

MARINA CHARRETTE

MAY 28, 2014

Mayor Cerino called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. In attendance were Council members Liz Gross, Linda C. Kuiper, Samuel T. Shoge and Mauritz Stetson, W. S. Ingersoll, Town Manager, Kees de Mooy, Zoning Administrator, Patricia Diver, Director of Finance, Jennifer Mulligan, Town Clerk and guests.

Mayor Cerino thanked everyone in attendance for participating in the Charrette.

Mayor Cerino stated that he and Mr. de Mooy have been taking pictures at low and high tide for some time to graphically illustrate the typical conditions at the marina. He thanked Tyler Campbell who took aerial photos for the presentation.

Mayor Cerino gave PowerPoint presentation.

Mayor Cerino outlined the history of the purchase of the marina, noting that public access to the river was an important piece of Chestertown's history. He said that if the marina were privatized, Chestertown would no longer be a port of entry.

Mayor Cerino showed the layout of the marina property. He said that the Town did not own the Fish Whistle property, which was located inside the boundaries of the area now owned by the Town. He also showed the docks owned by the Town, noting that the cost of the Cannon Street dock was split among the Town, Sultana Projects, and Echo Hill Outdoor School. He explained how the decks to the docks were added on top of the old docks, by the previous owner and how they were often underwater during high tide or a storm.

Mayor Cerino stated that existing docks had to be gutted and replaced. Floating piers should be considered for replacement.

Mayor Cerino stated that the bulkheads were raised and replaced at the bulkhead on Cannon Street. Since that time, it has sunk back down and floods. The bulkhead that starts at the Fish Whistle property and runs to the boat ramp is in dire need of repair. The bulkhead to the down river side of the travel lift was fixed up a few years ago and does not flood often. There was a seawall downriver of the marina that separated the Scott's Point marina basin from the Town's and was designed to slow down sediment transport between the two properties but was not in good condition. He said that he thought the bulkheads had to be raised at least 2' to 3' so they would not flood.

Mayor Cerino stated that the marina consisted of three (3) piers. There was a pier just downriver from where Sultana docked and the water was 14' to 18' deep. He said that there was plenty of water but one slip in was a cliff that went suddenly to 4' of water. He said that the other docks at the marina had the same significant drops in depth. He said that the pier closest to the Scott's Point docks had 6' of water on a regular day. He said that the shoreward docks had 2' to 4' of water on average. Mayor Cerino stated that boats were being turned away because there was not the depth to accommodate them. He said that he thought the piers should be extended 60' to 70' regardless of dredging.

Mayor Cerino showed how the marina regularly floods. He said that water comes in between at the Fish Whistle, the corner by the marina store and right up the boat ramp. He had photos from an average flood from the high tide, southerly winds and a full moon.

Mayor Cerino stated that if he was the one to fix up the marina he would either demolish the existing marina store or move it to hard ground where it would not flood. Any new construction had to be put on high ground. He said that if the grade of the property was going to be raised, landmarks that should be used as a guideline are the brick pump house on Cannon Street and the front of the large shed. Any fixed piers had to be at least as high as the dock that housed Sultana and Echo Hill.

Mayor Cerino stated that there was a beautiful walkway from the Foot of High Street to Cannon Street and then it went nowhere. He said that there was no continuity along the riverfront. The walkway in front of the Fish Whistle was underwater most times, slick, and ended with a mass of gravel. He said that the proposed waterfront walkway through Scott's Point condos to Wilmer Park should be encouraged. He showed existing footpaths through the Marina to Wilmer Park. He outlined possible walkways that he thought could work through the area. He said that Wilmer Park seemed quite far away presently because there was no connection in place, but it was just yards away. He said that pedestrian safety was of utmost importance, especially in a working marina setting.

Mayor Cerino stated that the public had to decide if the existing look of the marina was what would continue or if the character of the marina change with the other improvements. Mayor Cerino said that boat storage had to be discussed, as well as the boat ramp and travel lift operation. There were no marked spaces for boat trailers so they parked all over the marina.

Mayor Cerino stated that boat storage was a significant piece of income for the Marina. Many boats relied on the travel lift to get their boats out of the water and fix them in the off-season. The costs of insuring, maintaining, and running the travel lift were large. Also, it was not safe to have people walking by the boat ramp and trailer lift. He said keeping these amenities had to be discussed and decided upon.

Mayor Cerino stated that parking was also an issue. He suggested making a connection to the Wilmer Park for parking, or creating a new storage area off-site for trailers.

Mayor Cerino stated that greening opportunities would present themselves during this project and were fundable by grants.

Mayor Cerino stated that now that this was a municipal Marina, any design had to be simple to operate, easy to staff, simple to maintain, and fundable. He said that there should be as many naming opportunities as possible at the site so that the private sector might donate capital support.

Mayor Cerino stated that everyone had to accept the fact that the reason the Town got involved with the Marina was because the full-service marina model was a failed economic model. Maintenance has been deferred on the property for years. He said this was a small piece of land and difficult choices had to be made to move this forward with a design that the majority of residents was happy with.

Mayor Cerino stated that he wanted to break out into 5 groups to discuss certain topics. Leaders and topics are as follows:

1. Bill Ingersoll and Steve Layden (McCrone) - layout of the docks and bulkheads.
2. Liz Gross - pedestrian traffic through the marina area.
3. Chris Cerino - boat ramp, trailer parking and parking.
4. Linda Kuiper - travel lift and boat storage.
5. Kees de Mooy and Margo Bailey - greening opportunities.

Groups worked on their topics beginning at 6:45 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 7:30 p.m.

Mayor Cerino stated that he would like a spokesperson from each group to give a summation of the ideas expressed. He said that a first concept design would be based on this feedback.

Mayor Cerino stated that his group discussed the boat ramp, trailer parking, and parking in general. He said that there was a concept for the marina from a couple years back that eliminated the cut through at the Fish Whistle. Parking was delineated for the Fish Whistle with landscaped islands in the middle containing the ingress and egress for Cannon Street and separated trailers from the lot. He said that the boat ramp was worth keeping for public access. Mayor Cerino stated that if the boat shed was eliminated a horseshoe could be created that enters and exits Front Street where you could back into the boat ramp with trailer parking across from the ramp. Chest high native plantings could be planted to hide the trailers from the neighbors. Brick walkways could be created along the street as well.

Mayor Cerino stated that the bump-out parking at Wilmer Park could be labeled overflow parking for the Marina and one-way traffic on Front Street implemented for exiting the marina. He said that this would force everyone to go through the downtown on their way out of the marina.

Mayor Cerino stated that possibly the marina store could be housed in the Williams building and use the corner spot to enjoy the river.

Mr. de Mooy stated that his group discussed greening. He said that whether the land is raised or not there were many opportunities for greening, although it was at the mercy of the tides. There were opportunities for street trees, sidewalks and lighting along Front Street. Raised beds were discussed.

Mr. Ingersoll stated that his group discussed docks and bulkheads. Mr. Ingersoll stated that the bulkheads had to be raised to the maximum extent allowed and storm drain systems could be designed under the parking lot. Extending the piers 60' to 70' into the river was agreed to by all. Reconfiguring the piers was also discussed and the three (3) pier concept looked favorable as long as the downriver pier was moved north to allow dockage on the downriver side. Concrete floating docks, dinghy docks, and kayak docks were suggested. The marina office should be relocated.

Mayor Cerino stated that condensing the 4 docks to 3 and extending them out into the river allowed for slips on both sides of the docks.

Ms. Kuiper stated that her group discussed the travel lift and boat storage. Everyone in her group agreed that the large shed should be removed from the site. The group wanted to keep the travel lift. It was discussed going out 3 or 4 slips and building a bulkhead to increase the land where the travel lift was located. The marina store should be moved to high ground. The old marina store location could become a crab deck.

Ms. Gross stated that her group discussed pedestrian flow through the property. She said that pedestrians should be kept as close to the water as possible for as long as possible, creating a true river walk. The entire walk should be handicap accessible and as wide as possible with benches and lighting. Handrails and railings along the bulkheads (at the Fish Whistle) were necessary. Signage for history, nature, etc. should be incorporated along the river walk. The Cannon Street bulkhead was in bad condition and sloping towards the parking lot so it should be raised to grade. The grade needed to be raised in several locations due to constant flooding.

Ms. Gross stated that regardless of what happens at the marina, the group recommended to Sultana and Echo Hill that they move informational signage to the edge of the dock so people knew what was at the end of the dock without having to walk all the way out. Reconsider naming the dock for the historic nature of the boats.

Ms. Gross stated that there was an awkward jog that should be realigned so it was straight. There was an electric light pole that should be relocated. Access to the finger piers on the bulkhead should be properly maintained and safe for the pedestrians.

Ms. Gross stated that the walk should go to safe distance around the boat ramp and travel lift, with signage to alert the pedestrians that operations are occurring.

Ms. Gross stated that the Town had an easement to continue the walkway through Scott's Point to Wilmer Park that should be used. The brick walk on Front Street should connect to the footpath at Wilmer Park and the parking lot. An attractive fence should screen the residents along Front Street from boat storage.

Ms. Gross stated that a member of her group suggested adding a pedestrian bridge in a Venetian style, but that would preclude use of the travel lift. If there was no boat storage and the area became a more park-like setting, a path could be running through the green space.

Ms. Alice Macnow stated that she thought the marina should be built so that 50 years from now it would still be usable, so the piers should be raised as much as possible.

Mr. John Seidel stated that nobody has discussed amenities for the marina. He said that bathrooms and bathhouses had to be discussed, as well as fuel and pump outs. He said that he was not sure that those amenities as well as travel lifts and boat storage were possible on such a small site.

Mr. McCown stated that a pump out facility was a necessity because some people will dump right into the river. He said that Echo Hill will have a difficult time using the facility if the travel lift and large garage facility were done away with. He said that was where they performed winter maintenance work.

Mayor Cerino stated that the PowerPoint was available to anyone that wanted it.

Mayor Cerino stated that the next meeting would be to make comment on the concept plan, when it was finished. The meeting ended at 8:02 p.m.

Submitted by:


Jennifer Mulligan
Town Clerk

Approved by:

Chris Cerino
Mayor

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MARINA CHARRETTE
MAY 28, 2014

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AGENDA FOR MARINA CHARETTE

Wednesday, May 28, 2014
6:00 pm at Chestertown Marina

- I. Introductions
- II. Power Point on Existing Conditions at Chestertown Marina
(Mayor Chris Cerino w/assistance of Town Staff)
- III. Small Working Groups to Discuss Elements of Marina Design
(members of the public working w/group leaders)
 - a. Docks
 - b. Bulkheads
 - c. Pedestrian flow through the property
 - d. Boat ramp and trailer parking
 - e. Parking (general)
 - f. Travel lift and boat storage
 - g. Greening opportunities at the Marina
- IV. Working Groups report findings to those in attendance
- V. Wrap-up and discussion of next steps in the process