





STATE OF RHODE ISLAND  
COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL  
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

To: Jeffrey M. Willis  
DEPT: CRMC Executive Director  
FROM: Richard M. Lucia, P.E.  
DEPT: CRMC Permitting Section

Date: 5/2/2023  
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RE: CRMC File No.: 1994-11-030  
Applicant's Name: Town of Portsmouth

**Project:** This project will modify the original Assent (1994-11-030) in order to complete repairs and replace the public boat launch facility. Work includes removing the original northern upper and lower fixed pier and replacing it with a new single fixed pier. Also, a new pre-cast reinforced concrete boat ramp, floating docks and a stone protection structure (groin) will be installed.

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Location: Burma Road Pole 22e, Portsmouth, plat 50, lot 7  
Water Type/Name: Type 4, Multipurpose Waters, Weaver Cove  
Coastal Feature: Coastal Beach (cobble), backed by a coastal bluff

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A. **Staff Summary:**

The existing facility was constructed in 1995-1996 and is in need of repairs and upgrades. The boat ramp is cracking and crumbling with large voids. Both pier and ramps are deteriorating from constant wave impacts and detrimental saltwater exposure.

This project will modify the original Assent (1994-11-030) in order to complete repairs and replace the public boat launch facility. Work includes removing the original northern upper and lower fixed pier and replacing it with a new single fixed pier. Also, a new pre-cast reinforced concrete boat ramp, floating docks and a stone protection structure (groin) will be installed.

The boat ramp will feature a timber groundout floating dock system. The existing 8 timber piles to the southwest of the boat ramp will be removed and replaced by 7 steel piles to support the float system. The float system will have a deck 6 feet wide and will consist of three (3) 20-foot sections and one (1) 24-foot section. The float system will be preceded with a reinforced concrete abutment, approximately 20 feet long by 6 feet wide at the shoreline.

Additionally, to protect against wave action, a wave protection structure (stone groin) will extend from the edge of the existing riprap revetment, to the southwest of the boat ramp. The protection structure will have a varying base width (47 feet maximum) and taper from the base to a width of 4 feet at the crest. The quantity of fill required to build this attenuator below Mean High Water is 18500 cf (686 cy). As indicated by the current poor state of the boat facility, the existing stone is inadequate to protect from even minor wave action, which makes the facility less usable even during low wave energy days. This groin will allow the ramp to be used in the times when there is moderate wave action and should extend the design life of the facility.

**Review of Applicable Regulatory Requirements:**

**CRMP Red Book Section § 1.3.1.J (Filling in Tidal Waters) and § 1.1.8 Special Exception:**

Please note that the work will include filling in tidal waters for the construction of the stone protection structure and per RICMRP 1.3.1(J) (Filling in tidal waters) this activity is prohibited unless:

- (1) The filling is made to accommodate a designated priority use for that water area;
- (2) The applicant has examined all reasonable alternatives and the Council has determined that the selected alternative is the most reasonable; and
- (3) The filling is the minimum necessary to support the priority use.

This project is located on Type 4 waters, Multipurpose Waters and as described in the RICMRP 1.2.1.E.the designated priority uses for this type water are:

- a. Large expanses of open water in Narragansett Bay and the Sounds which support a variety of commercial and recreational activities while maintaining good value as a fish and wildlife habitat; and
- b. Open waters adjacent to shorelines that could support water dependent commercial, industrial, and/or high intensity recreational activities.

Based on the above, since this project supports high intensity recreational activity, it is the staff's opinion that the proposed work is not prohibited and does not require a special exception. Additionally, the filling of tidal waters is the minimum necessary to support the designated priority use for Type 4 waters.

Please note that the project has obtained the required RIDEM Water Quality Certificate File No. 22-190, dated March 2, 2023. Also as required an ACOE General Permit was obtained on December 1, 2022, for this project.

**CRMP Red Book Section § 1.3.1.(D) Recreational Boating Facility**

This section of the Red Book has policies and design standards for boat launch ramps. The applicant has designed the replacement ramp in accordance with these standards.

**CRMP Red Book Section § 1.3.1.G. Shoreline Protection**

The proposed stone groin is designed in accordance with the standards set forth in this section. Specifically, the "Rubble Mound of Breakwater Armor Stone Stability" has been submitted and the design of the groin is in accordance with the guidance located in the ACOE Coastal Engineering Manual and **CRMP Red Book Section § 1.3.1.G.5.i (Shoreline Protection, Standards).**

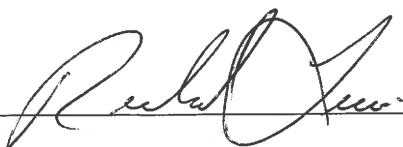
**CRMP Red Book Section 1.3.1(R) Submerged Aquatic Vegetation**

Based on the latest Submerged Aquatic Vegetation maps there were no SAV identified at the project site.

**CRMP Red Book Section 1.3.6 Protection and Enhancement of Public Access to the Shore**

It is the Council's policy to require applicants to provide, where appropriate, on-site access of similar type and level to that which is being impacted as the result of a proposed activity or development project. By the very nature of this project public access will be enhanced.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



**Recommendations and Conclusion:**

It is the staff's opinion that the project meets the regulatory policies and standards of the Red Book. Also, the project will provide a safer, more robust and much needed increase in public access to the shoreline. On this basis, staff recommends approval of the project subject to staff stipulations.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. M. Seaver", is written over a horizontal line.