

To the Parks and Recreation Committee - and the Board of Representatives

I'm a "Clam Digger" which means I was born and raised on City Island, on the Long Island Sound waterfront. I paid my way through school working on the waterfront from City Island to Maine, but Stamford provided a great deal of work, opportunity and access to competitive sailing and fishing. I worked as a professional captain, sailor, rigger on and off for almost 40 years and have delivered boats through, used or worked in a large number of marinas, yacht yards, yacht clubs and town municipal docks over this period throughout the Northeast.

I feel I have a reasonable knowledge of the acceptable marine practices, policies, and protocols, although they may differ from place to place.

We moved here in large part because of what we saw as the inherent character of the waterfront City of Stamford and its marine heritage, great access to the water and a social responsibility of that ownership. We have now been residents/homeowners here for over 17 years.

For almost 10 years, I have leased berth from the City of Stamford at Cove Island Marina, as we live very close to it and it has, in the past, provided us with fast and almost unfettered access to Long Island Sound.

I have a 27' fishing boat which draws less than 3ft (is only 36" below the surface at its deepest point) this is considered shallow by any standard for a power boat this size.

When I first berthed at Cove Island, the slips and my slip were already in dis-repair. My marina neighbors with many years of history at the dock relayed the understanding that we were "on our own" when it came to maintenance and repair of the slips. We would have to do our own surveying of the condition of our assigned slip and conduct repairs to prepare the slip for safe docking of our boats before using the slip for the first time, and, every year after.

My first slip had a cost of approximately \$526 for the season plus my cost of repair and maintenance to the slip I was assigned. Sometimes, a few new pieces of wood decking were required and/or new cleats to be installed on the dock. Other times more serious frame repair would be

required to keep the dock a tight stable and safe anchor for our boats through the season. On the whole, I accepted the condition because it was close to my home which is a dream and the price was within reason.

Currently, although I have a slightly larger boat than the last, this year's lease for my slip is \$1646.56 plus a \$100 late fee I will incur because I will be paying after February 15th and will only get my slip back "if there is availability" (meaning the City has the right to call everyone on the waiting list for a space before granting my slip back to me).

I reached out to a City of Stamford Head of Operations quite some time ago, well in advance of February 23rd, to try to collectively work out a solution to the current problems.

We currently are losing over half our access to and from Cove Island Marina. I received a responsive return call, spoke with the city official regarding dispensation, or the opportunity to give up the inaccessible slip and get it back once the slip becomes usable, I was told they would look into it and get right back to me. I have not had a response since.

Most importantly and explicitly, in regard to the cost of the lease of these slips: access to Long Island sound has been cut by more than half of our usable time because the Marina entrance, at the west end of Cove Island Beach, has been blocked by fallen sand from a man-made, overbuilt, beach dune. The storm surges have knocked the sand down into the entrance way. Now the entrance has less than 1 foot of water at an average low tide (See attached photos and video). Not even the smallest boats in the marina are able to navigate through this entrance within a 1-3 hour swing of each average ebb tide.

The length of affected space is from the inside of the Marina entrance and leading to the Sound channel is approximately less than 200 feet of mostly sand. This is what mainly causes the inaccessibility between the Marina and the channel to Long Island Sound within 2-3hours on each side of every low tide for most boats in the marina.

Most of the harbors along Connecticut haven't been dredged in over 80 years, so they are all naturally a bit silted in. Most of the harbors require dredging. I understand there is something in the works and it is possible

that permits already exist to undertake these operations sometime in the future. I have made many attempts to be kept informed by city workers and officials. Yet we feel there has been a meaningful effort to keep information from us. We have been unable to get any information from those contacted on plans so that I can make an intelligent decision on what is in our best interest of our time, money and safety.

There are 2 low tides every day and the tide turns every 5 hours and 50 Minutes, which makes tides hour sooner every day. So, if a boater is trying to get out on the water after work, or over the weekend, the window to go out for a few hours and come back in at a convenient time a constantly moving target. Add foul weather to the equation and the odds of access go down further.

At the time we first leased a slip, the docks had electricity and fresh water and it was my understood those utilities to be a component service of the lease. We lost the power several years ago(Sandy?) and it has yet to be restored. Not having power is not merely inconvenient, it is unsafe, as the docks are unlit at night. This also adds cost and difficulty for the owners as power is required for maintenance, servicing and/or emergency service to the boats and the slips. At minimum, there should be power to the bottom of the landing of any dock ramp.

There is no security. The gates are generally broken and considering the parking lot is used into the wee hours, there are routinely break-ins to the boats, and of course, there is no video camera for the entire marina(Safety issue) nor all of the Cove Island Park complex.

Please consider the marine heritage of this incredible shorefront community and work with the residence who pay and devote time to the a lifestyle along Long Island Sound.

I would like to know the following:

1. Will the City give a rebate to the cost of the slip commensurate with the loss of access in and out of the Marina?

2. Can I move my boat elsewhere until the channel is cleared and return to my slip without losing my slip in writing?
3. What is the precise status of the permitting for dredging and scheduling the Cove Island Marina entrance?
4. What is the budget, schedule and timing of the repair to the marina?
5. What FEMA monies have been received by the City of Stamford due to storms Sandy and/or Katrina?
6. How much of those funds were used or set aside for repairs to the West end of the beach (Marina entrance) and to Cove Island Marina?
7. I have been told that I could move my boat to Czescik's Marina, at an even higher cost and adding some 30 minutes of idling to access the Sound on each trip. Even more importantly, it is also shallow at low tide and no slips are available that are not shallow at low tide. I have personally checked into this.
8. How much income is derived from paying Cove Island Marina paying members?
9. How much money has been spent on maintenance over the past 5 years. I would appreciate a proper breakdown of the expenses?
10. What are "Dockmaster", "Jimmy's" correct job title and responsibilities?
11. What is Sean Elumba's correct job title and responsibilities?
12. What is the city responsibilities of the City of Stamford for safety of the marina and the members?

Very Sincerely,

Myles Scherr
City of Stamford Resident

















