

Riparian moorings not counted as part of island mooring fields

By Sam Bari

The commissioners voted unanimously at the Nov. 12 Harbor Management Commission meeting to follow current regulations and not count riparian moorings as part of mooring fields. A riparian mooring is one that is deeded with property rights to land owners. The vote included a decision to issue up to four permits in right-of-way access areas where riparian moorings are permitted.

Meghan Brescia of 19 Seaview Ave. represented herself and her husband Lenny in an appeal for re-consideration of their July 8 denial of a mooring. Harbor-master Sam Paterson had denied the mooring although they were deeded a right-of-way access mooring in an area where only three riparian moorings were in use.

According to Harbor Commission Chairman Mike de Angeli, the ruling at the time was in accordance with a Coastal Resource Management Council (CRMC) request to not grant any more moorings until the regulations had been reviewed and an ordinance written concerning riparian moorings.

"A request for an up-to-date ruling was made nearly three years ago, and they have yet to make a decision so we can write the ordinance," de Angeli said.

Since the July 8 Brescia denial, CRMC Marine Resources Specialist Kevin Cute advised the commission in an Aug. 27 letter

to follow the rules as written in the current ordinance. Cute also visited the commission Sept. 17 and he said he would go back to CRMC and get a clarification on the issue as quickly as possible.

De Angeli said that the commission decided to proceed with caution and continue to refrain from granting additional moorings until CRMC came back with a decision. However, riparian rights deed holders argued that the current regulation allows four riparian moorings and they were being denied their rights.

Town Solicitor Peter Ruggiero said that the commission was within its rights to follow the current ordinance, and that they could overturn the decision to deny the Brescias their mooring.

After weighing the matter, the commissioners unanimously voted to grant the appeal and issue Lenny and Meghan Brescia a mooring permit. De Angeli also instructed Executive Director Thomas Tighe to get in touch with John Sahagian who was denied a mooring at Mackerel Cove for the same reason. Sahagian was contacted and told that his mooring permit would be approved for the 2009 season.

In a different case, William Brennan of 238 Narragansett Ave. decided not to appeal his case concerning conflict with his mooring. He said he would install new tackle to bring the mooring up to specifications for his new boat since it is 3-feet longer than the one being replaced. Harbor-

master Paterson explained that there is room at the mooring, but he might have to move a little one way or another to make sure there is adequate space between boats.

In the executive director's report, Tighe said that the inflatable harbor-master's boat was taken to Ribcraft, the manufacturer, for normal maintenance. He said that Ribcraft will store the vessel inside for the winter and that he would arrange for the boat to be picked up and commissioned for work next spring. He also said that the pumpouts have been winterized at East Ferry.

Facilities Committee Chairman Robert Bowen reported that progress had been made concerning the steel pier at East Ferry. Town Engineer Mike Gray is waiting for paperwork, he said. "As soon as the insurance forms are completed they will start work," Bowen said. He added that he expects to have the cost estimates for the wood pile pier some time in December.

Chairman de Angeli reported that the Ft. Getty Master Plan Committee met two weeks ago after discussing a sailing program with representatives from Sail Newport. "They want to construct a building. It's a complicated proposal, but I think it can be worked out. We're just trying to figure out what the major issues are so we can make some decisions," de Angeli said.



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