

**Notes from the Nantucket/Madaket Harbor Planning Public Meeting
29 August 2005.
Siasconset Casino**

Between 45 – 50 people in attendance for at least part of the meeting.

The purpose of this first public meeting on the update of the 1993 Nantucket and Madaket Harbors Action Plan was to introduce the planning process, the consultant team, and the schedule, and to solicit input on the issues of the harbors to be addressed through the plan update.

Presenters:

David Fronzuto, Nantucket Marine Superintendent
Jack Wiggin, Steve Bliven, Sarah Oktay, John Duff, Chris Sweeney of the University of Massachusetts Boston. Rich Delaney of the Horsley Witten Group.

Dave Fronzuto introduced the harbor plan update process, providing a number of relevant facts:

- In 1989 there were 800 moorings, and that there are now 3100; :
- Nantucket has received several Coastal Pollution Remediation (CPR) grants;
- The Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan came out of the 1993 Harbor Plan
- Commercial scallop licenses have fluctuated between 150 to 450 at the peak of harvesting, now we cannot support 400 licenses (more like 150).
- Nantucket is awaiting the Estuaries Report (SMAST <http://www.mass.gov/dep/smerp/esttmdls.htm>) which is expected to produce TMDL numbers for Nantucket and Madaket Harbors.

Jack Wiggin, Director of the Urban Harbors Institute, University of Massachusetts Boston introduced the members of the consultant team and discussed the purpose and scope of the harbor planning process (see PowerPoint file link on home page for “Nantucket 8-29-05 public meeting presentation”). He then opened the meeting up for public comment, questions, and discussion.

The following is a summary of the comments, questions, and issues raised during the meeting, grouped by topic:

Process:

- Regarding the review of the 1993 plan to be done by the consultants: how will the review be done? Who will decide whether an action item has been satisfactorily completed? Where/when will the public be able to provide its input into the decision as to whether the action items have been completed?
- There should be an assessment of why the various aspects of the 1993 Harbor Plan were not completed or implemented.
- The process of preparing the Harbor Plan should clearly describe the benefits/detriments of a locally-approved plan vs. a state-approved plan.
- Who in the community will be reviewing the drafts of the Harbor Plan? Will this be staff driven or will there be an opportunity for public review?

- It was suggested that the town web site might be good mechanism to disseminate draft material and to receive comments.
- What is the time-frame for preparation of the plan? Response was that it is intended to have material available for the Annual Town Meeting, preferably by the end of the calendar year.
- Another process question: who will determine the priority among future uses?
- It should be the role of the Harbor Planning effort to identify issues and offer technical solutions for the Town to decide on.
- The 1993 Plan is organized in sections around various issues. The new plan would be most useful if it, too, was organized by topic.
- It would be useful if the public meetings are organized around specific topics.
- Once the plan is developed, what will be the mechanism for getting the drafts and discussion out to the public, and how can comments be incorporated?
- There should be a defined process for the nature of the meetings and how they will function.
- The planning process should not be staff-driven; their agenda may not be the same as that of the public.
- There should be a meeting (or meetings) specific to Madaket Harbor so that issues specific to that harbor don't get "lost".
- Could the public meetings be video-taped and shown on the local cable channel?
- It is not clear what level of approval the 1993 Harbor Plan reached.
- Process: There should be a method defined for the receipt and review of comments on specific issues or wording.
- Process: The contractors should attend a meeting of the Board of Selectmen to brief them on the nature of the project and the progress and expected results.

Implementation:

- Once the plan is developed, there needs to be considerable follow-up by way of education in order to get the various recommendations implemented and change behavior of harbor users.
- The plan will only be as good as the regulations it leads to.
- When the plan is nearing completion, there should be a section developed on education to let the public know the options for implementation.

Water Quality:

- Duck dung (DD) in the Consue Springs area may be a health problem. Additionally there are stormwater runoff pipes in the area adding to the problem. People were referred to a 2005 report by Earth Tech for additional background information.
- Related to water quality, there are "organics" going into the harbor. What are the impacts and how can they be managed? The consultant team indicated that this issue is too broad to be handled effectively through a harbor plan, - but that the planning effort could review what has been done, what is currently in the pipeline, and emphasize the importance of maintaining and improving water quality for

harbor uses. The Director of the Health Department noted that the Town is in the process of dealing with this issue.

- Are there toxic impacts from the use of engines on boats? How will this be addressed? The consultant team noted that the Harbor Planning effort will look at overall water quality but will not be able to do water quality analysis and planning.
- What are the links between fertilizers from the massive lawns being planted along the harbor and how does this relate to the impacts from DD?

Natural Resource Protection:

- The plan should address the issue of invasive species (*Phragmites sp.*) in Madaket Harbor.

Commercial and Recreational Fishing:

- The plan should address issues related to scalloping; over-harvesting and defining a sustainable yield.

Harbor Safety, Navigation and Moorings:

(No specific comments were made on this topic)

Public Access:

- There is a need for greater public access to the shore.

Tourism and Recreation:

(No specific comments were made on this topic)

Downtown Waterfront District:

- One of the recommendations of the prior harbor plan that has never been accomplished is waterfront zoning. This allowed the Yacht Club proposal and can limit what could be done if the tank farm or waterfront parcels are proposed for development.
- It is important to identify the historic high tide line for the purposes of Chapter 91 (DEP waterways licensing) decisions. It was noted that the MCZM office has funded an effort to identify the historic high water lines around the coast of the state but it is not clear where Nantucket stands in this process. The consultant team will check this as part of the planning effort.
- Docks and piers – presently there is a moratorium on docks in the RC zoning district and a prohibition against new or increased docks on the rest of the island. The moratorium is expected to last for another year or so. The Harbor Plan should address related issues such as: Where should docks go? What mechanism should be used to manage them? Where there should be a separate by-law just for docks?
- The harbor is a Harbor of Refuge. However, with the potential loss of the boatyard it is not clear how boats will be hauled in a timely manner prior to a storm. This needs to be balanced with waterfront development interests.

- There should be an inventory of the C. 91 licenses issued for the harbor and any public benefits attached to them. The consultant team reported they have already obtained copies from DEP of most of the licenses and would analyze/summarize them.
- An important aspect of the harbor is its historic nature. This should be recognized as a harbor use and incorporated into the Harbor Planning effort.