



**INTRODUCTION**

This newsletter has been developed to improve communication and explain the workings and responsibilities of the Essex Harbor Management Commission and the Harbor Master and his Deputy. Essex Harbor officially extends in the Connecticut River from Old Saybrook to Deep River, eastward to the middle of the main navigation channel and westward to include the North, Middle and South Coves and Falls River Cove – the navigable waters of Essex.

Essex was the second harbor in Connecticut to be recognized with a Harbor Plan by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and the US Army Corps of Engineers. In September 1990, Essex adopted the Harbor Plan and enacted the Ordinances contained within it at a Town Meeting. The Harbor Plan is available on line from the Essex website, [essexct.gov](http://essexct.gov).

Funding for the HMC in Essex comes from user fees, principally from mooring permit fees and occasionally grants. We are not part of the Town of Essex general fund or budget process.

The primary work of the commission is the management of moorings and dockage throughout the town. Two U.S. Coast Guard recognized anchorages in the Connecticut River account for the bulk of moorings. Other moorings are found in the area coves.

Property owners wishing to have a dock must first go through the HMC. The HMC reviews such applications for conformity with the Harbor Plan, for neighbor comments and effect on the environment and harbor navigation.

In Essex, the HMC also serves to “manage” the various public access points in town. These points are discussed below.

HMC meetings are open to the public. For 2013, monthly meetings are scheduled for the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 at the Essex Town Hall, usually in the second floor meeting Room B. Minutes and agenda are reported through the Town website and posted in the Town Hall.

**PUBLIC ACCESS IN ESSEX**

Public Access takes many forms, ranging from trailer launching to visual access. The only actual trailer access is located at the foot of Main Street on the River. This is a quality ramp, beach access for small boats and includes a pier with float. There is no designated parking at this location. There is no fee or restriction on using this ramp with the exception of grounding barges.

Other Public Access points include endings of pentways carried over from colonial times – Mack Lane, Collins Lane, Nott Lane, Scholes Lane, Novelty Lane and Little Point Street, none of these locations accommodate public parking. The Town Park on Main Street includes a ramp and float for easier launching of small craft, parking and public toilets. Bushnell Park at the end of Bushnell Street has recently been upgraded and includes an observation deck, small boat storage racks, parking, small boat launching and portable toilet in the summer.

With the exception of Bushnell Park, boat storage is not allowed at any Public Access, either on land or at a dock or float..

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## MAIN STREET RAMP & DOCK

The Main Street launch ramp is available for everyone. However, it is limited in size and ability to handle larger craft. Patience is required with the traffic and parking issues that go with the area as well as pedestrian traffic and visitors when moving up or down the ramp.

The Town Dock accommodates different interests and serves both pedestrian visitors and boaters. Boats are limited to short term dockage and no overnight dockage is allowed. The Connecticut River Museum is located to the north and Town Dock users are asked to respect the museums property and regulations.

## BUSHNELL PARK

Bushnell Park is situated in North Cove next to Dauntless Shipyard. It has limited access for small boats with shallow water on the east side leading to the North Cove fairway. Recently an observation platform was constructed offering seating and quiet views of North Cove and the surrounding environment. North of the Park are private residences, and their privacy should be respected as well.

The HMC also recently built small boat storage racks primarily for canoes, kayaks and small inflatable boats. There is a charge and permit required for using these racks for boat storage. Emergency contact information must be provided with the application. Applications are available on line at the Town website. Use of the racks is permitted from April to November and all boats must also be removed a Hurricane or Tropical Storm warning be posted.

Unpermitted boats and/or boats left during the closed time may be removed by the Town.

## HARBOR MASTER

In Connecticut, the Harbor Master and Deputy Harbor Master are subcontractors (at nominal pay) of the State Department of Transportation and are primarily responsible for safe navigation. They also have additional responsibilities under the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the Harbor Plan in Essex, particularly in regard to moorings.

In the interest of safety and for the public good the Harbor Master and/or his deputy may have boats moved, hauled or impounded without prior notice to the owner. In Essex, this has been a rarity, but has occurred on occasion to resolve issues before damage or injury was sustained.

If you have a question about your mooring, plan to be away for an extended period, or want to change boats, etc., please be sure that you communicate with the Harbor Master .

## Docks and Structures

Building a dock or other structure or modifying an existing structure at or below the high tide mark requires compliance with the Essex Harbor Plan and more importantly the obtaining of approval from DEEP. The first step in the process is a review by the HMC, which must sign off before DEEP can approve.

It is recommended that a discussion be had with the HMC first and the necessary steps can be explained so that you may generally know what to expect.



Small Vessel  
Permits Available on  
Town Website

## MOORINGS AND PERMITS

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection claims all land under navigable waters and below the high tide mark to be under its jurisdiction and grants local supervision to approved Harbor Management Commissions. In Essex, they recognize the HMC and the Harbor Master are recognized to approve placement of moorings.

The Harbor Plan outlines the type of moorings and minimum requirements for ground tackle to be used. Placement of the mooring tackle in accordance with the Plan is based on size and type of boat and how it will interact with other nearby vessels.

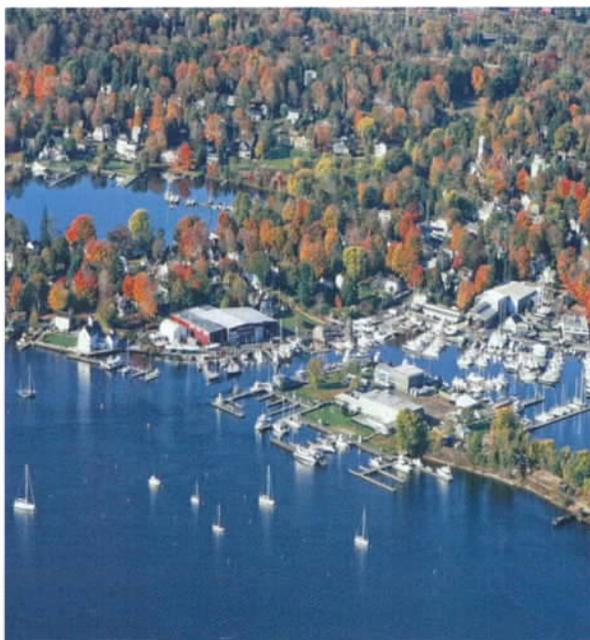
Moorings are available without regard to residency, or citizenship. Boats over 50' measured on deck are not eligible for moorings based on the Harbor Plan. There is a requirement to be able to demonstrate water access to the mooring.

Permits are given annually. Renewals are mailed out in October and are required to be returned by mid November. Permit applicants are required to demonstrate compliance with federal and state registration and to show evidence of financial responsibility (insurance certificate). Costs of the permit is based on the size of the boat and currently runs from \$50 to \$110 annually.

Those wishing to apply for a permit may be placed on a Wait List if there is not room in the designated area at the time of application. Currently, the list for Main Anchorage off the Village is less than 10! Wait List application is available on the web and costs \$10 per year to cover overhead.

Mooring Policies are published on the web and include details on what is required to stay in good standing with your mooring. As always communication is most important.

The names of Permit holders and Wait Listees are published and available on the web and posted in the Town Hall. It is always the responsibility of the Permit holder or the Wait List standee to communicate with the HMC and/or Harbor Master with respect to changes in address, boat status and anything else that relates to the mooring and the boat occupying it.





**Members:**

Jeff Going, Chairman  
860-961-5090

Wally Schieferdecker, Vice Chairman

Walter Wiegert, Treasurer

John Senning

Joe Zaraschi

Earl Fowler, Alternate

Fred Hitchcock, Alternate

Ex-Officio Members

Paul Riggio, Harbor Master

Ruth Hockert, Clerk

**Dates to remember:**

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>April 1</b>     | <b>Bushnell Park Storage-<br/>Permits Required<br/>Mooring Permit Holders-<br/>Tackle available for inspection</b> |
| <b>October 30</b>  | <b>Mooring Permit Applications<br/>and renewals mailed</b>   |
| <b>November 15</b> | <b>Mooring Permit Renewals<br/>and sabbatical requests due back<br/>to Harbor Master</b>                           |
| <b>November 30</b> | <b>Bushnell Park must be<br/>cleared of all boats, permits expire</b>  |
| <b>December 31</b> | <b>All Mooring Permits Expire</b>  |

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**Essex Harbor Management Commission  
29 West Avenue (Town Hall)  
Essex, CT 06426**