

From George Stadel, Stamford Taxpayers PAC

I have been involved in the boat business all my life as a boat designer and builder, and for two years as a marina manager. I don't know the particulars of the proposed improvements to the Cummings Park marina but I do know that \$1.75million is excessive. There are several things to consider:

First, the only reason for a city to be in the marina business is to provide docks for those who otherwise couldn't afford them. A city marina cannot possibly compete with private marinas in providing services or amenities, nor should it. If you spend this much money on improvements and expect it to be paid by increased dock fees, you will be eliminating many of the only people you should be considering. It is the same as improving a baseball or soccer field, then keeping out the ordinary public who formerly used it because they are not part of an organization with liability insurance and a city permit. Do not take the public out of the public marina as Stamford has been taking the public out of public parks.

Second, in these times Stamford taxpayers cannot afford to spend money on discretionary capital projects. Years of overspending must stop.

Third, this project, like so many others Stamford has in the pipeline, must be examined in detail. The brief description in the capital budget is inadequate to make a reasoned judgment. The capital budget mentions only 4 items:

- The docks need to be replaced. The docks do not seem to be dangerous. Recent repairs seem to be good. They should not be replaced at this time. There is a wide range of prices for floating docks so when the time comes to replace them low cost docks should be chosen and there should be at least two bids.
- The docks have no water. That is not true. There is water on the docks. It is not necessary for a city marina to have a water outlet at each finger dock. A spigot within 90 feet of each boat is adequate and the docks already have that.
- The docks have no electricity. It would be a useful improvement to have electricity on the docks. Like the water, within 90 feet of each boat is adequate for these small city docks.
- The bubbler system needs to be replaced. No marina in this part of the country uses bubbler systems anymore. For Long Island Sound conditions (salt water, 7 foot tide, intermittent ice, and for this marina, few boats in the water over the winter), portable submersible pumps such as made by Kasco are the correct solution. Twenty of these (1/2 HP) could be purchased for about \$11,000. In the rare case of heavy ice that might pull piles, local distributors could provide more over night.

I urge you to eliminate the \$1.75million marina improvement funding from the budget until the administration proposes a reasonable, economic alternative.

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Stamford Taxpayers Political Action Committee