

Minutes of Duxbury Bay Management Commission, February 14, 2008

Present were: Ned Lawson, Shawn Dahlen, Jack Kent, John Brawley, Don Merry and Joe Messina

Not Present were: Corey Wisneski, Emmet Sheehan and John Carnuccio

Draft Aquaculture Plan

Ned Lawson addressed some of his comments on the most recent draft of the aquaculture management plan. Ned Lawson stated that there were good policy arguments expressed for expanding amount of existing leases. There was discussion with respect to whether there was sufficient information to justify the limited entry policy that would exclude new licensees. It was discussed that good arguments in support of such a policy included the three year classes of oysters, the economic realities of new growers, and the need to attempt to limit other impact on bay users by limiting the number of new boats and increased use of town ramps that might arise from a significant increase in the number of license holders. It was discussed that the periodic review process for license holders could examine whether particular licensees are in fact engaged in aquaculture. If such review revealed that licenses were not utilized, such licenses could be opened up to new entrants. It was agreed that the viable periodic review of existing license holders would be an essential part of the limited entry fishery proposed. Jack Kent then raised specific comments on the draft. Jack Kent raised the issue of the legality of limiting shellfish licenses to only town residents. It was discussed that such a restriction is already a part of the rules and regulations of the Shellfish Advisory Committee with respect to aquaculture licenses and that most towns with commercial aquaculture have similar restrictions. It was discussed that the draft plan recommends the use of Town lands where possible store aquaculture equipment. Jack Kent raised the issue that possible use of such lands for storage should also be considered in addressing a hurricane management plan.

The discussion then turned to the next steps in the process to finalize the draft. It was agreed that the draft would be circulated by the Chairman to the other interested town boards (as well as the East Coast Shellfish Growers Assoc., the Massachusetts Aquaculture Assoc. and the Duxbury Shellfish Growers Assoc.) to solicit comments. Comments will be requested prior to March 6, 2008.

Winter Safety

Ned Lawson noted that Don Beers and Jake Emerson would be attending the next meeting to address the issue of winter safety on the bay. Don Merry discussed the possibility of a drill at the Percy Walker Pool with the Harbormaster so that participants can drill on how to survive in the water while wearing hip waders. It was also discussed that there needs to be coordination between the Fire Department, Police and the Harbormaster's office so that 911 calls from bay users or relating to bay emergencies are directed to the appropriate responder. Don Merry reported that that system has recently been clarified and the necessary protocols for dispatching for an emergency on the water have been distributed.

Bay Outreach Guide

John Brawley discussed the need for a public education guide on how to navigate and handle safety on the bay in or around aquaculture areas. John Brawley has applied for a small grant from the Southern Massachusetts Aquaculture Center for such a guide on behalf of the Duxbury Shellfish Growers Assoc. It was discussed that there is a need for an overall bay safety guide that would cover all bay safety and navigational issues. It was agreed that such a guide would be desirable, however, acquiring funding for such a guide could be difficult.

Cordage Marina Project

John Brawley raised the issue of a proposed development of a 300 slip marina at Cordage Park in Plymouth. An environmental impact statement for the landside development has been filed with DEP. A water focused environmental impact statement should be filed shortly that should address all water related issues. It was agreed that the DBMC should examine the statement and should make comments.

Water Quality Study Group

Ned Lawson raised the composition of the water quality study group. Ned Lawson has invited Don Gunster to attend this meeting, but he was unable to attend. It was agreed that such a group should continue its work in obtaining and analyzing historic and present water quality data and arriving on particular areas of focus, and perhaps report annually on the state of water quality on the bay. It was agreed that such work is very important, however, obtaining funding could be a problem. It was discussed that the water quality study group should be comprised of John Brawley, Emmet Sheehan, Corey Wisneski, Joe Grady and, perhaps, Don Gunster.

New Business

As a matter of new business, Don Merry raised the issue of moorings. He inquired if there was a written or informal plan for mooring, both in the basin and throughout other parts of the bay. He inquired as to how conflicts in various uses of the bay and mooring are being handled. Don Merry agreed to investigate and report back at the next meeting.

By: _____

Clerk pro tem