

In The Matter Of:
Coastal Resources Management Council

Workshop - Perry Raso Application
March 8, 2021

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING

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IN RE:

CRMC File No. 2017-12-086
In the matter of Perry Raso

WORKSHOP

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Date: March 8, 2021
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Place: Via Zoom
Rhode Island

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jennifer Cervenka, Chair
Raymond C. Coia, Vice Chair
Donald T. Gomez
Patricia Reynolds

STAFF PRESENT

Anthony DeSisto, Esquire, Legal Counsel
Jeff Willis, Executive Director
James Boyd, Deputy Director
Lisa Turner, Secretary
Ryan Moore, Moderator
Ben Goetsch, Aquaculture Coordinator

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1 MONDAY, MARCH 8, 2021

2 [COMMENCING AT 10:15 A.M.]

3 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Good morning, everyone.
4 It's Monday, March 8, 2021. This is a Subcommittee
5 meeting of the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management
6 Council. We have been convened to hear the matter of
7 Perry Raso, 2017-12-086, for a three-acre aquaculture
8 lease in Segar Cove and Potter Pond. This is a workshop
9 for Subcommittee members to deliberate.

10 At the end of this, it's our job to render a
11 recommendation that we would then present to the full
12 Council at a subsequent meeting.

13 I'll first do a roll call of Subcommittee members.
14 Starting with myself, Jennifer Cervenka, Chair; Vice
15 Chair Ray Coia?

16 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: Ray Coia is here.

17 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Don Gomez?

18 MR. GOMEZ: Don Gomez here.

19 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Patricia Reynolds?

20 MS. REYNOLDS: Patricia Reynolds here.

21 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: South Kingstown
22 representative Vin Murray?

23 MR. MURRAY: Vin Murray is here.

24 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: We also have staff. Our

1 executive director, Jeffrey Willis.

2 MR. WILLIS: Here, Madam Chair.

3 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Our deputy director, Jim
4 Boyd.

5 MR. BOYD: Here, Madam Chair.

6 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Our former aquaculture
7 coordinator, Dave Beutel.

8 MR. BEUTEL: I'm here.

9 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Ben Goetsch, our current
10 aquaculture coordinator?

11 MR. GOETSCH: Here, Madam Chair.

12 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Our chief legal counsel,
13 Tony DeSisto?

14 MR. DeSISTO: Yes, Madam Chair, I'm here.

15 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Lisa Turner our recording
16 secretary?

17 MS. TURNER: Here, Madam Chair.

18 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Ryan Moore our moderator?

19 MR. MOORE: Here, Madam Chair.

20 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: And Lisa Reis our court
21 reporter?

22 COURT REPORTER: Here, Madam Chair.

23 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Before we start, I just
24 wanted to thank everyone who has been with us for the

1 last several months. We've had a very long process here,
2 and I want to thank the Applicant, the interveners, the
3 counsel that represented them, and all the members of the
4 public who came forward during the public comment period.

5 We've had a robust discussion of applicable
6 standards of relevant facts, and it's been very helpful
7 to me personally to hear what everyone had to say. I was
8 particularly happy about the public comment section. I
9 had asked people to keep their comments to five to ten
10 minutes and focus on their personal knowledge and use of
11 Segar Cove and Potter Pond. I think for the most part
12 everyone did that. It took a long time to get through
13 because there was a lot of people, but I thought people
14 were respectful of time and concise in their comments.

15 I want to thank Dave Beutel for coming out of his
16 retirement to be with us, and I appreciate that. And
17 then, you know, all the staff at CRMC that help put this
18 process together and keep the public informed.

19 So with that, I don't know if any Subcommittee
20 members want to say anything in addition to that before I
21 kind of outline the process for this morning, but I'll
22 give you opportunity if you do.

23 [NO RESPONSE]

24 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. So, moving on.

1 For this workshop I thought we would, or I propose that
2 we do it in the following fashion.

3 First, I wanted to review what we all believe are
4 applicable policies, regulations, relevant ordinances,
5 and want to make sure that we get the proper lay of the
6 land of the legal standards that we're looking at. If
7 anyone has questions, we can discuss those and maybe put
8 them to our legal counsel.

9 Second, I want to move into the testimony, evidence,
10 documents that were admitted to talk about what
11 Subcommittee members believe are relevant, if they want
12 to discuss it and, again, if they have questions. And
13 you know, some of the areas I thought that we would want
14 to talk about is, you know, what activity happens on
15 Segar Cove and at what level, how Segar Cove is unique,
16 how will activities be impacted, what is the layout of
17 the farm.

18 Fourth, I want to talk about how we applied those
19 facts to the legal standards. So that's when we'll be
20 talking about, you know, whether or not various burdens
21 have been met.

22 And then finally, I want to arrive at a motion that
23 would be a recommendation either to approve or deny the
24 application as presented.

1 So that's my proposal for how we move through this
2 workshop. Does anyone want to comment on that, have
3 questions on it? Have I missed anything that you would
4 want to discuss as far as topics?

5 [NO RESPONSE]

6 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. So let's start
7 first with a review of what the applicable legal
8 standards are and relevant ordinances.

9 Everyone has had an opportunity to review the staff
10 report and then the post-hearing briefs that lay out all
11 the legal authorities. Everyone knows that our authority
12 does come from the Aquaculture Act, so that's Rhode
13 Island General Laws 20-10-1 and that gives us the
14 authority to approve aquaculture applications.

15 There's a couple of provisions in the declaration of
16 intent and public policy that have been highlighted that
17 I'll just read to you. Again, this is from 20-10-1 of
18 the Rhode Island General Laws:

19 "Whereas the process of aquaculture should only be
20 conducted within the waters of the state in a manner
21 consistent with the best public interest, with particular
22 consideration given to the effect of aquaculture on other
23 uses of the free and common fishery navigation and the
24 compatibility of aquaculture with the environment of the

1 waters of the state."

2 Also again quoting from this section:

3 "It is the public policy of this state to preserve
4 the waters of the state as free and common fishery. The
5 health, welfare, environment and general well being of
6 the people of the state require that the state restrict
7 the uses of its waters and the land thereunder for
8 aquaculture. And in the exercise of the police power,
9 the waters of the state and land thereunder are to be
10 regulated under this chapter."

11 There are a number of provisions in Chapter 20-10
12 that I'm not going to read to you. I'm just highlighting
13 certain portions. Does anyone want to talk about
14 anything in this chapter, what our authority is, the
15 provisions that I've just read?

16 MR. GOMEZ: Madam Chair?

17 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yes, Mr. Gomez.

18 MR. GOMEZ: Going through the Red Book, I just
19 want to make sure -- I've been using the Red Book mostly,
20 not the Rhode Island statute that you just read. They
21 are pretty much -- the Red Book is very much compliant
22 with what you just read, is it not?

23 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yes. That's my view. So
24 what I read to you is from declaration of intent and

1 public policy. That is the reasoning, I guess, behind
2 the authority given to the CRMC to award aquaculture
3 leases.

4 And so as I view it, and we can check with our legal
5 counsel, the regulatory standards that we need to review
6 in the Red Book are the expression of that intent and
7 public policy.

8 In other words, if you measure whether or not we're
9 meeting this best public interest, we go to the specifics
10 in the Red Book.

11 MR. DeSISTO: That's correct, Don.
12 Specifically, Section 20-10-3 gives the CRMC authority to
13 grant permits throughout aquaculture pursuant to the
14 regulations that are promulgated in the Red Book.

15 MR. GOMEZ: Thank you.

16 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Any other questions or
17 discussion about the statute?

18 [NO RESPONSE]

19 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: So as a segway for
20 Mr. Gomez, under the Red Book we want to ensure that the
21 Applicant has met his burden on a number of factors. And
22 that's 1.3.1(a) of the Red Book, and that's Category B
23 requirements. And as you've seen in the post-hearing
24 briefs, these are iterated, but I will read them not in

1 full, but somewhat paraphrasing of this and we can have
2 discussion.

3 So under this section the requirements for
4 Category B assent are necessary data and information for
5 the purposes -- hold on.

6 "All persons applying for a Category B assent are
7 required to, one, demonstrate the need for the proposed
8 activity or alteration;

9 B, demonstrate that all applicable local zoning
10 ordinances, building codes, flood hazard standards and
11 all state -- fire codes and environmental requirements
12 have or will be met;

13 C, describe the boundaries of the coastal waters and
14 land areas that is anticipated to be effected;

15 D, demonstrate that the alteration or activity will
16 not result in significant impacts on erosion and/or
17 deposition processes along the shore and in tidal waters;

18 E, demonstrate that the alteration or activity will
19 not result in significant impacts on the abundance and
20 diversity of plant and animal life;

21 F, demonstrate that the alteration will not
22 unreasonably interfere with, impair, or significantly
23 impact existing public access to, or use of, tidal waters
24 and/or the shore.

1 G, demonstrate that the alteration will not result
2 in significant impacts to water circulation, flushing,
3 turbidity and sedimentation.

4 H, demonstrate that there will be no significant
5 deterioration in the quality of the water in the
6 immediate vicinity as defined by DEM.

7 I, demonstrate that the alteration or activity will
8 not result in significant impacts to areas of historic
9 and archaeological significance;

10 J, demonstrate that the alteration or activity will
11 not result in significant conflicts with water-dependent
12 uses and activities such as recreational boating,
13 fishing, swimming, navigation, and commerce;

14 And K, demonstrate that measures have been taken to
15 minimize any adverse scenic impact.

16 Any questions or discussion of these requirements
17 under the Red Book for Category B assents?

18 MS. REYNOLDS: Madam Chair, I do have a
19 question.

20 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Ms. Reynolds and then
21 Mr. Gomez.

22 MS. REYNOLDS: For all of those requirements,
23 do we need to make a positive finding, or can we do sort
24 of substantial compliance that it complies with most of

1 those Category B requirements?

2 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. DeSisto?

3 MR. DeSISTO: Well, I don't really see a
4 distinction, Patricia. If you're going to make a
5 positive finding, that means that you have to -- when you
6 weigh it out there's more positive. For lack of a better
7 way to explain, there are more positives than negatives.
8 So to me --

9 MS. REYNOLDS: So some of those things maybe we
10 feel are -- we can't make a positive finding on, but the
11 overall -- if we find overall that it's consistent, it's
12 okay? I am just trying to judge how compliant it needs
13 to be in order for us to recommend.

14 MR. DeSISTO: What you have to do is make --
15 you have to make positive findings of fact on all of
16 those factors that apply to this application.

17 MS. REYNOLDS: Okay.

18 MR. DeSISTO: In other words, if you don't --
19 if you can't make a positive finding of fact on one of
20 the factors, that's fatal to the application.

21 MS. REYNOLDS: Okay. Thank you. That's what I
22 needed to know.

23 MR. DeSISTO: Yes.

24 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Gomez?

1 MR. GOMEZ: Yeah, the last issue, the scenic
2 impact, I thought that was a category that CRMC really
3 didn't get involved in. And subjective, to get back,
4 it's extremely subjective. I look at the initial
5 winter -- call them ugly and in a month I think they're
6 fine. It changes with time, and I'm not sure what the
7 definition of a scenic impact is.

8 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. I just wanted to
9 point out that all we need to find is that measures have
10 been taken to minimize it as opposed to saying we think
11 this is scenic or not because I agree with you, I think
12 that's highly subjective. So we just need to look at,
13 did the Applicant take certain measures to reduce the
14 overall appearance such as like low profile cages.

15 Mr. Murray?

16 MR. MURRAY: Yes. Observation, it seems that
17 the repetition of the word "significant" is significant
18 and that's the judgmental aspect. It's not that there be
19 no conflicts per say, but it's whether or not they are
20 significant or not. I guess that's -- well, I mean, it's
21 repeated in almost every one for the purpose I take it.

22 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yeah, and if you're just
23 talking in general throughout these requirements that the
24 standard is that significant, that's the threshold for a

1 number. Yes, I agree.

2 MR. MURRAY: Okay.

3 MR. DeSISTO: My only final point on it, just
4 to follow up, is that some of these standards might not
5 apply. For instance, the historic and archaeological
6 significance. If there are no historic or archaeological
7 components to the application at hand, that's something
8 that you make a finding of fact on, that it's
9 inapplicable to this type of an application.

10 So I think that's one of the things you have to
11 determine also.

12 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay, thank you. Any
13 other comments, questions, about the Category B
14 requirements?

15 [NO RESPONSE]

16 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Another standard
17 which is also found in the aquaculture provisions in the
18 Red Book that there was much discussion on is this
19 so-called five percent rule. I just want to read to you
20 where it's presented in the Red Book. This is where I
21 need Jim Boyd --

22 MR. BOYD: Madam Chair, that's
23 Section 1.3.1(k)4F. It's under the --

24 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: And there's another

1 provision, too, at 520. So I'm just going to read both
2 of those. And, thank you, I can always count on you to
3 get the specifics. This is 4(f).

4 "In the coastal salt ponds the area occupied by
5 commercial aquaculture shall not exceed five percent of
6 the total open water surface area of the coastal pond
7 below MLW."

8 So that's one place where it appears. Also it is at
9 subpart 520.

10 "The maximum area occupied by aquaculture leases in
11 the coastal salt ponds is five percent of the total open
12 water surface area of the salt pond below MLW. This
13 limit is established based upon the current knowledge of
14 ecological carrying capacity models."

15 So on this, I think everyone agrees that there is a
16 five percent rule, and there's some discussion about what
17 that rule represents. The section I just read, it says
18 that it's based upon ecological carrying capacity, and
19 there's been some suggestion that it might be beyond
20 that, social carrying capacity.

21 So I guess what I would like to do, I have a view of
22 it, but I'd like to ask Dave and Ben what that five
23 percent represents. Mr. Beutel?

24 MR. BEUTEL: The five percent rule was actually

1 read for the overall amount of aquaculture for a coastal
2 pond in mean low water. It was based on ecological
3 carrying capacity knowledge at the time, and I think you
4 all heard Dr. Byron and Dr. Rowe talk about how five
5 percent is significantly below the ecological carrying
6 capacity. So it is based on ecological knowledge, but
7 the fact is that it has been used as a social carrying
8 capacity. That has been how it has been applied.

9 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Mr. Goetsch, do
10 you have anything to add to that?

11 MR. GOETSCH: Yeah, it is regularly referred to
12 as a social carrying capacity, but no where in the Red
13 Book is it referred to as -- in the very beginning of the
14 case, the chapter for aquaculture, 1A, it says CRMC --
15 the Council recognizes the possibility of setting
16 scientifically defensive limits on aquaculture leasing in
17 a particular water body. I believe that the five percent
18 rule complies under this policy statement and that it was
19 originally -- current knowledge shows that it might be
20 more like 40 percent; however, no intention to change the
21 five percent. I think because there's been at least a de
22 facto recognition that it is a social carrying capacity
23 which is something that hasn't been studied but I don't
24 think specifically defined five percent.

1 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: As I'm understanding both
2 of you, it has been understood as a de facto social
3 carrying capacity, the five percent?

4 MR. GOETSCH: Yes. That was I think the result
5 of Dr. Byron's studies. Again, it's not mentioned or
6 referred to as a social carrying capacity in the Red
7 Book.

8 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Just to clarify, the five
9 percent represents a ceiling, so you can't have more than
10 five percent of a particular coastal pond that's occupied
11 by aquaculture leases; however, if you're below the five
12 percent, you could still be denied an aquaculture
13 application if you don't meet the Category B
14 requirements; is that correct?

15 MR. GOETSCH: That's correct, yes.

16 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Does anyone else
17 have questions about the five percent rule if you want to
18 discuss it?

19 MR. MURRAY: I wonder if the staff would opine
20 as to whether they view the five percent as a very
21 conservative limit to compare?

22 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: A very conservative limit
23 to -- did you say ecological or social carrying capacity?
24 I didn't hear the question.

1 MR. MURRAY: Social carrying capacity is kind
2 of a more fussy term not agreed to or defined by probably
3 the people assembled here. I just wonder if the five
4 percent -- I guess it is an accommodation on a
5 conservative basis for aquaculture in an effort to
6 minimize conflicts with other uses of the coastal
7 recourses ponds.

8 MR. GOETSCH: The number was originally arrived
9 from using data from a New Zealand study from Bob Rowe
10 with the aquaculture working group. It did have a mutual
11 study of what level of aquaculture would not have an
12 effect on the ecology of the pond. Five percent was kind
13 of anyone's best guess at that time. There was a study
14 that was done after that, that determined that the
15 numbers were much higher. But the numbers of the working
16 group, which is a multi-state group, agreed that five
17 percent was a number that all parties could live with.

18 I would ask Dave Beutel to elaborate on this, as he
19 was I believe party to those conversations.

20 MR. BEUTEL: It is the working group on the
21 five percent rule based on the ecological knowledge at
22 the time. And as Mr. Goetsch just mentioned, subsequent
23 knowledge came in that the ecological carrying capacity
24 was significantly higher than five percent, but the

1 aquaculture working group agreed to continue to use the
2 five percent amount for regulation.

3 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Gomez?

4 MR. GOMEZ: I think I talk too much, but based
5 on the presenters' objections, which we heard many, it
6 would appear to me that the social recreational capacity,
7 which I don't know what that number should be, but has
8 certainly been exceeded and probably will get further
9 exceeded. And I just want to be able to, in my own mind,
10 separate the social carrying capacity versus the
11 aquaculture carrying capacity.

12 So when I look at this question, I'd like to look
13 exclusively at the five percent rule. Is that correct,
14 that we need to do something in between?

15 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: You want to look at the
16 five percent rule only as it applies to ecological
17 carrying capacity?

18 MR. GOMEZ: Yes, yes.

19 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yes.

20 MR. GOMEZ: Even given that it appears that the
21 recreational carrying capacity based on presentations of
22 objectors has probably exceeded a number of moorings, a
23 number of skiers go on and on and on. So there's a
24 conflict there which is evident because of the presenters

1 that objected, and the five percent rule to me applies to
2 the aquacultural permit within that pond. That's what I
3 would like to make my judgment on as opposed to the fact
4 that the other uses interfere with that capacity or
5 apparently interfere with that capacity, five percent.

6 I don't know. I mean, I just don't know. I tend to
7 favor the five percent rule because it's so conservative.
8 I think all the conditions are pretty much met relative
9 to the water quality, the carrying capacity of the oyster
10 farm, or the shellfish farm. It seems like a pretty good
11 spot. It's tucked in, it's more or less out of the way,
12 and then we have the town noting, in fact, the past I
13 guess ordinance stating high speed craft need to set back
14 from the shoreline which further reduced, in my mind, the
15 social recreational carrying capacity of that area
16 because of the setback.

17 So I've taken that into consideration also, but I'm
18 just trying to separate out the social carrying capacity,
19 the number of people that want to use that waterway
20 versus a small section of that being identified within
21 CRMC limits of the five percent rule. If any of that
22 makes sense.

23 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yes. I understand where
24 you're going with that. For me, the way that I'll view

1 it on the five percent rule is that it represents
2 ecological carrying capacity. I think it's ambiguous as
3 to whether or not it represents social carrying capacity,
4 and so I'm going to try not to base my decision on five
5 percent as applied to social carrying capacity because it
6 seems somewhat arbitrary to me to just five percent
7 equals okay.

8 I'm going to focus on the very specific Category B
9 requirements, and I'm satisfied that we don't go over
10 five percent for the pond so that per our regulations, it
11 appears to satisfy the ecological portion.

12 MR. GOMEZ: That's what I'm in agreement with,
13 yes. Thank you.

14 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay, good. Anyone else
15 want to talk about the five percent rule or have
16 questions about it?

17 Mr. Boyd?

18 MR. BOYD: Madam Chair, just to the point of
19 discussion just now on the ecological carrying capacity,
20 if I may, the very first policy in the aquaculture
21 section 1.3.1(k)1A speaks to the fact that as any human
22 activity can have adverse environmental effects, the
23 Council recognizes the possibility of setting scientific
24 defensible limits on aquaculture leasing in any

1 particular water body.

2 The CRMC also recognizes that in the framework of
3 adaptive management protocols, research into the ecology
4 of coastal waters and our understanding of ecosystem
5 carrying capacities is constantly evolving and improving.

6 So that policy speaks essentially to the ecological
7 carrying capacity and in no way mentions the societal
8 carrying capacity here. And so the five percent rule is
9 entirely focused for purposes of the regulation on the
10 ecological carrying capacity.

11 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Thank you for that
12 clarification.

13 Anyone else, or are we done with this topic?

14 [NO RESPONSE]

15 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: There has also been
16 identified and discussed with the expert testimony this
17 Section 4.8 of the South Kingstown Boats and Waterways
18 Ordinance. The ordinance itself is not a CRMP regulation
19 or requirement and it's been identified, I believe, to
20 demonstrate whether or not there's more or less conflict
21 with existing uses.

22 I'm going to read it and tell you how I view it, and
23 we can get counsel to weigh in on this.

24 "Section 4.8 which governs waterskiing, swimming and

1 personal watercraft, and then in parens jet skis et
2 cetera:

3 Subpart 1, no waterskiing will be allowed in the
4 narrows upper Point Judith Pond, Potter Pond channel or
5 in the designated areas of acreages or moorings. No
6 waterskier or his or her boat shall approach any
7 stationary or moving object closer than 200 feet except
8 as may be incidental to starting or finishing a run; nor
9 shall any waterskier ski within any designated channels."

10 So that has been discussed by both the Applicant and
11 the interveners. There's also Subpart 6 which has been
12 identified for context which is:

13 "No person shall operate a personal watercraft
14 within 200 feet of swimmers, divers, shore, or board
15 vessels except at headway speed."

16 So I just want to ask first, Mr. DeSisto, if it's
17 correct that this local ordinance is not binding upon
18 this Subcommittee, but it may be relevant in our
19 evaluation of conflicts or how the proposed farm fits
20 within the cove?

21 MR. DeSISTO: That's correct, yes. Not
22 binding, but certainly relevant to your discussion.

23 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay, thank you.

24 Anyone want to comment on this, have a question

1 about it?

2 [NO RESPONSE]

3 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. I believe that
4 sets forth the general authorities that we are working
5 within. Have I missed anything, Mr. DeSisto, or any
6 Subcommittee members that you would like to add?

7 MR. DeSISTO: No. I think that was an
8 excellent summary to get the deliberations going.

9 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Again, you know,
10 there's other provisions of the Red Book and of the
11 statute. I haven't read everything in its entirety, but
12 it's my opinion that these are the most relevant policies
13 and standards to focus on for our deliberations.

14 So we have before us two configurations. The
15 proposed farm came in as Configuration A, and then
16 through discussions with our aquaculture coordinator and
17 feedback from stakeholders, the Applicant agreed that
18 there could be this Configuration B that takes off some
19 of the western edge of I'll call it a rectangle, or an
20 initial rectangle, and then the Configuration B is now
21 what we have been referring to as a polygon.

22 The preference, as I understand it, from the staff
23 report is for Configuration B, but we still have those
24 two in front of us for discussion.

1 Mr. Beutel, is that correct?

2 MR. BEUTEL: That is correct, Madam Chair.

3 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Is there anything else
4 that you want to add on the Configuration B?

5 MR. BEUTEL: The only thing I can add is that a
6 rectangle from a farmer's point of view is easier to work
7 than a five-sided polygon.

8 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay, thank you. Let's
9 talk now about testimony, admitted documents that go to
10 the -- I'll just put out the first topic, what activity
11 occurs in Segar Cove or the pond as a whole. I want to
12 kind of get together what we believe, you know, according
13 to the preponderance of the evidence and what is that
14 activity that we're going to have to look at to determine
15 any conflicting uses.

16 Can I just ask, and I'll just start with you,
17 Mr. Murray being the South Kingstown representative, if
18 you want to comment upon what you viewed as the activity
19 either as to type or frequency or both?

20 MR. MURRAY: I think in general Potter Pond is
21 a more quietly used pond than others, other salt ponds
22 that are more readily accessible. There was a bit of
23 discussion about the rights-of-way providing access to
24 the pond, but I think those -- none of those

1 rights-of-way really have supportive parking, for
2 example, so the general public doesn't have as ready
3 access as people who live on the pond.

4 Water street, for example, there's been a dispute as
5 to whether that's a public access or not. I think the
6 people that live in Matunuck Point have rights to it, but
7 there was a big dust up last summer as a matter of fact
8 over that, that probably isn't resolved.

9 I've got probably almost 60 years association with
10 living in Matunuck. I grew up at Mary Carpenter's Beach.
11 My family still owns a house there. I lived in East
12 Matunuck for the last 25 years at this point and, you
13 know, I used the pond quite a bit. I've actually
14 waterskied in the pond, although not for several decades,
15 and it seems to me that that's the use characteristic of
16 the pond.

17 I think waterskiing is probably a smaller slice of
18 the pie than other uses that occur there, fishing,
19 shellfishing, kayaking, for example. So, you know, I
20 don't think the use characteristics are as dramatic as
21 some folks had said during the course of the hearings or
22 as limited as the Applicant's photographic record.
23 Probably somewhere betwixt and between. It's
24 weather-dependent, time of the year dependent, but I

1 think it's a fairly quiet pond if you compare it to
2 others in the state.

3 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yeah, I -- I viewed the
4 Applicant's photographic record as limited. Obviously,
5 because it was a snapshot in time in a noon hour for a
6 period of time, and it's hard to draw conclusions about
7 whether or not there was activity at other times during
8 the day. So I think it has -- it's some evidence, but
9 it's on the more limited evidence side in my view.

10 I thought the collective testimony of those who live
11 on the cove and use the cove and the pond, in my view,
12 the preponderance of the evidence was that there is
13 regular activity on the pond and it's a variety of
14 different uses, the waterskiing and more passive
15 recreational uses of the kayaks and small craft and
16 paddle boarders and that type of thing.

17 I did come away with the understanding that there is
18 regular seasonal use, particularly in the summer, the
19 more higher regular use of that cove and that there's
20 certain patterns that have developed as far as the fast
21 lane and the slow lane where the recreational -- the more
22 passive recreational uses are going closer to the farm
23 area. The deep middle is, if you're going to have
24 waterskiing, that's where you'll see the waterskiers. So

1 that's what I got from kind of the collective testimony
2 on that.

3 Mr. Gomez, would you like to comment?

4 MR. GOMEZ: Yes. Again, the waterskiing seemed
5 to come up quite frequently. When I put that with the
6 relevant ordinance, it seemed to have minimal impact, and
7 at some point we were talking about maybe one more skier
8 could use the area.

9 The passive, if you will, kayaking and things like
10 that, there may be some impact. I toyed with the idea of
11 moving I think it was ten feet from mean low water or
12 something, the edge of the pond. There was testimony
13 that said transit lanes through the farm and the area
14 along the shore would accommodate the kayaks and things.

15 The one question maybe that we should discuss is,
16 there were several parties that thought the farm
17 restricted access to the cove because of its location in
18 a boat from the main body of the pond, and I'm not sure
19 if that's really true or not, but there were several
20 people that said, you know, trying to navigate especially
21 a sailboat, a small sailboat, into the pond might be
22 impacted by the farm.

23 I don't know if we want to get into it now or not,
24 but there might be some modifications. One of the

1 restrictions on the pond is that you'll flag the corners.
2 The deep water part of the pond is bottom shellfishing,
3 and I'm not sure we need flags right to the edge of the
4 bottom shellfishing. Maybe the flags could be back a
5 little bit. So just some thoughts that maybe we can
6 discuss later on that.

7 So I don't see a major impact to the recreational
8 use. I just -- people deal with kayaks and small canoes
9 and things like that around the ponds around the farms on
10 a regular basis. The impact of the high speed
11 waterskiing, if one follows the ordinance in that
12 location, seems to be minimal. And that would be my
13 thoughts.

14 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Ms. Reynolds,
15 would you like to comment upon activity in the cove and
16 pond?

17 MS. REYNOLDS: You know, I'm happy to follow
18 Don because a lot of what he says I also agree with. For
19 me, there was obviously a lot of very heartfelt testimony
20 from lots of people who live near and use the pond. For
21 me, there's clearly no doubt that having the aquaculture
22 there impacts water-dependent uses or activities. Letter
23 B in the requirements.

24 But to me it's really the extent of that impact, how

1 significant that impact is. So with the farm there, to
2 me, it prohibits all recreation in that specific area.
3 It's not safe to swim. Paddling is probably not a good
4 idea. And clearly any kind of motorized sports is not
5 safe in that area, so it does preclude it. But because
6 of the setbacks for the zoning, for the town, that
7 limited area becomes even less significant to me. And
8 also the fact that there are very few opportunities in
9 that area to waterski anyway, also again, makes that a
10 bit less significant to me.

11 So I think there's a way for all of these rules to
12 be balanced on the pond, that the existence of the
13 aquaculture could stay, and that because of the limited
14 impact to all other water-dependent uses, they can
15 continue to occur on other areas of the pond.

16 So for me, I don't find the farm being there, the
17 proposed farm, to be a significant impact on recreation.

18 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Because it's been brought
19 up a couple times now -- well, maybe I should ask my
20 vice-chair if you want to comment first, and then I want
21 to talk about the buffers.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: I will, Madam Chair.
23 First thing, unrelated but related, when you made your
24 introduction, you thanked staff and everyone that

1 participated, is almost verbatim what I had. I just
2 wanted to add, I want to thank you as our Chair because
3 this was a difficult application and procedure, putting
4 everything together. I want to thank everyone that you
5 thanked, and I want to thank you as well for running the
6 meetings.

7 Now to the question at hand. Similar to you, when I
8 look at the evidence put forth by the Applicant, and I
9 had in quotation marks, and it was something you said,
10 it's a snapshot in time. So we look at a snapshot in
11 time as it relates to evidence put forth by the
12 Applicant.

13 What I needed to rely on was the local residents and
14 recreators who have more of an intimate knowledge of the
15 cove and its uses. You know, Vin has been there. He's
16 done things on the water. I didn't have that benefit so
17 I rely on the local residents and everything that they
18 said.

19 Staff report way back said the significance of the
20 effect is debatable. So that's the whole purpose of the
21 hearing, hearing both sides over here. Similar to what's
22 been said, I do feel that placement of that aqua farm
23 there creates an issue, and my concern is that placement
24 of the plan there will compress the water activity to the

1 center of the pond and create more of a safety issue.

2 So maybe unlike some of you, and I don't mean this
3 downplaying what you guys said, I find that there is a
4 safety issue and that's what is going to sway me. Maybe
5 I'm showing my hand here. As counsel has said, a
6 non-positive factual finding is fatal to the application.
7 And when I look at everything, I do feel, and I'm of the
8 opinion, that there is a significant impact on existing
9 public use, water use, recreational activity and that.

10 So while I apply all of the evidence, expert lay
11 testimony, all that to each and every criteria that you
12 succinctly delineated for us, and I think every one of
13 them is met except I do feel, and I hold the opinion,
14 that the evidence to me reflects that there is a
15 significant impact.

16 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you, Mr. Coia. So
17 that's a good segway. Back to the buffers, because I've
18 heard a couple times now that the buffers already
19 significantly restrict what can be done in that area. I
20 want to make sure that we're all on the same page as to
21 what can be restricted in that the 200-foot buffer.

22 So the prohibition of the 200 feet relates to
23 waterskiing. So this is waterskiing only within the
24 200 feet if I'm reading this correctly -- well,

1 waterskier or his or her boat that is towing the water
2 skier. And I want to make sure, Mr. DeSisto, that that's
3 how you view that ordinance, that it relates to one of
4 the uses of the pond.

5 MR. DeSISTO: Right, yes.

6 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Then you have the
7 waterskier or his or her boat have to stay away from the
8 stationary or moving objects. So if you have the
9 200 feet, the farm occupies 200 feet out from the shore,
10 and then anything that is stationary within that farm you
11 would have to measure another 200 feet into the cove.

12 Is that correct?

13 MR. DeSISTO: Yes.

14 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. And then it's also
15 been raised whether or not the 200 feet for the
16 waterskier, that buffer, actually measures from the shore
17 or measures or doesn't. Because another provision that I
18 read earlier, it actually identifies the shore, that a
19 200-foot buffer from the shore. Shore was not used in
20 this section, and so an argument has been made that there
21 is no restriction from the shore for the waterskiers.

22 So I guess the way that I would view that is that a
23 waterskier could be using what's the proposed farm area
24 as a buffer that it currently is available. I think I

1 understood the argument to be that.

2 So we should discuss that. What do we believe this
3 200-foot buffer restricts? Does it restrict waterskiing
4 from the shore? Does it restrict waterskiing from the
5 edge of the farm? Both? You know, I'd like to hear
6 discussion on that. Mr. Gomez?

7 MR. GOMEZ: Here I go again. In my mind I was
8 using that number from the shore. The 200 feet from a
9 stationary object I would expect would include things
10 like the moorings and if anybody has any lobster pots out
11 or anything like that. So in my own internal
12 deliberation I considered the 200 feet from the shore,
13 not the fixed asset such as a flag on the farm.

14 You brought up a good point. I'm not sure whether I
15 need to change my thinking and make it 200 feet from the
16 further most stationary object in the pond. An
17 additional 200 feet I guess would take it out another
18 maybe 500 feet from the shore or so, maybe more, which is
19 pretty restrictive.

20 But again, we go back to the separation of the five
21 percent rule and the recreational carrying capacity
22 which, you know, at some point we might have to admit
23 that the carrying capacity of that small area has been
24 exceeded. There's nothing we can do about that. People

1 go and use the water.

2 So I'm still listening to deliberation before I make
3 a final decision, is I guess all I can say.

4 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: I mean, I think the way
5 that I read this ordinance is that you could, without the
6 farm being there, you could have a waterskier or a boat
7 be in the proposed farm area if it's a start or a finish
8 of a run because it says "except as may be incidental to
9 starting or finishing a run."

10 So the way that I view it is, just assume that it
11 is 200 feet from shore, just assume that interpretation,
12 the boat and the waterskier can still be there if they
13 are getting ready, they are starting up the boat or
14 finishing the boat or, you know, they are finishing their
15 run and another waterskier comes in. They can be in that
16 area just to get out of the water type of thing.

17 So to me, that is clear that they can be in the
18 proposed farm area depending on what the activity is.
19 They can't be in there for full throttle potentially, but
20 at the beginning and the end.

21 Does anyone disagree with that?

22 [NO RESPONSE]

23 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Then this setback,
24 the 200 feet, is not -- let's assume that it's from

1 shore. It doesn't relate to other activities. Do we all
2 agree on that? This is waterskiing specific.

3 [NO RESPONSE]

4 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: So the other activities
5 we've talked about with kayaking and paddle boarding and
6 sailing and whatever, something other than the
7 waterskiing, you can be within the 200 feet from shore,
8 assuming that's the interpretation.

9 Does anyone disagree with that?

10 [NO RESPONSE]

11 MR. DeSISTO: No, Madam Chair, and if I may,
12 that's the plain reading of the ordinance. I think it
13 applies to one activity, but not others.

14 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Then we also have
15 this Subpart 6:

16 "No person shall operate a personal watercraft
17 within 200 feet of swimmers, divers, shore or moored
18 vessels except at headway speed."

19 I think that's pretty clear that personal
20 watercraft -- I don't know if that's more than jet skis.
21 It's defined in the ordinance as "jet skis, et cetera."
22 So I know it applies to jet skis and they can't be within
23 200 feet of shore under this except if they are, I guess,
24 slowing down and just getting out of the way, out of the

1 fast lane.

2 Does that seem like a reading, Mr. DeSisto, that you
3 would support?

4 MR. DeSISTO: Yes. You know, I'm not going to
5 say I'm an expert on personal watercraft, but I don't
6 know what it encompasses other than the jet skis.

7 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yes, okay. So,
8 Ms. Reynolds, I know you were talking about the buffer
9 before. In this discussion, does that change any of what
10 you were saying, or is that how you understood the
11 buffers to work? Again, this is my interpretations. I'm
12 happy to discuss anything.

13 MS. REYNOLDS: It does. I was thinking that it
14 was also from the shore as a stationary object, so it
15 does sort of open up the level of impact for -- a
16 different interpretation of those buffers does allow --
17 from the proposed farm.

18 I also, as part of this, too, I want to talk to
19 Ray's issue of safety. So what I think about that,
20 obviously safety is a really important component to just
21 any kind of law or ordinance. I'm thinking about the
22 Category B assent requirements where it mentions that it
23 needs to be D, where it talks about it's applicable to
24 all safety codes. But a lot of what we heard, and I know

1 that the people who live on the pond are recognized sort
2 of as experts in their area, so their testimony about
3 safety was really important and relevant. But did we
4 hear anything -- I'm trying to remember from anybody
5 about any, from a harbormaster kind of person if there's
6 somebody like that, that actually could testify to safety
7 issues? Because I do think it's important, but I'm not
8 sure how to weigh that in consideration of these assent
9 requirements.

10 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yeah, I mean, that was
11 brief. The harbormaster did comment on it. I'm
12 paraphrasing. He said that he didn't view there to be
13 safety issues to weigh that against the Waterfront
14 Advisory Commission that said that there were.

15 In my view, it's not clear that there was an expert
16 specifically on safety. There were experts on both sides
17 that I think commented upon that, but just to answer your
18 specific question, the harbormaster did comment on that.

19 MS. REYNOLDS: Okay.

20 MR. GOMEZ: Madam Chair, I'm not talking as an
21 expert in this area, but I have taken a number of boating
22 course classes with the state with various grandchildren
23 and friends and things. The jet ski issue, in the State
24 of Rhode Island you cannot operate a jet ski without

1 getting a safety certification that you are qualified to
2 operate such. And the same is true with a speed motor
3 craft, skiing and things. So all of these people have to
4 have a safety -- have to have passed a course relative to
5 operation of those recreational platforms and safety with
6 them.

7 So, you know, the safety issue theoretically is
8 supposed to be engrained in the people and, you know,
9 running a jet ski through an oyster farm or something
10 like that or running it too fast along the shore and
11 things like that is kind of a prohibited activity from a
12 safety standpoint in accordance with the boating course
13 that's given by DEM.

14 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay, yeah, and I did
15 note that looking at the full ordinance that there were
16 such requirements for operation of motorboats and jet
17 skis. That's consistent with what I saw in the
18 ordinance.

19 Mr. Coia?

20 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: Thank you, Madam Chair.
21 Talking about the delineation of the markers, the
22 200-foot buffer, my rationale and interpretation was that
23 it's 200 feet from the closest fixed object which would
24 be something that's in the field, the aquaculture field

1 or farm. And that's why I said that I think placing it
2 there compresses the activity more towards the middle.

3 You know, there's been some discussion about fishing
4 and kayaking through the farm, but my concern is more of
5 a high velocity physical moving, i.e., a person on skis
6 and/or the vessel pulling them.

7 I don't know about everyone else, but I learned some
8 physics of waterskiing during this whole hearing about
9 the arch of the curve that it makes, the boat can turn
10 this fast, and I'm going like that, people can see me,
11 but the skier does a much bigger tail. And because of
12 that, the driver and the skier has to be cognizant of the
13 area that they can operate within.

14 So, again, my concern is on the safety, especially
15 with the waterskiers because the velocity in which they
16 are moving versus a kayaker. Not to say that someone
17 can't get hurt kayaking if something happens, but my
18 safety concerns are more of the moving vehicles and the
19 moving person being pulled.

20 As I said, I think obviously prohibiting them, and
21 there's a prohibition, but also a commonsense prohibition
22 for them to waterski throughout an aquaculture farm.
23 You're putting them more toward the middle so that when
24 there are other skiers there, and there has been

1 testimony that there has been more than one at one time,
2 there is now more of a chance that they are in each
3 other's way.

4 So that's my rationale for that. So my
5 interpretation is that it's 200 feet from a marker or the
6 delineation point in the aquaculture farm.

7 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: I do agree with you that
8 I think that's the way to read the buffer. It's a moving
9 or stationary object. So we know that the proposed farm
10 does take up 200 feet of the buffer and then it goes a
11 little bit beyond that. So 75 percent in the buffer,
12 25 percent -- I think I'm saying this correctly --
13 outside of the buffer the goal outside that 25 percent
14 can then measure from there to more feet into the cove.

15 There were some depictions of I think Mr. Whitney's
16 report of what that would look like and then, you know,
17 there were buffers around the farm 200 feet out. It also
18 looked at work boats being parked there. Those being
19 also stationary or moving objects that you would have to
20 measure 200 feet from. So that would be additional
21 bump-outs where those boats are parked.

22 So I agree with how you're viewing it. That's how I
23 viewed it. And I think with respect to the skiers,
24 there's been much to be on whether or not the elimination

1 of one of two or three skiers is significant. It's a
2 small number, right? But it also is -- if it's two, it
3 would be a 50 percent reduction in that activity that
4 will make -- one skier would be able to do the run at any
5 given time.

6 There was discussion about how people park and wait
7 so that they can get in a run after someone else is
8 finished. They've eliminated one from two being able to
9 do it simultaneously, and you also have those waiting.
10 So I think cumulatively, on any given day, if you have
11 eight hours of a day and then you have seven days a week
12 during the summer season, that could result in hundreds
13 of skiers not being able to ski in the cove even though
14 it's just one at any given time, but I think cumulatively
15 it's bigger impact.

16 I also think that the more passive recreational
17 users will get pushed more towards what's been referred
18 to as the meaty middle, outside of the farm, more in the
19 deep water area. They can go around the farm. We've had
20 testimony about that. There's going to be at its
21 narrowest .10 feet, so they could go around the farm near
22 the shore but, you know, would they? Or would they feel
23 uncomfortable with that? I don't know. I think
24 practically it will put more into the middle, and I don't

1 think you'll have passive recreational users based on the
2 testimony that I've heard going through the farm.

3 You know, I guess you could navigate through the
4 farm, but I haven't heard anyone in this proceeding
5 indicate that they would be comfortable doing that
6 because they could fall, or the wind would blow them, and
7 they don't want to get caught in the lines.

8 So I think the combination of bumping out the buffer
9 zone, you know, assuming that that would be in effect at
10 the time the farm is constructed, and then shoving more
11 activities into the smaller condensed area does present a
12 significant impact. I can't see it any other way,
13 really, because of the condensing of the space and the
14 testimony about the deep water being at a premium, you
15 know, two areas of the pond, the northern basin and Segar
16 Cove. And so it's not like there's 97 percent more of
17 the pond to use for waterskiing. It's just two places.
18 And the northern basin is already crowded with skiers.

19 So I do think cumulatively there is an impact on
20 existing uses, that if constructed it would be
21 significant. I agree, I think it poses safety issues.

22 MR. GOMEZ: Madam Chair?

23 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yes, Mr. Gomez.

24 MR. GOMEZ: You mentioned work boats. They are

1 there on a temporary basis. They probably could be
2 scheduled. The Applicant could probably schedule those
3 to be away from peak hours when people would be skiing,
4 but if you're going to do the hundred, 200 limit on the
5 flag that is set out in the scallop area, you could raft
6 the boats during the summer especially around the Fourth
7 of July weekend, Labor Day weekend. You've got anchored
8 boats that sometimes anchor for fishing or quahogging,
9 sailboats moving extremely slow or stopped. Even bass
10 fishing, as people have mentioned, it's great bass
11 fishing water. People normally drift for bass fishing.
12 Those are all stationary objects. Then you start putting
13 the 200 foot around them and then you shut down the whole
14 cove.

15 So I think we can carry this to extremes, again,
16 getting back to the fact that maybe the recreational use
17 has gone past its carrying capacity. That's why I
18 question the separation of the farm from the
19 recreational. I'm still there and still thinking, but
20 you made some good points.

21 Safety issue, when I went through all the material,
22 safety issue was the first thing I wrote down. I did
23 consider the 200 feet from the shore and the idea that
24 you lost one skier at a time. It seemed to be the math,

1 that's the way the math worked. That did not seem
2 significant to me, but I'm not a skier. I'm a fisherman.
3 So those are my points.

4 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Mr. Coia?

5 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: Just to follow up on that,
6 I think what we need to take into consideration and focus
7 on is that the existing use right now is the recreation.
8 That's there. It's been there for a long time. So the
9 Applicant is now looking to inject an aquaculture farm
10 into an area that already has an existing use.

11 I know Don said well, maybe the recreational use has
12 a maximum of --

13 MR. GOMEZ: Yeah.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: -- but to me you can't
15 take it away. We're not adding recreational use, we're
16 not putting more boaters there, we're not putting more
17 skiers there. We're trying to protect what's already
18 there. I think, again, I keep going back to the language
19 of our standard of review. Is there a significant
20 impact? And we have to look at, well, what's there, how
21 is the use currently, how has the use been for the last
22 50 years, however long, and then would the addition of
23 this farm have a significant impact? That's all I'm
24 looking at. I'm looking at what's already there and what

1 the evidence showed all the uses that everyone has been
2 doing for all the years. So I just wanted to follow up
3 on what Don had said.

4 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Thank you.
5 Mr. Murray or Ms. Reynolds, would you like to comment on
6 any of that?

7 MS. REYNOLDS: I'm thinking to ask you, we did
8 the review of the dumplings, and one of the things that
9 we should have talked about was a balance of uses there.

10 When you look at the proposed aquaculture and what
11 we've all agreed is a very conservative limit on
12 aquaculture in the total pond at five percent, and the
13 fact that the pond still falls below that five percent
14 with the addition of this new three-acre farm, does that
15 sort of talk to the balance of uses?

16 And when I think about the potential impact to the
17 recreation from the farm, so it's the towed water sports
18 is a subset of sort of the total recreation package, I
19 still -- I don't think that the limit on the waterskiing
20 or the tubing in that specific area is the significant
21 impact, but I do think danger to even one person being in
22 that area is significant.

23 So if we do interpret that buffer as being something
24 that needs to be extended for safety, that would

1 definitely factor into how I start to think about the
2 safety issue. And that, for me, would sort of trump all
3 of the other things.

4 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: You know, I just point
5 out that the ordinance, again, it's not a CRMC
6 requirement. We're not looking at this and checking off
7 the box and saying is it met or not. We are just looking
8 at it as assuming that it is enforced by the town, what
9 does it do as far as conflict with existing uses if the
10 farm goes in?

11 So I just want to make that clear. But I agree, you
12 know, that waterskiing is just one subset and there's
13 some debate as I'm hearing as to whether or not the
14 impact would be significant on waterskiing. But just
15 take into consideration that the other uses, they are not
16 going to be displaced entirely, but they will somewhat.
17 They can kind of hug the edges by the shore, or they go
18 on the other side near where there's the waterskiing.
19 They don't have that three acres unless they want to
20 navigate through the farm, and they likely won't do a lot
21 of that.

22 So all those uses are not going to be -- I think
23 someone described it in the testimony, they won't be in
24 the slow lane. They won't have that slow lane anymore,

1 and then the waterskier is the deeper water. So you have
2 the slow lane and the fast lane being put into one more
3 narrow space.

4 These town ordinances, the Waterways Ordinance, is,
5 you know, the 200 feet. That's a safety ordinance. So
6 presumably it's there for a reason, right, to keep people
7 away from each other. Again, the waterskiers have to
8 stay 200 feet away from others. Jet skiers have to stay
9 -- you know, there are so many things to maintain a
10 buffer on and then you're putting them in the same place.

11 So the overall activity that can occur in the
12 reduced water sheet becomes much smaller because if you
13 have waterskiing there, maybe you're not going to have
14 much of anything else unless those more passive
15 recreational users want to go along the more kind of
16 narrow edge of the shore.

17 MR. MURRAY: Madam Chair, I think Ms. Reynolds
18 raised some very good points about balance of use of the
19 public resource. Although, I would concur that the
20 safety issue is a thornier one, and even one injury would
21 be one too many. So it's kind of hard to get by.

22 I have a wonderment, a question in my mind, about
23 three acres is the max. Is that indeed the maximum size
24 of the lease that can be sought?

1 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yes.

2 MR. MURRAY: Okay. Just a question. Would a
3 reduction in the size of the farm mitigate appropriately
4 the safety issues that have been raised? Although there
5 was no indication of any accidents per say, wasn't that
6 question asked during the course of the hearing and there
7 were no reports from DEM regarding people being hurt or
8 what have you? I just wonder.

9 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: I mean, I think the
10 answer is kind of a lawyer's answer, but it depends. It
11 would depend on the resulting size, it would depend on
12 the configuration, the resulting configuration. I don't
13 know what you're proposing, but --

14 MR. MURRAY: I'm not proposing anything. It's
15 a question I have in my own mind because you look at the
16 two configurations, the rectangle or the polygon, and I
17 think the polygon was I guess an effort in some respects
18 to try to accommodate some of the concerns that had been
19 raised in the initial travel of the application.

20 I do think that ten feet to shore is too close in my
21 mind, but there's been a lot of life to this. I guess
22 there's good reason for that. I don't have a magic
23 answer to any of the questions that are lingering.

24 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay, understood.

1 Mr. Gomez?

2 MR. GOMEZ: I think we do need to remember that
3 half of this farm is submerged under water, no floats on
4 top with the exceptions of the mandated anchors at the
5 corners. So we're talking three acres, but the deep
6 water part of it is also -- I'm not sure if the
7 application restricts it to submerge for scallops, but I
8 think that would be one of the stipulations I think we
9 could put on a permit, that there would be no floating
10 bags out in the outer half, if you will, of the pond.

11 The ten feet, I had considered maybe eliminating one
12 row along there because I agree that ten feet is not a
13 very significant amount of space, especially even with a
14 kayak or something. And if you eliminated one row along
15 the shore, you'd get more distance. I do think that the
16 ten feet is for mean low water, which only occurs for a
17 small portion of the time. So, therefore, it is greater
18 than ten feet for the majority of the tidal cycles.

19 All of that comes into play so we start talking
20 about, you know, very small pieces of this puzzle, and
21 I'm not sure -- again, I'm really concerned about safety
22 myself. I don't like to see problems, but I spent my
23 whole life at Sakonnet Point going around traps and going
24 around lobster pots. Sometimes they are marked and

1 sometimes they are not. It is just something you have to
2 deal with and get used to.

3 I don't see a three-acre farm, half of which is
4 submerged, is a really big problem. But, again, I
5 understand the safety aspects. We're in a mindset that
6 even though these people have certified safety
7 certificates to operate doesn't mean that they follow
8 them. The Town has ordinances. I guess it doesn't mean
9 they follow them. So foolish people end up in a jamb
10 sometimes.

11 Again, those are just things going through my mind
12 to deliberate the final outcome.

13 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yes, I mean, they either
14 won't follow them or they will follow them and it will
15 just eliminate a lot of activity. So they are either not
16 going to observe it and there will be a problem, or
17 everyone will observe it and then you can't do a bunch of
18 things you used to do on the cove, or somewhere in
19 between those two.

20 MR. GOMEZ: I think in between, yeah.

21 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Gomez, we can ask
22 Mr. Beutel, just on the submerged part of the proposed
23 farm, can you describe how deep that submerged and what
24 the infrastructure is in the submerged area? I guess

1 that's the scallop area with the suspended gear.

2 MR. BEUTEL: The proposed scallop gear was
3 suspended lantern nets. So that would require buoys on
4 the surface of the water to suspend those lantern nets.
5 It appears to me that there would be three to four feet
6 of water above the top of the lantern net.

7 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: And how many buoys are
8 required for that?

9 MR. BEUTEL: It depends. Here is your lawyer's
10 answer. It depends. It depends on the weight of the
11 lantern net. So as the scallops grew, additional
12 flotation would have to be added. It may still be one
13 float per lantern net, but the size of the float would be
14 increased.

15 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. But you wouldn't
16 be able to get rid of the buoys because you need that for
17 the scallop infrastructure to grow them. You can't get
18 rid of the buoys that support --

19 MR. BEUTEL: You have to be able to access the
20 lantern nets. You could put a buoy in the top of the
21 lantern net so that you didn't see it from the surface,
22 but then your ability to access it would be diminished.

23 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Mr. Gomez, does
24 that answer some of your question on the submerged

1 portion?

2 MR. GOMEZ: It makes it more complicated for
3 me.

4 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yeah. Any other
5 questions about the infrastructure that would be required
6 for this farm?

7 [NO RESPONSE]

8 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Just to clarify,
9 Mr. Beutel, the outward edge or edges of this farm would
10 have infrastructure on them, right?

11 MR. BEUTEL: Correct. The corners, yes, the
12 corners should be marked.

13 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: So it's a stationary or
14 moving object, I guess, stationary object?

15 MR. BEUTEL: It should be anchored. It
16 shouldn't move except with the tide and wind, but the
17 anchor part shouldn't. The float part will.

18 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Is there anything
19 else that we want to discuss just about Segar Cove, how
20 it's shaped, how it's used, how it compares to other
21 areas of the pond that is relevant to our discussion
22 here?

23 Do people believe that testimony was clear that the
24 uses typically happen in the middle of the cove as

1 opposed to where the mooring area is in the south or the
2 very north where you have the docks? Does everyone view
3 it that way? Mr. Murray?

4 MR. MURRAY: Yes, generally speaking. I mean,
5 the mooring areas are much shallower so the deeper
6 portions in the cove, it's relative. It's based on the
7 chart I have is five or six feet of depth, a more active
8 area of the pond, of Segar Cove.

9 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Anyone else want to
10 comment on the geography and features of the Segar Cove?

11 [NO RESPONSE]

12 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Before we go through the
13 Category B requirements, does anyone want to talk about
14 any other evidence that came in that would relate to any
15 of these requirements that we need to make a finding on?

16 MR. GOMEZ: Madam Chair, I just wrote down, I
17 had written down just two other areas that popped up a
18 lot. One was noise and the other was pollution. I think
19 we all agree that pollution is not a problem. The noise
20 impact, I didn't see it as a problem either. I'm not
21 sure we need to get into deep discussion on it. I just
22 present two more factors that came up during all the
23 presentations, noise and people indicating that there
24 would be pollution. That's the only reason I mention it.

1 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yeah, and maybe we can
2 discuss this when we go through the Category B
3 requirements, but I agree with you that I don't think
4 that there's a pollution problem that's proposed that
5 would be caused by the proposed farm. And I think any
6 noise issues that could be caused by the farm can be
7 controlled through operational control.

8 I know the Applicant had proposed, you know, not
9 using tumblers or power washers and radios and having
10 restriction on hours. All those things, I think, would
11 eliminate some of the more odious aspects from a noise
12 perspective of a farm.

13 You know, I mean, depending on where I ended up, I
14 was going to propose also, you know, no tours that you
15 bring from the restaurant, that type of thing. So I
16 didn't see those as impediments.

17 MR. GOMEZ: Thank you.

18 MS. REYNOLDS: Madam Chair, I just wanted to
19 ask about that also. So I thought as part of the public
20 testimony there were some people that got up in favor of
21 the farming, the aquaculture. And one person actually,
22 he got up and said he preferred it because the amount of
23 noise and pollution from the boats and the water, the
24 existing motorboats there, he thought should have

1 outweighed the impacts of the farm.

2 When I look at the assent requirements, mostly it
3 talks in terms of potential negative effects of the farm.
4 But how do we factor in the evidence that we heard about
5 the fact that the farm actually cleans the water and
6 weigh that against extra pollution created by recreation?
7 Is there a balance between that or do we not consider
8 that?

9 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: I mean, I think we can
10 consider what the existing pollution might be in the cove
11 and when we go through the Category B requirement about
12 impact from the farm, I think that can be considered at
13 that time. Does it help clean up the pond? And so if
14 there is boat activity, and it takes away some of the
15 pollution because they are filter feeding organisms, then
16 that goes into that factor. I think that's the answer.

17 Mr. DeSisto, does that sound right?

18 MR. DeSISTO: It does. It is definitely a
19 factor that can be considered on this, in the Category B.

20 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. All right. So
21 let's go through the Category B requirements.

22 The first requirement is to demonstrate the need for
23 the proposed activity or alteration. What I'll do is go
24 around to everyone. I'll start with A and just get your

1 feedback on that.

2 I do think that the Applicant has demonstrated a
3 need for this operation, that he's maxed out on his
4 existing lease and wants to grow the business. I think
5 that's a threshold that is, not as a low threshold, but
6 it's an easy thing to meet particularly where you have a
7 maxed out existing lease. And I think the policy behind
8 that is to ensure that it's not a speculative type
9 project.

10 I'll just ask anyone of the staff if you would
11 comment on that if I'm wrong on that, but that's how I
12 view it.

13 Anyone? Mr. Goetsch or Mr. Beutel?

14 MR. BEUTEL: I would agree with your assessment
15 that his current farm is maxed out. He had tried a
16 number of times to expand the current farm in its
17 location, but the rules about eelgrass have prevented
18 that location from being expanded; hence, his desire to
19 move into Segar Cove.

20 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay.

21 MR. BEUTEL: He has met that burden.

22 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Thank you,
23 Mr. Beutel, Mr. Coia, any further comment on need?

24 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: Madam Chair, the way I

1 looked at it was, and I look at the notes I wrote down,
2 need versus want. Is it something that is needed by this
3 individual? Is it something that's needed by the public?
4 Is it something mainly what the Applicant wants?

5 I have absolutely no disagreement that he's maxed
6 out where he is, so then the question is, all right, does
7 he need it because he wants it? And does a need apply to
8 this particular parcel?

9 You know, a lot of times when we talk about need in
10 our standard of review, it's a property owner and they
11 want to do something on their property. Obviously, they
12 need it there because that's their property. They can't
13 walk somewhere else. So maybe unlike some other
14 individuals, I'm looking at it, that this is not his
15 property per say. He's looking to go put it there.

16 So, yes, he needs it to grow his business, but is it
17 needed to be there? That's part of my deliberation. You
18 know, it is a want versus a need, and who benefits from
19 the need? So that's where I was going with it.

20 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: I agree that he wants it.
21 I mean, of course, he applied. I don't know if it sounds
22 like it's more subjective in your mind as to what need
23 is, and you don't know if it's related to the particular
24 farm.

1 Either Mr. Goetsch or Mr. Beutel, can you shed any
2 light on what we evaluate when we look at need?
3 Mr. Beutel, you already addressed it. Mr. Goetsch, do
4 you have anything further to add?

5 MR. GOETSCH: I don't think so. I think
6 Mr. Beutel's comments, if it wasn't for -- eelgrass the
7 Applicant would have applied for an expansion where it
8 is. Because of those restrictions, he needed to apply
9 elsewhere.

10 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you. Mr. Murray?

11 MR. MURRAY: I would agree with the Chair's
12 perspective that he met the standard.

13 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Ms. Reynolds?

14 MS. REYNOLDS: I agree that he has met the
15 standard. I'm thinking about want versus need,
16 definitely. He's a business person, and he wants this.
17 But I think that overall, I'm looking at a bit more
18 globally. I think that we need to be able to produce
19 food, and we need to be able to provide jobs. So I think
20 it benefits not only Perry, but it also benefits us as a
21 community. So I think that he has met that standard of
22 need.

23 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you. Mr. Gomez?

24 MR. GOMEZ: Yes, I agree with Ms. Reynolds.

1 Going back to the Red Book, we do promote aquaculture
2 quite extensively at CRMC. I think this is an extension
3 of that. I think the need has been met. I think he's
4 met the requirement for need.

5 The other issue is getting back to the idea of
6 balance. It appears if we deny this application, and the
7 idea of balance goes strictly to the people that want it
8 for recreation. So, yes, he has met the need.

9 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Moving on then to

10 1B: Demonstrate that all applicable local zoning
11 ordinances, building codes, flood hazards, standards, and
12 all safety codes, fire codes, environment requirements
13 have or will be met. Then it talks about local
14 approvals.

15 I don't think there is any issues here of applicable
16 -- there's local waterway ordinances. I don't think that
17 the proposed farm would be inconsistent with that. It
18 would just be subject to it.

19 Mr. DeSisto, is that a correct way to view it?

20 MR. DESISTO: It is, yes, because that
21 ordinance regulates actually another use other than this
22 one. And the ordinance couldn't regulate this use
23 because by state statute authority to regulate is
24 conferred on CRMC and not the local communities. This is

1 what I was referring to earlier in this meeting. This
2 standard goes to those codes that are more for upland
3 uses as opposed to water uses.

4 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Right, so it would be an
5 inapplicable requirement.

6 MR. DeSISTO: That's correct, yes.

7 MR. GOETSCH: I would add it does mention
8 1.3.1K, the amount of freshwater aquaculture conducted on
9 land. You have this as a prerequisite for application to
10 CRMC, freshwater land based --

11 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay, and that's what
12 it's meant to address?

13 MR. GOETSCH: I believe so, yes.

14 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: All right. I'm just
15 going to ask if all agree that this is not applicable to
16 this proposed farm. Mr. Gomez?

17 MR. GOMEZ: Yes, I agree.

18 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Ms. Reynolds?

19 MS. REYNOLDS: Yes, I agree.

20 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Murray?

21 MR. MURRAY: I agree.

22 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: And Mr. Coia?

23 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: Yes. Based upon the
24 evidence that I reviewed, I agree.

1 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: All right. Moving on to

2 1C: Describe the boundaries of the coastal waters
3 and land area that is anticipated to be effected.

4 I believe that that requirement has been met through
5 the application materials and the testimony provided by
6 the Applicant and his experts.

7 Mr. Coia?

8 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: I concur.

9 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Murray?

10 MR. MURRAY: I have a question. There are two
11 concepts. Are we talking about the polygon or the
12 rectangle?

13 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yes, I guess we have to
14 be talking about both. I mean, the Applicant -- the
15 rectangle and then there was an alternative that was
16 developed with sten or the polygon, and both have been
17 depicted in our application materials.

18 MR. MURRAY: I agree. I understand the polygon
19 is preferred, so-called, by the Applicant at this point.

20 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: I think the polygon is
21 preferred by staff. I don't know where the -- I thought
22 the Applicant preferred the rectangle but would be okay
23 with the polygon.

24 MR. MURRAY: Back in geometry class, I guess,

1 right?

2 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Right. Ms. Reynolds?

3 MS. REYNOLDS: Yes, I agree.

4 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Gomez?

5 MR. GOMEZ: Agree.

6 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay.

7 1D: Demonstrate that the alteration or activity
8 will not result in significant impacts on erosion and/or
9 deposition processes along the shore and in tidal waters.

10 I believe through the testimony provided by the
11 Applicant that they satisfied this. There's no issue
12 here, and in fact, I think it could actually help prevent
13 some erosion by breaking up the waves generated by
14 various activities on the water. So I think that this
15 was satisfied that there would be no significant impacts.

16 Mr. Gomez?

17 MR. GOMEZ: Agreed.

18 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Ms. Reynolds?

19 MS. REYNOLDS: Agreed. The Applicant has met
20 that requirement.

21 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Murray?

22 MR. MURRAY: Agreed.

23 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Coia?

24 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: I agree. The Applicant

1 has met that burden, and I don't recall or have
2 recollection of any contradictory evidence by any of the
3 objectors that would persuade that.

4 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you.

5 1E: Demonstrate that the alteration or activity
6 will not result in significant impacts on the abundance
7 and diversity of plant and animal life.

8 As I recall, DEM indicated that there would not --
9 that the impact here would be minimal. There was also
10 the Fisheries Council that was split. Some said, I
11 believe, that there would be an impact and some that did
12 not. Cumulatively, and in addition combined with the
13 testimony of the Applicant, I don't believe that if there
14 is an impact that it would rise to the level of
15 significant, is my view, and that this criterion has been
16 satisfied.

17 Mr. Coia?

18 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: Madam Chair, I believe
19 that the evidence submitted by the Applicant would
20 support that he has met that criteria.

21 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Murray?

22 MR. MURRAY: I would agree as well.

23 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Ms. Reynolds?

24 MS. REYNOLDS: I would agree as well.

1 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: And Mr. Gomez?

2 MR. GOMEZ: I agree.

3 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay.

4 1F: Demonstrate that the alteration will not
5 unreasonably interfere with, impair, or significantly
6 impact existing public access to, or use of, tidal waters
7 and/or the shore.

8 I want to have a little bit of discussion on this
9 because it appears that it's twofold. It talks about
10 significant impact on existing public access, and then it
11 talks about significant impact to existing use which is
12 kind of like J, that it has us evaluate whether or not
13 there's significant conflicts with water-dependent uses.

14 So I see it as a little bit redundant of another
15 criterion, but it does have this additional I guess
16 evaluation of whether or not it's impacting public access
17 to the tidal waters or shore. I'm just going to speak to
18 the public access part of it, and then I'm going to
19 combine the use of the impact on use when we talk about
20 the conflicts criterion.

21 So for public access to the tidal waters or to the
22 shore, I do -- there are public access points. They are
23 not in the area of the proposed farm, so that's not
24 impacted. It does restrict some of the access in the

1 area where the farm hugs the shore, but it doesn't
2 entirely impede it. So in my view, based on that, I
3 don't think that there's a significant impact on public
4 access.

5 Mr. Gomez?

6 MR. GOMEZ: I agree with that. I think the
7 word "unreasonably," you know, it states that it in fact
8 is reasonable. I would agree, it does not present
9 detriment to the public access.

10 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Thank you.
11 Ms. Reynolds?

12 MS. REYNOLDS: I agree that it does not
13 significantly impact public access.

14 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Murray?

15 MS. REYNOLDS: Unreasonably.

16 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Sorry. Thank you.

17 MS. REYNOLDS: Sorry.

18 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Murray?

19 MR. MURRAY: I would concur that it doesn't
20 reasonably interfere with access to the shore, although,
21 I had noted earlier I think I guess the eastern side of
22 the proposal.

23 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yeah, I agree it makes it
24 a little more difficult in that area, but overall not

1 unreasonable in my view.

2 Mr. Coia?

3 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: I would be of the opinion
4 that there is an impact, but I do not believe it to be a
5 significant impact.

6 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: All right.

7 "1G: Demonstrate that the alteration will not
8 result in significant impacts to water circulation,
9 flushing, turbidity and sedimentation."

10 Based on the expert testimony that I heard, I
11 believe that this burden has been satisfied that there
12 will not be a significant -- there would not be a
13 significant impact proposed by the proposed farm to water
14 circulation, flushing, turbidity and sedimentation.

15 Mr. Coia?

16 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: Madam Chair, I agree. I
17 don't think there's any evidence put forth that would be
18 contradictory to that.

19 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Murray?

20 MR. MURRAY: I would agree as well.

21 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Ms. Reynolds?

22 MS. REYNOLDS: I'm in agreement as well.

23 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Gomez?

24 MR. GOMEZ: Yes, I agree.

1 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: "1H: Demonstrate that
2 there will be no significant deterioration in the quality
3 of the water in the immediate vicinity as defined by
4 DEM."

5 Again, I think there was a lot of testimony put
6 forward that the proposed farm would actually have the
7 effect of improving the water quality. I think it's even
8 stated in the Red Book. It says in K-1-A, "The CRMC
9 recognizes that responsible shellfish aquaculture has a
10 net positive effect on the environment."

11 There's been some determination already by the
12 agency that aquaculture improves the water body, and this
13 particular proposal I don't think is any different. I
14 think it's consistent with that general finding and based
15 on the evidence submitted.

16 Mr. Gomez?

17 MR. GOMEZ: I agree, no significant degradation
18 to the water quality.

19 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Ms. Reynolds?

20 MS. REYNOLDS: I agree that there's been
21 adequate science on the fact that aquaculture positively
22 impacts water quality, and that it could also potentially
23 positively have an impact on the diversity of plant and
24 animal life.

1 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Yes, that's true. Got
2 that, too.

3 Mr. Murray?

4 MR. MURRAY: I would concur with that point of
5 view.

6 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: And Mr. Coia?

7 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: Madam Chair, I would
8 concur and state that I believe the evidence put forth by
9 the Applicant supports that and reflects that he meets
10 that criteria, and that there was nothing put forth by
11 any objectors to contradict that.

12 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Beutel, just a
13 question for you on this point because this criterion
14 does talk about as defined by DEM. I know that there's a
15 letter from DEM that says minimal impacts. I don't know
16 if it goes to quality of water or, you know, diversity or
17 abundance of plant and animal life.

18 Could you comment on that?

19 MR. BEUTEL: Yes, I can. There's a letter from
20 the DEM Office of Water Resources that comments on the
21 water quality, and that letter says that the water
22 quality will not be negatively impacted.

23 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: And what exhibit is that?

24 MR. BEUTEL: I don't remember. It's in the

1 packet.

2 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. You read it and
3 were satisfied that that was as defined by DEM for
4 purposes of this criterion?

5 MR. BEUTEL: Yes.

6 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you.

7 Does anyone disagree with that as explained by
8 Mr. Beutel?

9 [NO RESPONSE]

10 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Hearing none, onto next.

11 "1-I: Demonstrate that the alteration or activity
12 will not result in significant impacts to areas of
13 historic and archaeological significance."

14 There is a letter in the staff report that is from
15 the Rhode Island -- I forget the acronym -- but the
16 historic commission, I'll just shorten it, that
17 essentially speaks to this point that there's no historic
18 or archeological significance with the area in which the
19 proposed farm would go. So based on that, I would say
20 that this is satisfied.

21 Mr. Coia?

22 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: I concur.

23 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Murray?

24 MR. MURRAY: I would agree.

1 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Ms. Reynolds?

2 MS. REYNOLDS: I would agree that the letter
3 from Rhode Island Historic Preservation and Heritage
4 Commission indicates that there is no negative effect on
5 the historic resources.

6 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you. And
7 Mr. Gomez?

8 MR. GOMEZ: I concur.

9 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: All right. "1-J:
10 Demonstrate that the alteration or activity will not
11 result in significant conflicts with water-dependent uses
12 and activities such as recreational boating, fishing,
13 navigation, and commerce."

14 This is the burden that the Applicant has that we've
15 all been talking about previously, you know, what are the
16 existing uses, how will the proposed farm affect the
17 uses. And as I've stated, I believe that there will be
18 significant conflicts with existing water-dependent uses
19 for everything that I explained earlier. I don't believe
20 that the Applicant is able to satisfy this burden because
21 of a combination of the town buffers, 200-foot buffers,
22 which get measured from either the shore and/or the
23 stationary or moving objects and condenses a multitude of
24 activities in the center of the cove and presents, in my

1 view, unreasonable and too significant conflicts.

2 Mr. Coia?

3 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: Madam Chair, I would like
4 to incorporate all of my prior comments so I don't
5 reiterate them in this, but I am truly of the opinion
6 that I do believe there is a significant impact. It
7 pushes everything towards the middle. And to me, that's
8 where a safety concern arises.

9 So this one is the one so far where I feel the
10 Applicant has not met his burden in our requisite
11 criteria.

12 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you. Mr. Murray?

13 MR. MURRAY: I guess this is the thorniest of
14 the criteria, and it's kind of a gray thing -- I mean,
15 the safety issue that's been discussed this morning, or
16 the potential safety issues, I think perhaps rise to the
17 level of significance, or could rise to the level of the
18 significance.

19 So I guess, somewhat reluctantly, I would agree with
20 the position of the Chair and the Vice Chair.

21 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Do you want to have
22 further discussion on it?

23 MR. MURRAY: Well, it seems like at least
24 40 percent of the die is cast, so to speak, and the

1 position is taken. So I'm not sure if discussion would
2 lead to clarity. It's a potential issue, and safety is
3 an overriding concern with any regulatory consideration
4 for permitting or zoning or land use or water use or what
5 have you. I guess it's an issue.

6 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Thank you.

7 Ms. Reynolds?

8 MS. REYNOLDS: So I agree with Vin. This is,
9 you know, where the rubber sort of hits the road, and I
10 think -- I don't think based on the evidence presented
11 that there's a significant impact, but I do think that
12 safety, the safety issue is tantamount.

13 I do have a question about the interpretation of the
14 zoning ordinance. Is that how the zoning official for
15 South Kingstown interprets that boundary, that it's from
16 the farm, do we know that? Or does the zoning official
17 interpret it from the shore?

18 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Ms. Reynolds, I'll let
19 Mr. DeSisto speak to it, but I don't think we have that
20 interpretation that's before us. I think that the
21 language is clear. Let me just read it one more time.
22 This relates to waterskiing. "No waterskier or his or
23 her boat shall approach any stationary or moving object
24 closer than 200 feet except as may be incidental to

1 starting or fishing a run."

2 So I think we heard that at least the buoys that
3 mark the edges are stationary. So I don't know if the
4 zoning officer would take a different interpretation, but
5 I view the buoys as stationary and the infrastructure and
6 the farm as stationary. Mr. DeSisto?

7 MR. DeSISTO: I agree with that. There's no
8 opinion, at least I didn't see, from the zoning official
9 on the interpretation of the ordinance or any official
10 from South Kingstown. However, I do think the ordinance
11 is clear and the fixed object would be the buoy, and you
12 have to measure it from that 200 feet. I don't see how
13 any official of the Town of South Kingstown would
14 interpret that differently.

15 MS. REYNOLDS: Then I think that that standard
16 is not -- because of the safety issue and the fact that
17 it would then compress the existing uses into too small
18 of a combined area of the water sheet.

19 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Ms. Reynolds, you were
20 saying something and then you went mute and came back so
21 we didn't hear exactly what you said.

22 MS. REYNOLDS: So I would agree that it doesn't
23 meet that standard, that part of the standard, because
24 the compression of the water -- I am sorry, my phone

1 keeps ringing, I turned it off -- that the safety issue,
2 the fact that it would be interpreted so that it would
3 compress the area of the water sheet will lead to a
4 non-satisfactory condition for safety.

5 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you, Ms. Reynolds.

6 Mr. Gomez?

7 MR. GOMEZ: As I said several times, I guess,
8 I'm really in favor of a balance. I think the Applicant
9 really has no other options within the pond from what
10 I've seen. The other area where there's some deep water
11 is more heavily used than this one. We are still talking
12 about one skier, but I had based my initial thoughts on a
13 200 foot from the shore.

14 I guess I have to agree with all the other members
15 of the Subcommittee that due to the South Kingstown
16 ordinance, there is a significant impact to the conflict
17 with other uses, and my rationale is strictly because of
18 the ordinance. We have to, I guess, forego balance in
19 this particular pond. Thank you.

20 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you, Mr. Gomez.
21 Finally, "1-K: Demonstrate that measures have been taken
22 to minimize any adverse scenic impact."

23 So as we've discussed previously a little bit, I
24 believe that measures have been taken by this Applicant

1 that would have the effect of minimizing the adverse
2 scenic impact with its low profile cages, in particular,
3 and a portion of the farm being submerged except for
4 buoys. So I think that he's done what he could do to
5 minimize those impacts.

6 Mr. Coia?

7 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: Madam Chair, I believe
8 that the Applicant has put forth sufficient evidence to
9 support a finding that he has met that criteria.

10 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you. Mr. Murray?

11 MR. MURRAY: I believe this criteria has been
12 met.

13 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Ms. Reynolds?

14 MS. REYNOLDS: I agree that the Applicant has
15 met this criteria.

16 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: And Mr. Gomez?

17 MR. GOMEZ: The Applicant has met this
18 criteria.

19 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: All right. We've gone
20 through all the Category B requirements, and I will ask
21 Mr. DeSisto, do we need to make a finding on the five
22 percent rule?

23 MR. DeSISTO: I'd appreciate it if you did.

24 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. All right, so as

1 we've discussed earlier, there is a rule that the
2 aquaculture in any coastal pond cannot exceed five
3 percent of the total open water surface area below MLW.
4 Based on the staff report and all the evidence, this
5 criterion has been satisfied in my mind.

6 Mr. Gomez?

7 MR. GOMEZ: I concur that the Applicant is
8 within the five percent rule.

9 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Ms. Reynolds?

10 MS. REYNOLDS: I agree. The Applicant is
11 within the five percent ecological carrying capacity.

12 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Murray?

13 MR. MURRAY: I would agree as well. It's below
14 the five percent capacity.

15 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: And Mr. Coia?

16 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: Madam Chair, I believe the
17 evidence submitted supports that the Applicant is in the
18 five percent.

19 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you. Mr. DeSisto,
20 are there any other standards that we need to review that
21 I have not articulated and gone through with the
22 Subcommittee members?

23 MR. DeSISTO: No.

24 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. I think at this

1 point we're ready for a recommendation, a motion on a
2 recommendation to the full Council that will be delivered
3 at a subsequent Council meeting.

4 Mr. Willis, do we know when that will be?

5 MR. WILLIS: We will need the written
6 recommendation of the Subcommittee prior to scheduling
7 it, but at this point it's probably April at the
8 earliest.

9 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay, thank you. So I
10 will entertain a motion.

11 Mr. Coia?

12 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: Thank you, Madam Chair.
13 Based upon all the evidence presented on both sides, by
14 the Applicant and the objectors, and applying all of that
15 evidence, expert testimony, lay testimony, demonstrative
16 evidence, scientific evidence, to our requisite criteria
17 as we just enumerated, going criteria by criteria, I
18 believe that the evidence finds and supports a finding of
19 a significant impact on the water use, existing water
20 use, recreational use, to incorporate the exact language
21 in my motion, and as such, I believe that because of this
22 finding that there is a significant impact and that the
23 Applicant did not meet that criteria. It is fatal to the
24 application, and I would move to make a recommendation to

1 the full Council that because of that, the application
2 not be approved and be denied.

3 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you. Is there a
4 second? I'll second the motion. Any further discussions
5 before I do a roll call?

6 [NO RESPONSE]

7 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Mr. Coia?

8 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: I vote aye on the motion.

9 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Murray?

10 MR. MURRAY: I would vote aye on the motion
11 based upon the issues relating to Criteria J under the
12 Category B assent requirement.

13 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you. Ms. Reynolds?

14 MS. REYNOLDS: I will vote to approve based on
15 issues of safety concerns.

16 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Approve the motion?

17 MS. REYNOLDS: Approve the motion.

18 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Mr. Gomez?

19 MR. GOMEZ: I will support the denial of the
20 application due to significant impact conflict with other
21 uses of the water.

22 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. And for myself, I
23 vote aye in favor of the motion based on the failure of
24 the Applicant to carry the burden on 1.3, 1A, 1J.

1 So based on that, we're unanimous. The motion to
2 recommend denial carries. And, Mr. DeSisto, you're going
3 to prepare a written recommendation to the Council?

4 MR. DeSISTO: That's correct, and I'll work
5 with staff on that, Madam Chair.

6 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Is there anything
7 further that we need to do?

8 MR. DeSISTO: My only question is, once the
9 recommendation, the written recommendation, is prepared
10 can it be forwarded directly to the full Council, or
11 would this Subcommittee like to review it first and pass
12 on the written recommendation?

13 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Anyone want to comment on
14 that? Subcommittee members, do we want to look at how
15 it's written up before it gets transmitted to the full
16 Council?

17 MR. GOMEZ: Madam Chair, I would not object to
18 getting the reading on it, but I will concur with all the
19 members of the Subcommittee on what they wish to do.

20 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you. Mr. Coia?

21 VICE CHAIRMAN COIA: I would just like to look
22 at it quickly just to make sure. I think due diligence
23 that we should to make sure it correctly depicts our
24 findings.

1 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Ms. Reynolds?

2 MS. REYNOLDS: I agree. I'd like to take a
3 look at it first.

4 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. Murray?

5 MR. MURRAY: Yeah, why not. This process was
6 great length and breath. That would not require another
7 meeting, would it? Would it be a review of an email if
8 there's any comments or what have you, or what would be
9 the story on that?

10 MR. DeSISTO: Well, actually --

11 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: We --

12 MR. DeSISTO: I don't think it's going to take
13 long, but we have to meet publicly.

14 MR. MURRAY: It would be another meeting?

15 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: It probably wouldn't be a
16 three-hour meeting, but --

17 MR. MURRAY: I imagine it wouldn't be.

18 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay, yeah. I would like
19 to take a look at the written recommendations so I agree
20 with everyone. It sounds like, Mr. Willis, we have a
21 couple steps. First writing up the recommendation, then
22 us considering that at a further Subcommittee meeting,
23 which I guess would be a continuation of the workshop.

24 MR. WILLIS: That's what I would recommend,

1 Madam Chair.

2 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: All right. Then whatever
3 we come up with or approve at that meeting, that would be
4 then be forwarded to the full Council and a meeting that
5 might be then in late April or early May, sounds like it
6 will push it out a little.

7 MR. DeSISTO: Correct.

8 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Anything else from
9 Mr. Willis, Mr. DeSisto?

10 MR. DeSISTO: No.

11 MR. MURRAY: I have a question. When this
12 matter goes before the full Council, is it required that
13 myself as representative from the Town be present for
14 that Zoom meeting?

15 MR. WILLIS: Madam Chair, I can answer that.

16 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Please.

17 MR. WILLIS: Yes, Mr. Murray, your attendance
18 and presence is required through the vote.

19 MR. MURRAY: Okay.

20 MR. DeSISTO: What we're going to try and do,
21 Mr. Murray, is to make it so you have to go to all of our
22 Zoom meetings.

23 MR. MURRAY: Well, thank you for that.
24 Retirement was too comfortable for me, apparently.

1 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Just to clarify,
2 Mr. Murray, he will vote with the full Council. Is that
3 true? He's not voting with us, or he is voting with us?

4 MR. WILLIS: I believe he is, and I would defer
5 to legal counsel on that. But the way the statute reads
6 is that the alternate member, when there is no one
7 representing the Town in a contested case, sits through
8 until the vote of the full Council.

9 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: So if there's eight of
10 us, then for this particular application we will have
11 nine?

12 MR. WILLIS: Yes, correct.

13 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Okay. Then you're in,
14 Mr. Murray.

15 MR. MURRAY: Volunteerism is often punished
16 apparently, so...

17 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: All right. Well, again,
18 thank you everyone for your time, for the Applicant's and
19 interveners' excellent presentations and post-hearing
20 briefs, and for all the public comment on this.

21 If that's all, then I would move to adjourn if I can
22 get a second.

23 MS. REYNOLDS: Don't we need to continue it,
24 continue the workshop or not?

1 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Mr. DeSisto?

2 MR. DeSISTO: It's not necessary, but you can
3 if you want.

4 MS. REYNOLDS: No motion.

5 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: All right. All those in
6 favor to adjourn, say aye.

7 [UNANIMOUS VOTE TAKEN]

8 CHAIRWOMAN CERVENKA: Thank you, everyone. See
9 you soon.

10 MR. DeSISTO: Take care now.

11 [ADJOURNED AT 12:35 P.M.]

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, Lisa M Reis, hereby certify that the foregoing Pages 968 through 1049, inclusive, are a true and accurate transcript of my stenographic notes of the proceedings, via Zoom, which occurred on the above-entitled dates, to the best of my ability.

LISA M. REIS, RPR
Court Reporter/Notary Public
My Commission expires on 7/27/24

Sworn to and subscribed before me,
This 22nd day of March, 2021

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