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Thursday, June 28, 2007

Council sites highway garage at Taylor Point

Referendum set for Aug. 28

By Tom Shevlin

Island residents will finally have the opportunity to approve the location of the town's controversial highway barn project.

After more than two decades, one failed referendum, and countless debates, the town council voted in a split 3-2 decision Monday in favor of locating the town's new highway barn facility adjacent to the Newport Bridge on upper Taylor Point.

The council's decision, which

is subject to approval by voters in a referendum slated for Tuesday, Aug. 28, came during a meeting that drew a standing room only crowd of over 70 island residents.

Three council members favored the Taylor Point property over Lot 47, which abuts the town's transfer station on North Main Road: Council President David Long, Vice President Julio DiGiando, and Barbara Szepatowski. Councilors William Kelly and Michael Schnack voted in favor of the Lot 47 proposal.

The Taylor Point property, See "Garage" on page 11

Council takes up East Ferry pier improvements

By Tom Shevlin

Town Council members tried to come to grips with the ongoing dispute over use of the town's wood pile pier at East Ferry on Monday.

According to reports, the wood pile pier measured 167 feet when it was first built with federal funds in 1974 for public outdoor recreation. Because it was built with federal funding, the town is required to provide equal access to all users. Since then, it has been used to serve fishermen, pedestrians and transient recreational boaters. An expansion of 140 feet in the 1980s also did not place limits on users. However, since then, additional boat, pedestrian, and fishing traffic has caused issues between users, with each group claiming the other

infringes on the pier space.

Councilor Barbara Szepatowski said there may never be enough space to satisfy everyone. "We could build from here to Newport and not have enough space," she said.

Vice President Julio DiGiando also expressed his concern over the high cost of a proposal received by the town in February to make improvements to the East Ferry facility, which could reach as high as \$284,000. Councilor William Kelly agreed and suggested that Department of Public Works personnel examine the pier complex to determine what, if any, improvements could be made independently by the town.

See "Pier" on page 11

The Tall Ships are here!



Brazil's Cisne Branco was at anchor at Taylor Point Tuesday evening, while waiting for a berth in Newport Harbor. Photos by Don Miller

Parade of Sail tops weekend events

By Sam Bari

The tall ships started arriving early in the week for the 2007 Tall Ships Festival, scheduled for June 28 to 30. The highlight will be the Parade of Sail on Sunday, July 1, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. Jamestown offers an abundance of excellent locations along the East Passage for spectacular views of the long-anticipated event.

This year, 22 ships will participate in the four-day festival and parade. Ships came from as far away as India, Indonesia, the Cook Islands, Brazil, Columbia and Germany.

Sunday's parade will be led by Rhode Island's own Providence, a 110-foot square topsail sloop, followed by the impressive Cisne Branco from the Brazilian Navy. The 254-foot, steel hulled clipper ship carries 23,627 square feet of sail, has more than a 34-foot beam and a 15-foot, 9-inch draft. Equally impressive is the 267-foot Gorch Foch II, a three-mast barque from Kiel, Germany, as well as the 249-foot Gloria, another three-mast bark that sailed from Colombia.



On the day of the parade, the ships will start getting underway at 9 a.m. and will proceed to a staging area south of Brenton Point where they will take their respective positions for the Parade of Sail. They will proceed northward up the East

Turn to page 14 for more on the Tall Ships including information on the parade of sail and where to view it. Parking and shuttle service information is also provided.



Junior businessmen

Nick Klassner and Connor Smith, both 7, ran a lemonade stand last weekend at East Ferry. With them are Ben Smith, 3 and customer Logan Ray, 1 1/2.

Photo by Vic Richardson