

Zoning board: home boat building is an island tradition

Temporary structure to house boat allowed on Plymouth Road

By Michaela Kennedy

At the June 27 meeting, the Zoning Board of Review voted 4-1, to allow Philip Steggal permission to erect a temporary structure to shelter a 39-foot trimaran racing boat he plans to construct on his property at 43 Plymouth Rd.

Steggal explained his boat-building plan to the board, adding that he planned to launch the sailboat upon its completion. He also explained a process of applying epoxy during the construction. "It's done under a vacuum bag so there would be no exposure to the smell of styrene," he said.

Board member Richard Boren asked if Steggal would agree to a "sunset" provision. After a set time period, the applicant must pull down the structure "whether or not you've finished with the boat, unless you come back to the board and ask for an extension and explain why you need the extra time," Boren said.

Zoning Board Chairman Thomas Ginnerty noted that the

project seemed to be an industrial use on a residential property. "On the one hand, it provides an economic convenience to you. It will impact your neighbors at large," he said.

He complained that the site had "a cramped, crowded look." He pointed out the toys and swings he saw at the next-door neighbor's property.

Steggal said he visited the neighbors to find out how they felt about the boat construction.

"They understand it's for personal use. This is not a commercial venture. I've built boats in the past, worked on other people's boats. No one spoke anything but encouragement for the project," he noted.

Ginnerty repeated that he did not think it was an appropriate site for the construction. "If the neighbors had come forward with you, I might view it differently," he said, adding, "I can speak as a resident, and I know I wouldn't want it going up next to me."

Steggal noted he had a strict budget for the project, and if he had to pay storage fees on a different site, the project probably would not happen. "I travel a lot. I want to be able to work on the

boat, and I also wanted to make sure I had time and money to do this," Steggal said.

Boren pointed out no one was at the meeting to object. He reminded the board of another applicant on Intrepid Lane. "We allowed someone to build a larger than regular size (structure) for the purpose of building a boat," he said.

Steggal noted that his neighbors offered to come to the meeting in his support, but he told them he did not feel it was necessary. He also noted that he would be contracting the work to a boat builder in Maine. "Some of the work will be done on site and some will be done in Maine," he added.

No one in the audience spoke in support or denial of the application.

Boren said if there were objectors present, he would have a different opinion. "Boating has been active and customary here for years and years and years," he said in support of the application.

Wineberg moved to approve Steggal's application, with some restrictions.

Reading the motion, he said the project "may not release noticeable vapors, shall face westward, and shall expire after 21 months" unless the owner appeared before the board again with an explanation of why he might need an extension of time. Wineberg explained that the house was on the south side of the property. "Exhaust fans, if they

are on the north side they'll face the house, and if they're on the west side they'll face the Dumpster," he said. The motion included a 21-month restriction to the temporary structure, an 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. limit on working hours, and off-site parking for the boat builders.

In findings of fact, Wineberg noted that the property was in a residential R8 zone. He also noted that the applicant independently notified neighbors, who were supportive. "Jamestown has a long history of restoring boats," Wineberg said in support of the application.

Ginnerty repeated his list of reasons why he opposed the project.

Wineberg asked Ginnerty whether the fact that a man could do the same thing with a smaller boat as a matter of right was enough to change his mind. Ginnerty stood firm in his opinion, and later voted against Steggal's request.

Board member Joseph Logan agreed with Wineberg's point, adding, "In this case, he has to remove it, whereas others are there indefinitely."

Board member Dean Wagner found no fault with the short-term project. "The fact that there are no objectors and it's a temporary structure" were in its favor, he added.

Commissioner Raymond Iannetta was absent, keeping a consistent record of no-shows for the year.

History of island's first responders on exhibit at Jamestown Museum

The Jamestown Museum opened for the summer season on Wednesday, June 28, with a new exhibit featuring the Jamestown Fire Department and Jamestown Emergency Medical Services.

The "Jamestown's Volunteers: Our Fire and Rescue Teams" exhibit was organized by Brookie Harding for the Jamestown Historical Society with the support and co-operation of Ken Caswell, a fire department volunteer and curator of the Jamestown Fire Department Memorial Museum, and Cheryl Serpa of JEMS.

Equipment used and uniforms worn by the volunteers over the past 100 years are on display along with pictures of early fire engines, pumpers, hose carts, and ambulances. Famous fires and rescues are chronicled in photographs, many from the Jamestown Historical Society's collection of over 5,000 photographs of island life. The fire department and JEMS have each loaned the museum a set of the protective gear currently worn, bringing their history up to the present day.

In addition, the permanent exhibit in the museum's Ferry Room displays models, pictures, maps, and operating gear from the ferries that connected the island to neighboring communities before the bridges were built.

The museum, at 92 Narragansett Ave., across from the Town Hall, is open Wednesday through Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m. through Sept. 3.

Visits at times the museum would not normally be open can be arranged. E-mail jhs@jamestownri.com at least one week prior to the requested time, or by calling the museum at 423-0784.



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Teen activities calendars available around town

The Jamestown Teen Center's summer calendar is now available for all teens to check out what is going on this summer.

Many trips and activities are planned for July and August, including roller skating, Go-carting, Adventureland, movie nights, a Paw Sox game, and a trip to Six Flags Adventure Park.

The Teen Center will be open most Wednesdays from 2 to 6 p.m. and the Community Center will also be open several Friday afternoons for basketball, pool, and Ping-Pong. These days are July 7 and 14 and Aug. 4 and 11 from 2 to 6 p.m. Calendars are available at the Jamestown library, Baker's Pharmacy, and the Community Center. To register for trips or for more information contact Melissa Minto at 741-0562 or e-mail jamestownteens@yahoo.com.

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