

Summary of Meeting 10
Citizens Advisory Committee
Greenwich Bay Special Area Management Plan
Wednesday, February 18, 2004 6:30-8:30 PM
Recreational Use
Warwick Sewer Authority, RI

At the tenth meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee for the Greenwich Bay SAMP, group discussion about Greenwich Bay recreational uses focused largely on challenges and opportunities concerning the reuse of bay dredge spoils for the renourishment of eroded local beaches. Discussion also focused on marina expansion and the cumulative impact of this growth coupled with mooring field and private dock growth. CAC members continued to reiterate the need for a clearly defined contact list for a full range of safety, administrative and environmental issues regarding Greenwich Bay, as it remains difficult and frustrating to locate the correct person, agency or office to address these issues.

Overview of the Recreational Use Chapter

Mike Campana, of the URI Coastal Resources Center/R.I. Sea Grant, spoke briefly about the trends, issues and goals regarding recreational use of Greenwich Bay (see handout). To further illustrate the presence of various uses on and around the bay, Megan Higgins, of the R.I. Coastal Resources Management Council, presented a computer mapping model that may be of assistance to the CAC as it develops recommendations for recreational use of the bay and its shoreline.

Municipal Recreational Overviews

Municipal representatives from East Greenwich and Warwick presented information about current and future recreation projects that involve the bay or its shoreline. William Sequino, town manager of East Greenwich, said there are a number of public access points along the town's waterfront, but many lack parking. He described the facilities along the waterfront, including the town's upgraded wastewater plant, and said that a state ferry dock will be available for public use. He also described an in-process town plan to reuse a waterfront landfill for a park, and efforts to create a bike path that would enable users to cycle to Warwick and North Kingstown. Michael Rooney, director of the Warwick Parks & Recreation Department, said that the city is developing an increased mooring fee structure to boost funding for the municipal harbormaster program. He also spoke about the need to renourish eroded city beaches, and reported that city laws allow duck hunting at some shoreline areas, including Buttonwoods Beach. He said ATVs and jet skis pose increasing public safety problems. Rooney's presentation drew questions from CAC members about the burgeoning need for a strengthened harbormaster program, which office should house the program, resident and non-resident mooring fees, and whether the city can use local dredge spoils to renourish municipal beaches.

Understanding the Issues and Identifying Solutions

Ron Gagnon, a dredging specialist from the state Department of Environmental Management, described DEM procedures for participation in dredging projects. Discussion by the CAC at this point revolved around several major topics: Exploring opportunities to reuse local dredge spoils for beach renourishment projects within Greenwich Bay; developing an information clearinghouse so bay residents have direct access to accountable bay-related public, safety, business, administrative, boating and recreational offices and personnel; developing an assessment process that can monitor and evaluate the cumulative impacts of marina, mooring and dock project expansions, and creating appropriate guidelines and SAMP recommendations to enable state and local government to work together to determine whether potential expansion projects are appropriate for the health of the bay and the well-being of people who live on it or near it.

CAC Recommendations

- ? Place the Warwick harbormaster office under the local police
- ? Develop a full contact list of local, state and federal personnel and offices overseeing bay safety, environment, business, administration and recreation concerns – among others.
- ? Increase mooring fees
- ? Implement harbormaster training
- ? Adjust mooring fields to reflect navigational routes
- ? Develop public safety guidelines for jetskis and habitat protection guidelines for ATVs
- ? Make more boat ramps handicapped accessible
- ? Develop a process to enable the use of local dredge spoils for local beach renourishment projects.
- ? Develop buildout analysis of cumulative environmental, safety, economic and aesthetic impacts of all existing and potential marina, private dock, parking and mooring fields expansions on the bay and its shoreline.
- ? Evaluate the pluses and minuses of implementing off-site parking programs and boat-stacking practices for marinas and public access points.
- ? Create a “sand budget” for the bay to facilitate beach nourishment discussions.
- ? Enlist the DEM to evaluate beach renourishment sediment criteria.
- ? Create and restore wetlands with clean local dredge spoils.
- ? Emphasize limiting or reconfiguring marinas within current limits rather than permitting new expansion.
- ? Study federal guidelines to see how the government deals with infringements on navigational channels.
- ? Implement noise nuisance guidelines.
- ? Use public access sites to identify recreational use areas.
- ? Add more hard data to recreational use chapter.
- ? Have CAC attend Warwick Sewer Authority meetings.

- ? Ensure that the island park system reinstates camping and end restrictions on activities that were part of the original park mandate.
- ? Ensure DEM has the authority to enforce DEM regulations in the coastal zone.
- ? Explore whether DEM can assist/assume harbormaster duties and enforcement role.
- ? Create new beach closure signs.

Next Meeting

The CAC will meet next on Wednesday, March 3 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the Warwick Sewer Authority. The meeting will include a presentation by the Narragansett Indian Tribe and next steps for the SAMP.

Attendees

Public

Jerry Meyer, East Greenwich Chamber of Commerce
 John Williams, Warwick Cove Marina
 Leo Martin, Harbor Light Marina
 Leah Robinson, Buttonwoods Bay Commission
 Bill Bergan, RI Shellfishermans Association
 Ron Gagnon, RI Department of Environmental Management
 David Richardson, Chipiwanoxet Neighborhood Association
 Carol Fritz, CTPA
 Michael Tikoian, RI Coastal Resources Management Council
 Lauren Slocum, Central Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce

Lincoln Ross, CTPA
 Bob Moeller, RI Saltwater Anglers Association
 Karen Way, BBGC
 Michael Rooney, Warwick
 Michelle Komar, Warwick
 Ralph Bozzi, Narragansett Bay Watch
 Elaine Trench

Management Staff & Technical Committee

Michael Tikoian, CRMC Chair
 David Abegdon, CRMC Council
 Grover Fugate, CRMC Ex. Director
 Virginia Lee, URI Coastal Resources Center
 Glenn Ricci, URI CRC
 Sue Kennedy, URI CRC
 Michael Campana, URI CRC