



October 20, 2020

Jeffrey Going, Chair  
Harbor Management Commission  
Essex Town Hall  
29 West Avenue  
Essex CT 06426

Re: Intervention in Harbor Management Commission proceedings covering the Application of Bombaci Family LLC for commercial development at Great Meadow Road

Dear Chairman Going,

I am the present Commodore of the Pettipaug Yacht Club, Inc. I forward this letter with the approval of the Board of Directors. Kindly accept this letter as intervention by the Yacht Club pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 12-19. I have given my oath of verification at the end of this document.

Pettipaug Yacht Club is currently conducting a comprehensive and active review of the the Application of Bombaci Family LLC also known as the Bombaci "Improvement Project", received by the Harbor Management Commission on October 12, 2020 and posted on the web site on October 19th. This Application calls for the establishment of a marine construction facility at Great Meadow Road, just north of the Yacht Club facility. Our ongoing review has already raised significant concerns about the appropriateness and viability of such an enterprise, not only because of the potential environmental impacts that we set forth below, but also for the inconsistency of establishing a commercial operation with large commercial barges transiting the area adjacent to the Club.

For background, Pettipaug Yacht Club was established in 1934 with the interest of sailing instruction and racing on the river, then called "The High and Dry Yacht Club". In 1956 the Club was incorporated and named the Pettipaug Yacht Club. The Club's mission has always been to encourage and promote yachting, water sports and small boat racing of all kinds. The Club presently has a membership of 395 families and has provided sailing instruction to generations of young sailors and access to the water for people of all ages.

Of particular concern to us is safely maintaining our mission of ongoing sailing instruction and racing. Should large commercial vessels begin to transit in front of the Club, as they necessarily will since the channel runs along the westerly side of the river behind Brockway Island, any small sailboat will be required to give way to the commercial barges. This is also an established mooring field. The Board and membership do not believe that having a commercial operation of this type is consistent with good harbor management or the existing Harbor Management Plan and will be dangerous and disruptive to a long established sailing program and the anchorage.

In addition we, and others, have reviewed the Harbor Management Plan and find the following issues and inconsistencies between the proposal of Bombaci Family LLC and the environmental considerations emphasized in the Harbor Management Plan.

A. With the localized strong tidal and down stream current interrupted by an extended pier and mooring or docking a construction barge will severely alter the river current characteristics jeopardizing the existing waterway through scour or fill, relocate the existing narrow channel and produce deleterious eddy currents effecting aquatic life, vegetation and water recreation uses downstream.

B. The proposal would establish a commercial marine construction operation on land which is of a sensitive environmental nature. *Essex Harbor Management Plan, November 3, 1987, Section I, Existing Conditions, (B)2. Soils.* The Great Meadows waterfront is noted in the Harbor Management Plan to be characterized by fragile soil types. *Essex Harbor Management Plan, November 3, 1987, Section II, Conclusions and Analysis (A).*

C. The Great Meadow area and the area of this project is noted for frequency and duration of flooding and submerged species in the area have been recognized by the Harbor Management Report as considered rare in the State of Connecticut. *Essex Harbor Management Plan, November 3, 1987, Section I, Existing Conditions (B)3. Vegetations.* Such flooding can easily carry material stored at the proposed construction site (none of which is specified) down stream and into the adjacent wetlands.

D. The proposal, as presented at the Commission's June 19, 2019 meeting by Mr. Bombaci, purports to allow for trucks and heavy equipment to access the subject property, be parked on the property and to be utilized at the riverside site bringing with it the potential for depositing of unspecified materials offloaded from barges, vehicle pollutants, damage to the underlying wetlands and soils and the vegetation on the site and adjacent conservation areas.

E. The Harbor Management Plan notes that the land surface of the Great Meadows has increased due to eutrophication, which is accelerating due to development along the shoreline. *Essex Harbor Management Plan, November 3, 1987, Section I, Existing Conditions (C)1. Shoreline Changes.* This commercial development will only exacerbate and accelerate that condition.

F. The commercial and industrial grade development of the Great Meadows area in such a unique and fragile area is not consistent with the Harbor Management Plan and brings the likelihood for unreasonable jeopardy to, and destruction of, these unique wetlands. *Essex Harbor Management Plan, November 3, 1987, Section I, Existing Conditions (C)3 Wetlands.*

G. The land areas of the Great Meadows are noted in the Harbor Management Plan as an environmentally sensitive area. *Essex Harbor Management Plan, November 3, 1987, Section II, Conclusions and Analysis (E).* The Harbor Management Plan warns against the danger of hazards resulting from more intensive development, as is proposed in the present application. *Essex Harbor Management Plan, November 3, 1987, Section II, Conclusions and Analysis (F).*

The Harbor Management Plan notes the importance of wetlands preservation. Indeed, the report notes that "an area including such a large amount of critical wetlands as the Essex waterfront requires special attention." *Essex Harbor Management Plan, November 3, 1987, Section III, Issue Identification (A & B).*

H. The proposal for a substantial commercial and industrial grade development in the nature of a dock construction facility is contrary to the recognized aesthetic and natural condition

of the Connecticut River waterfront in the Great Meadows, which will be lost if the commercial development proceeds. *Essex Harbor Management Plan, November 3, 1987, Section I, Existing Conditions (C) 4 Characteristics of Coastal Area.* The Harbor Management Plan highlights that much of the waterfront of Essex along the Connecticut River has been designated as open space or conservation lands (as is most of the Great Meadow) and warns the impact of intensive activity on the generally fragile ecosystem which fringes the river itself. The Harbor Management Plan highlights the aesthetics of the river front which is considered "highly pleasing visually . . ." The Plan finds that the aesthetic of the waterfront "must be considered to be of major importance. In this context, the heavy use of the water areas poses at least the potential for damage to the aesthetic aspects of the river and must be considered in this light." *Essex Harbor Management Plan, November 3, 1987, Section III, Issue Identification (A)4(a).* Commercial and industrial grade use in this sensitive area is inconsistent with the Harbor Management Plan and will jeopardize the river side vista, a recognized important natural resource. The Harbor Management Plan notes that public interest involves the protection of sensitive ecological assets and public access to the water both visually as well as physically. *Essex Harbor Management Plan, November 3, 1987, Section III, Issue Identification (B) Study Area, 1(a).* The Pettipaug Yacht Club provides just that sort of public access. A neighboring commercial construction facility will only compromise that access.

I. The proposal will have the effect of disturbing a sensitive wildlife area. Construction equipment and loading and off loading of materials will be dangerous to the wildlife in the Great Meadows, which is known for its abundant bird life and other wildlife. The importance of wildlife protection is noted in the Harbor Management Plan. *Essex Harbor Management Plan, November 3, 1987, Section III, Issue Identification (B) Study Area B, 3(a).*

The Harbor Management Plan also identifies as one of its goals, the strong coordination between zoning authorities of the town. *Essex Harbor Management Plan, November 3, 1987, Section IV, Harbor Management Goals (J).* The Plan also highlights the goal of maintaining the value of critical wildlife habitats by encouraging zoning to restrict development of these areas. *Essex Harbor Management Plan, November 3, 1987, Section IV, Harbor Management Goals (N).* The subject property is zoned River Road Residential. Commercial activity is not a permitted use in this zone. In addition to the environmental inconsistencies of this proposal with the Harbor Management Plan, the proposal is inconsistent with the specific goals set forth in the Harbor Management Plan. Based on the Application submitted for a marine construction business and Mr. Bombaci's presentation to this Commission on June 27, 2019, their plan is for a commercial operation at which barges would be loaded and unloaded with construction or other unknown material. Not only does this present jeopardy to the natural resources of the river and adjacent land, but presents the image of construction vehicles hauling unknown, undesignated materials up and down River Road and on the Great Meadow Road, overburdening our easement and hauling construction material through residential communities.

The proposal before the Harbor Management Commission is inconsistent with the Harbor Management Plan and represents real environmental risks to the sensitive area of the Great Meadow. The Commission should make a finding of inconsistency.

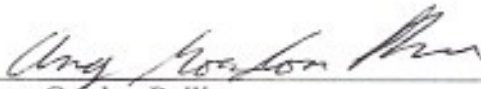
Sincerely Yours,



Amy Gordon Pullin  
Commodore  
Pettipaug Yacht Club

**VERIFICATION**

I, Amy Gordon Pullin, Commodore Pettipaug Yacht Clubam over 18 years of age and believe in the Obligation of an Oath. I have read the preceding Application to Intervene and it is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

  
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Amy Gordon Pullin  
Commodore of Pettipaug Yacht Club  
Duly Authorized

STATE OF CONNECTICUT )


2020

) ss: *Essex Chester*

October 21, 2020

COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX )

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned officer, Amy Gordon Pullin, signer of the foregoing Verification certificate, who was sworn and made solemn oath that the facts stated therein are true and correct to the best of her knowledge and belief.

  
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Commissioner of the Superior Court  
Notary Public

**SHARON S. ECHTMAN**  
**NOTARY PUBLIC**  
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES SEPT. 30, 2024