety of rowing a small dinghy greater distances)
- If the mooring field is ever expanded it will generate more revenue for the Town, but it will compound the lack of parking issue and may create

additional pedestrian and vehicle traffic in the neighborhoods (this issue is a stand alone issue and is not dependent upon any of the others, unless we expand the field, and then parking will be affected).

Committee recommendation

The committee was divided on this issue and there was a feeling that while this would improve the positioning of the boats and allow for potentially more moorings, there may be strong opposition from the mooring holders that are required to move, especially if the Town requires it and they are forced to cover the cost. There was discussion on delaying this piece of the report to see if the problems resolve themselves when mooring holders remove their mooring from the anchorage and no mooring is placed in this area. It was also believed that the harbormaster could address the more serious problems with the mooring holders that are having the problem.

If the mooring field is restructured, but the number of moorings not increased, this could be done without adversely affecting the land based infrastructure. However, please note that the insufficient parking addressed in **Item #2** will continue to be insufficient.

The initial report of the committee suggested that this not occur until 2011, and it is the feeling of the committee that the harbormaster continue to review the situation and report back to the committee in the fall of 2009 as to status of the mooring field. At that time the committee would report back to the Town Council.

Item 2 - Develop additional parking to support Town Landing

Goal

- Develop additional parking to support Town Landing

Concerns/benefits:

- Cost and location of a parking lot
- Neighborhood concerns of a parking lot
- Pressures that increased parking could have on Town Landing
- Currently, approximately 350 people access the anchorage through Town Landing as well as people utilizing the facility for other activities
- Currently, Town Landing lot has space for 28 vehicles; 5 spaces on lower Town Landing Road; 22 vehicle spaces and 6 trailer spaces in the lot across from Town Landing Market
- Consultants recommend 1 parking space for every 4 moorings – based on this formula we would need 32 additional spaces to meet the current number of moorings
- There is also a need for additional trailer spaces

Committee recommendation:

The committee discussed the fact that while the Town has grown and facilities such as schools, library and municipal buildings have been built or enlarged to meet the needs of the community, the issue of increased parking for Town Landing has not been addressed. Since 1995, the anchorage has seen approximately a 100% growth in the number of moorings.

This issue **received very strong support from the committee with the finding that additional parking is urgently needed.** Without additional parking, any expansion of the mooring field or additional moorings from the waiting list cannot be accomplished. Parking is the critical piece of this report and all other issues revolve around improvements.

Item 3 – Dinghy utilization**Goal**

- Provide access for people to their boats
- Eliminate the need for a launch service

Concerns/benefits:

- Number of dinghies at Town Landing – has been resolved by the permitting process and the addition of municipal dinghies – in 2009 we did not issue all of the resident dinghy permits (6 remain at this time) or all of the non-resident permits (2 remain)
- \$6,000 revenue to the Town with permits
- Cost to Town for 6 municipal dinghies - \$3,000
- Municipal dinghies reduce the traffic build-up at the launch ramp when people are required to bring their own dinghy and unload
- Safety of people rowing long distances to their mooring – will be resolved with the permission to have outboard motors
- Environmental concern if people violate the ordinance and leave fuel on their dinghy – will be monitored by harbor staff
- Elimination of dinghies would generate a need for a launch service

Committee recommendation:

It appears that the system of municipal dinghies is working well and the committee is recommending maintaining the status quo.

Launch service**Goal**

- Elimination of the need for dinghies and the congestion they create
- Safer transportation to the boats

Concerns/benefits:

- Private vs. Town operated – cost of initial capital outlay of \$250,000 and an annual operating expense of \$90,000 – which could probably require an increase in the mooring fee of \$250 per year (\$500 for non residents, \$300 for residents) to those accessing through Town Landing
- Would need to remove the dinghies which would eliminate the \$6,000/year in revenue to the Town
- Private or public, this would increase parking problems due to people leaving other access points for the lower cost at Town Landing
- May have a detrimental affect on PYC or Handy Boat
- Contingency plan if the launch service fails
- A positive point would be the elimination of the congestion of the dinghies along the floats

Committee recommendation:

The committee realizes that at this time the launch issue will not be a major concern until many other issues are addressed and resolved, or there is a move to greatly expand the number of moorings, which is unlikely. The consensus of the committee was to maintain the dinghies and not to proceed with any discussion of a launch service.