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**CITY OF STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT
HARBOR MANAGEMENT AND
SHELLFISH COMMISSION**

90 Magee Avenue
Stamford, Connecticut 06902

February 20, 2026

**Stamford Inner Harbor Boat Launch Feasibility Study
Phase Two**

Project Narrative

Project Background

In 2022, the Stamford Harbor Management Commission, now the Stamford Harbor Management and Shellfish Commission (SHMSC), in coordination with other City agencies including the Land Use Bureau, Engineering Department, and Parks and Recreation Department, designed a two-phase Feasibility Study to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a public boat launching facility with direct access to the Stamford Inner Harbor. No such public facility now serves the Inner Harbor.

The *City of Stamford Harbor Management Plan* (Harbor Management Plan) establishes a “Harbor Vision” for safe and beneficial use and conservation of the Stamford Harbor Management Area (SHMA). In this regard, the Harbor Management Plan encourages and supports the provision of new and enhanced opportunities for public boating access to the SHMA as well as suitable access for emergency services purposes. The Plan also calls for continued identification and evaluation of opportunities available for improving boating access to the SHMA. To advance the Harbor Vision, planning for a public boat launching facility in Stamford Harbor was one of several harbor management priorities identified in 2022 by the SHMSC. These priorities were discussed with Mayor Caroline Simmons who expressed support for the SHMSC’s efforts, and the efforts of the City’s Land-Use Bureau, Engineering Department, and Parks and Recreation Department, in this regard.

As initially planned, the proposed Feasibility Study included two phases. Phase One involved evaluation of several pre-identified sites to identify any that might be appropriate for further and more detailed evaluation. Phase One would essentially be a “table-top” exercise. Phase Two was to include the detailed site investigations, including a topographic and bathymetric survey, soil borings, and other work, needed to determine the feasibility of developing a boat launch on the site that might be selected in Phase One for further evaluation. If the selected site should prove feasible based on the detailed investigations, the SHMSC then would pursue the environmental

permits from the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) as needed to construct the ramp on that site.

Enhancement and expansion of existing public boating facilities and the establishment of new facilities should be encouraged to provide dock space, boat slips, boat launching areas, a public landing, and other facilities as well as enhanced public access opportunities to the Stamford Harbor Management Area (SHMA) by resident, nonresident, and transient boaters. Facilities provided should be consistent with demonstrated need and with the capacity of the SHMA and upland areas to accommodate those facilities. Opportunities for public access to the SHMA through the City park system should be fully utilized and, to the extent feasible, enhanced. The City should promote and encourage increased water-related use and activities at public parks including visual and physical access opportunities, public boat slips and launching facilities, public landings and other facilities for visiting boaters, small boat storage and launching areas, and fishing piers.

City of Stamford Harbor Management Plan, 2009

In 2022, the City of Stamford applied to the CT Port Authority (CPA) for a Small Harbor Improvement Projects Program (SHIPP) grant to fund the Feasibility Study, including phases one and two. The Port Authority subsequently awarded funds in the amount of \$25,000 only for Phase One because as it was not known at the outset whether Phase One would result in a potential site for further and more detailed evaluation in Phase 2.

Phase One

Following a competitive bidding process, the City of Stamford selected RACE Coastal Engineers based in Stratford, CT as the City's engineering consultant for the Phase One work. That work was completed in February 2025 with issuance of the "Stamford Harbor Boat Launch Feasibility Study" Final Report." (A copy is enclosed.)

In summary, the site identified as "Kosciuszko Park Site 1" was identified as a potentially feasible site for further and more detailed evaluation to determine its feasibility. The Phase One Final Report concluded with the following recommendations for next steps in the overall Feasibility Study process

Recommendations for “Next Steps”¹

As noted, Kosciuszko Park Site 1 was identified to be the highest scoring location between the four sites evaluated. While the scoring matrix showed this location to be the most favorable, additional survey and investigative work will be required to determine overall boat ramp facility viability in this area. Initial feedback from CT DEEP WEED [Waste Engineering and Enforcement Division] about the development has been positive, however there will need to be increased dialogue with the State and Federal regulatory bodies that hold jurisdiction over this area, and by no means is it guaranteed that any or all of the regulatory bodies will issue approval for such development. It is difficult to solicit much further input from these agencies until more specifics as to an actual boat ramp design and impacts are known, however the development of a boat launching facility for public use, provided disruption or degradation of coastal resources are minimized, is a supported development policy under CT State Statutes. Specific regulatory agencies that will need to be included as part of this review include, but are not limited to:



View toward Kosciuszko Park Potential Boat Launch Site 1 nearby Stamford Hurricane Barrier to right. (G. Steadman photo 2016)

- *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works, given the proximity of the work to the Stamford Hurricane Barrier.*
- *CT DEEP WEED, due to proposed post-closure uses of the landfill*
- *CT DEEP Land and Water Resources Division (LWRD) regarding proposed developments below the Coastal Jurisdiction Line (CJL).*
- *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory, regarding proposed developments within “waters of the U.S.” and below the High Tide Line (HTL).*

It is further noted that review of the City’s compliance with the existing “Closure Plan” for Kosciuszko Park, or other regulatory matters which may have arisen from the 2005-2007 landfill closure work, including the 30-year post-closure maintenance program that the City is obligated to perform, is beyond the scope of the boat ramp evaluation, and should be reviewed internally before progressing studies, surveys, and investigative activities further. If following an internal review, the City of Stamford believes itself to be in compliance and wishes to pursue the development of a boat ramp at this location further, the following next steps may be considered.

¹ This presentation of “Next Steps” is reproduced from pages 29 - 31 of 31 of “Stamford Harbor Boat Launch Feasibility Study;” photos added 1.20.2026.

1. *Perform property/topography/bathymetric survey in the proposed development areas of interest. A review of existing property land records, including any access and easement agreements, and land-use restrictions that may be on-file, should also be carried out and incorporated into the survey mapping.*
2. *In consultation with DEEP WEED, prepare and execute subgrade investigations (soil test borings, test pits, etc.) in the area of the proposed developments, with a goal of better defining geotechnical conditions for engineering design purposes, as well as the extent of, if any, historic landfill in this location, and how best to minimize impacts to these locations.*
3. *Develop preliminary site and grading plans of the proposed boat ramp facility including parking lot additions, vehicle/trailer access ways and maneuvering & tie-down areas, and boat ramp and boarding dock locations. As part of this phase, a determination of cut/fills and required stormwater management should be determined.*
4. *Continue discussions with CT DEEP WEED regarding required cuts/fills and potential impacts, if any, on any existing landfill or cover, and begin discussions with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory & Civil Works, and CT DEEP LWRD regarding applications to such agencies for the activities to be conducted within respective jurisdictions.*



View toward Kosciuszko Park Potential Boat Launch Site 1 nearby Stamford Hurricane Barrier to right. (G. Steadman photo 2025)

Phase Two

Following completion of the Phase One work, representatives of the SHMSC, Land Use Bureau, Engineering Department, and Parks and Recreation Department met to discuss the recommended next steps and agreed to pursue Phase Two of the Feasibility Study and to apply for a SHIPP grant to undertake the following Scope of Work as identified in Phase One. In addition, the Engineering Department, responsible for managing the Kosciuszko Park Landfill Closure Plan, provided permission to proceed with the Phase Two evaluation, and the SHMSC agreed to support the provision of funds from the 860 Canal Street Mitigation Fund Account and from the Harbor Management Fund (see Cost Proposal) as the required 50% match for the requested 2026 Port Authority SHIPP grant for Phase Two Boat Launch Feasibility Study.

Phase Two Scope of Work

1. Site Surveys and Investigations

- a. Bathymetry, topography, wetland flagging

2. Geotechnical Investigations

- a. Intertidal, subtidal, and land-based borings
- b. Licensed Environmental Professional (LEP) review / coordination w/ DEEP Waste Engineering and Enforcement Division (WEED)

3. Preliminary Design Plans

- a. Including parking areas and vehicle access ways, landscaping, grading, boat ramp, and docks

4. Planning and Regulatory Coordination

- a. General design meetings, conference calls, and ongoing coordination with City of Stamford agencies and officials
- b. Pre-application review meetings with DEEP and USACE (does not include preparation of regulatory permit applications)

End of Project Narrative