

**CONNECTICUT MARITIME COMMISSION (CTMC)
REPORT OF MEETING (Mtg. #07-02)
21 February 2007**

Location of Meeting: Fort Trumbull Conference Center
New London, CT

Attendance:

Commissioners

Present

Chuck Beck (for Commissioner Carpenter)
Vincent Cashin
Ginne-Rae Gilmore (for Acting Comm Angelo)
G.L. "Doc" Gunther
Joseph P. Maco (for TSB Chair Kelleher)
David Shuda
Martin Toyen
George Wisker (for Comm McCarthy)
Jon Wronwoski

Absent

Tom Dubno
Judy Gott
Joseph Riccio
Phil Smith (for Secretary Genaurio)
Robert Virgulak
Kaye Williams

Guests

John Crowther	Jack Hopley	Mike Keegan	Michael Piscatelli	Tim Purdy
Dave Rossiter	Joe Salvatore	Joel Severance	Bill Spangler	Bill Spicer
Alan Stevens	Brian Thompson			

I. Call to Order:

- Chairman Marty Toyen opened the meeting at 10:02. A quorum of 9 was present.

II. Review of Meeting Minutes:

- The draft minutes of the 17 January 2007 meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved unanimously after a motion by George Wisker and second by Vin Cashin.

III Discussion Open to Public

- None.

IV Old Business:

- Status of the Dredge Material Management Plan (DMMP) –George Wisker stated that nothing really new had occurred relative to the LIS DMMP. It appears that the \$1.74M survived but since Congress has not yet passed a spending Bill it is not certain. He further stated that the FY 08 Federal budget proposes \$2.8M for the LIS DMMP. Mike Keegan stated that the New England Division of the ACOE should be getting word soon on its quarterly allocations for FY 07. Mike Keegan further stated that the Long Island Sound DMMP will begin the public “scoping” process in Spring 2007. He made a pitch for information gathering to begin now relative to updating the dredging needs. He also recommended a GIS determination for identified/ potential upland disposal sites. Senator Gunther questioned whether or not the information was already on file. Mike Keegan responded that some information on some maintenance projects may be on file but dated. Information on improvement projects is non-existent.

Marty Toyen shared a letter from Senator Lieberman. The letter was a response to the CTMC letter dated 20 Dec 2006 sent to all of the CT Congressional delegation requesting their support for dredging funds. The Senator's letter stated that he was "committed to the fight that awaits us" with respect to obtaining dredging project funding and referenced the Norwalk Phase 1 and the \$1.74M for the LIS DMMP.

CT Maritime Cluster (CMC)/DECD Development of Commercial/Recreational Data - The Chairman reported on the two sub-committee meetings. Bill Gash (CMC Executive Director) will approach the CMC Board of Directors on the steps/funding necessary to update the previous report. DECD has committed to review a request for financial assistance.

- Revenue Sources for Maritime Projects/Proposed Draft Legislation - Chuck Beck reported that there are two Bills introduced before the CT legislature relative to establishing a state dredging fund: SB 852 and HB 7070. SB 852 appeared to be merely a place holder. HB 7070 mirrored the draft legislation created by the CTMC with a few editorial differences and one difference of substance. Section 3 (c) of HB 7070 appears to be standard OPM/Bond Commission language but it also seems to limit the requested Harbor Improvement fund Bond to a value equal to each individual project. This may or may not be problematic and needs to be investigated more thoroughly.

Marty Toyen expressed that HB 7070 was extremely important and urged all of the CTMC members and the stakeholders in the audience to contact their respective legislators and all of the legislative leaders to seek their support for HB 7070. He further stated that he will draft a template letter and make it available.

Ginne-Rae Gilmore inquired about whether or not the Harbor Improvement Fund could be structured after the DECD managed Manufacture Assistance Act Fund (MAA). The MAA fund allows DECD to commit up to \$200K at the DECD Commissioner's discretion. Dave Shuda inquired about the limits of the Harbor Improvement Fund. Marty Toyen provided an overview of how and on what the fund could be used. He referred to the language in Sec 2(b). Dave Shuda commented on the ability of competing Port Authorities in other states to offer tax incentives, construction of warehouses, etc to lure shipping companies to their ports.

- CT River Presentation on Dredging - The discussion centered on decreasing commercial use of the CT River as a commercial waterway. Joel Severance provided an overview of how the CT River had been used in the past compared to how it was used presently. He was assisted by Bill Spangler (a CT River Pilot), Jack Hopley (NRG operations manager) and Tim Purdy Moran (Towing). Each presented information related to the importance of the River as a thoroughfare and the need for dredging. There was a lengthy discussion relative to how the shoaling of the River had negatively affected the number of transits and the load carried by tug and barges. The decreasing loads and transits have forced former users of the River to deliver petroleum products to truck deliveries since #6 oil can not move through pipelines. The channel use to be maintained at 15 feet at MLW. It is presently riddled with spots of 10 or less feet at high water. Jack Copley provided data relative to the number of barrels of #6 oil moved by barge to the Middletown NRG power plant and how that would equate to truck trips. He also made a comparison of draft differential to liquid load. Draft restrictions due to shoaling have reduced liquid load capacity from 32K barrels per barge per trip to 22K barrels per trip which increases cost. Tim Purdy echoed the comments of the others and provided additional information related to a similar situation with the NRG power plant on the Housatonic River. It was stated that there are presently about 50 tug and barge trips up the CT River. In 1992 there were 196 trips.

Doc Gunther added comments on increased environmental risks caused by shoaling and the benefits to flood control if the River were dredged. He provided a lengthy example of his related efforts on the Housatonic River. Joe Maco made statements about similar shoaling concerns on the upper reaches of the Thames River.

Joel Severance added information relative to how the shoaling of the channels is affecting the recreational boating industry and potentially reduced Coast Guard presence on the CT River. He quoted the recently released Transportation Strategy Board report that emphasized the need for maintenance dredging as well as the goal to decrease the need for trucks to move goods on CT highways by increasing the movement of goods via the waterways.

Mike Keegan emphasized the need to define the CT River as a multiuse vs single use waterway in order to better compete for Federal dredging project funds. He provided an explanation of recent changes on how projects are funded. He recommended that where possible, cargo delivered to out of state or alternative ports due to draft restrictions at CT ports needs to be identified. He also stressed the need for CT to "prioritize" its dredging needs as a potential means of energizing the CT Congressional delegation. He also mentioned incorporating the cost of alternative transportation (i.e. trucks) in any cost benefit analysis.

Marty Toyen emphasized the need for the CT River users (the presenters) to provide their statistical data to Joe Salvatore (the newly hired dredging project coordinator). George Wisker provided information about the known 5 "bars" or areas that tend to shoal in the CT River. He also made comments about the "seasonal dredging windows" imposed by the spawning season of various aquatic species as well as the need to identify appropriate dredge material disposal methods. Bill Spicer recommended emphasizing the loss of past commercial use due to shoaling vs projecting a theoretical increase if dredging were to take place.

V New Business:

- Transportation Committee Meeting – Marty Toyen reported that he has asked for a meeting with the chairmen of the Transportation Committee to discuss dredging needs, the draft Harbor Improvement Fund legislation and other related CTMC matters. However, his calls have not been returned.

New Haven Port Authority Presentation - Michael Piscatelli, a City of New Haven planner, works as staff to the newly formed New Haven Port Authority. Michael made a short presentation to the CTMC resulting in his asking for support from the CTMC on an issue related to CONNDOT's use of some "port" property in conjunction with the Q Bridge project.

CONNDOT has taken (purchased) an approximate 2-3 acre parcel of land formerly owned by Coastline at 201 Waterfront Street (bounded by Waterfront, Alabama, Stiles and the new Waterfront Connector) within the New Haven Port District. A warehouse building sits on the parcel and will be demolished to allow CONNDOT to use the parcel as a waste storage facility (WSF) over the next 10 years for materials associated with the Q Bridge project. It was stated that an existing WSF at Long Wharf will be relocated to this new site to reduce costs to the CONNDOT/Q-Bridge project. The parcel at 201 Waterfront Street is prime "lay-down area" for the facility operators due to the proximity to the port facilities as well as being adjacent to the newly established rail line to the port.

The NHPA and the City of New Haven have tried to convince the CONNDOT project managers to "trade parcels" within the port district without success. At a recently held NHPA meeting, the CONNDOT Q-Bridge Project Manager stated that the decision on relocating the WSF has been raised to the "highest levels within CONNDOT", or words to that affect.

Upon conclusion of Michael Piscatelli's presentation, a motion was made, seconded and carried (8 in the affirmative, 1 abstention) for the Chairman of the CTMC to write a letter to the CONNDOT Commissioner asking for reconsideration on the decision to use 201 Waterfront Street as the WSF. The argument should address that although 201 Waterfront may be the most cost efficient for CONNDOT, not allowing the NHPA to use the parcel for port operations will have a negative economic impact to the port, the City, the region and perhaps the State far exceeding the benefits to the CONNDOT Q Bridge project.

Dave Shuda Stated that Coastline had sent a letter to the CONNDOT Commissioner which raised the issue and offered an alternative site within the north port district as an alternative. There was some additional discussion relative to the potential economic impact to the port facility operators as well as an offer from DECD for assistance should the WSF location be moved.

- Pending Maritime Related Legislation – Chuck Beck pointed out that several maritime related pieces of legislation have been introduced to the current session of the CT legislature. In addition of the dredging bills (SB 852 and HB 7070) previously discussed, attention was drawn to SB 514, HB 5213, HB 6558, HB 5463, Raised Bill 7125and, Raised Bill 7184. Copies were included in the handouts.
- Errata – Dave Shuda provided an update on the potential move of the Turbana fruit importation operation form Bridgeport to another port. He stated that Turbana had reduced the possibilities to three ports: Philadelphia PA, Wilmington DE and a port in CT (Bridgeport, New Haven or New London). Dave stated that there are approximately 180 truck loads of product that arrive Bridgeport via Turbana vessels every week. Approximately 75% of the trucks travel north to delivery the product to market. If Turbana were to relocate to Philadelphia or Wilmington, approximately 85% of the trucks would still travel north through the SW corridor of CT to deliver to the same markets. There was additional discussion related to the factors being considered by Turbana. The limited draft of Bridgeport harbor, the potential diversion of vessels form the Montauk Pilot boarding station to Point Judith during heavy weather and various CT regulations perceived add costs to conducting business in the state were provided as an example of factors. Joe Maco opined that there is a conflict between the State and the local port authorities at times.

Marty Toyen announced that John Johnson had been replaced by Robert Virgulak as a member of the Maritime Commission by the House Minority Leader, Representative Cafero. He further recommended that all members of the CTMC appointed by an elected official should contact their respective sponsor to determine their status.

VI Date of Next Meeting:

- Marty Toyen reminded all that the next meeting of the CTMC is scheduled at 9:30 AM **Wednesday** 21 March 2007 at the South Central Region Council of Governments (SCRCOG) office located at 127 Washington Avenue in North Haven, CT.

VII. Adjournment:

- A motion was made by Chuck Beck, seconded by George Wisker and approved unanimously to adjourn. The meeting ended at 12:04 PM.