

CRMC DECISION WORKSHEET

2025-11-063

Geoffrey Van Gorkom

Hearing Date:	
Approved as Recommended	
Approved w/additional Stipulations	
Approved but Modified	
Denied	Vote

APPLICATION INFORMATION						
File Number	Town	Project Location		Category	Special Exception	Variance
2025-11-063	Portsmouth	305 Riverside Street		A*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Plat	15			
		Owner Name and Address				
Date Accepted	12/03/2025	Geoffrey Van Gorkom		Work at or Below MHW		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Date Completed	01/29/2026	305 Riverside Street		Lease Required		<input type="checkbox"/>
		Portsmouth, RI 02871				

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Construct and maintain a residential boating facility consisting of a 4x76' fixed pier, a 3x24 ramp and an 8x18.75' float. The facility shall extend 90' beyond Mean Low Water (MLW) at a depth of approximately 2 feet, requiring a 40' Variance to Section 1.3.1(D)(11)(l).

KEY PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

- Coastal Feature:** Coastal Bluff with Stone wall
- Water Type:** Type 2, Low Intensity Use/Bluebell Cove
- Red Book:** 1.1.7; 1.2.1(C); 1.2.1(D); 1.3.1(D); 1.3.5
- SAMP:** N/A

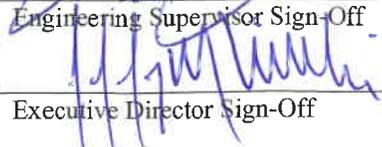
Variations and/or Special Exception Details: 40' Variance to Section 1.3.1(D)(11)(l) 50' Mean Low Water Standard.

Additional Comments and/or Council Requirements:

Specific Staff Stipulations (beyond Standard stipulations):

STAFF RECOMMENDATION(S)

Engineer _____ Recommendation: _____
 Biologist ALS Recommendation: No Objections
 Other Staff _____ Recommendation: _____


 Engineering Supervisor Sign-Off _____ date 1/29/26

 Executive Director Sign-Off _____ date 2/3/26

Supervising Biologist Sign-off _____ date _____
 Staff Sign off on Hearing Packet (Eng/Bio) _____ date _____



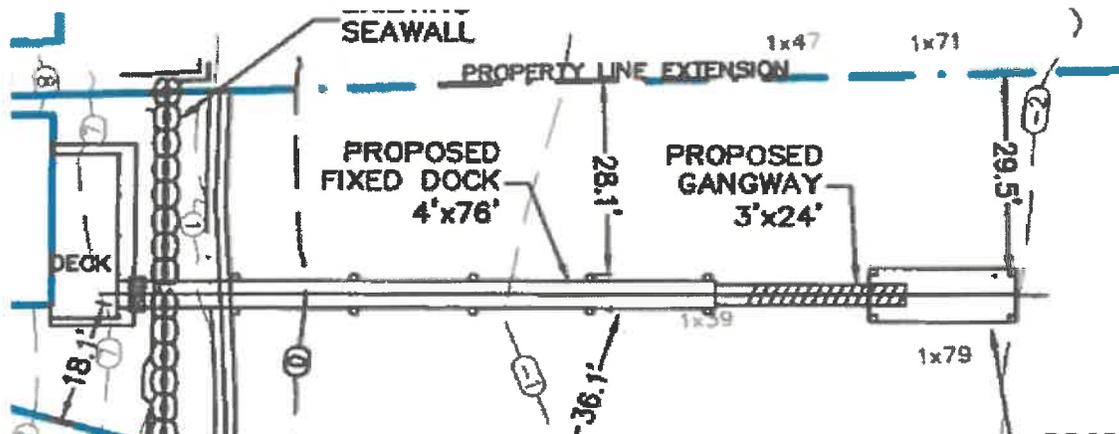
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
STAFF REPORT TO THE COUNCIL

DATE: January 21, 2026
TO: Jeffrey M. Willis, Executive Director
FROM: Amy Silva

Applicant's Name:	Geoffrey Van Gorkom
CRMC File Number:	2025-11-063
Project:	Construct and maintain a residential boating facility consisting of a 4x76' fixed pier, a 3x24 ramp and an 8x18.75' float. The facility shall extend 90' beyond Mean Low Water (MLW) at a depth of approximately 2 feet, requiring a 40' Variance to Section 1.3.1(D)(11)(l).
Location:	305 Riverside Street; Portsmouth: Plat(s): 15; Lot(s): 47
Water Type/Name:	Type 2, Low Intensity Use/Bluebell Cove
Coastal Feature:	Coastal Bluff with Stone wall
Plans Reviewed:	"Construction of Timber Dock, Gangway & Floater", 7 pages in total, sheet 1-5 and 7 dated 11/17/2025, and sheet 6 dated 10/20/2025 by Mount Hope Engineering, Inc

INTRODUCTION:

The application requests Assent to construct a Residential Boating Facility. Because the facility is proposed to extend longer than 75' beyond Mean Low Water (MLW), the matter is before the full Coastal Council. The proposed facility will terminate 90' beyond Mean Low Water (MLW) at a depth of approximately 2 feet, requiring a 40' Variance to Section 1.3.1(D)(11)(l). No comments were received during the public notice period.



CRMC Permit history:

1996-06-032	Paul Chrupcala	Approved- Septic Repair
2025-11-063	Geoffrey VanGorkom	Current application
2025-12-040	Geoffrey VanGorkom	Approved- As-built driveway expansion

During the course of review it was determined that the driveway had been expanded without benefit of CRMC Assent. An as-built application was submitted and approved.

COMMENTS ON APPLICATION/APPLICABLE POLICIES, STANDARDS & ETC:

650-RICR-20-00-1: “Red Book”

1.1.7	Variances	See Below
1.2.1(C)	Type 2 Waters: Low Intensity Use	Docks are consistent with Type 2 water uses
1.2.1(D)	Coastal Headland Bluffs & Cliffs	There is no anticipated impact to the Coastal Feature
1.3.1(D)	Residential Boating Facilities	See below
1.3.5	Protection of Scenic Values	See below

Section 1.3.1(D):

The proposed facility meets the standards and requirements of Section 1.3.1(D), with the exception of of Section 1.3.1(D)(11)(l) – the length standard. The standard states that docks shall not “*extend beyond that point which is.... 50 feet seaward of mean low water*”. In order to obtain a water depth of not quite 2 feet, the applicant is requesting a variance to extend to 90.1’ beyond Mean Low Water and a total length of approximately 110’ feet. This request is consistent with other facilities approved in this area.

Section 1.3.5:

Residential Boating Facilities are a use that is consistent with Type 2 waters. Where docks are consistent with the water type, CRMC does not consider them to be a detrimental impact on scenic quality of the shoreline.

COMMENTS ON VARIANCE REQUEST:

The application was not submitted with a Variance, but one was submitted shortly after submittal. The request states that the length Variance is to achieve an adequate depth of not quite 2 feet. The Variance request also notes that this is similar to other facilities nearby.

Staff has reviewed the nearby facilities and found the following:

315 Riverside Ave: (Under construction in below image), approved by 2022-10-022, extending to 75’ beyond MLW for less than 2’ depth and a total length of approximately 91’.

319 Riverside Ave: approved by 2022-06-021, extending to 75’ beyond MLW for 4’ depth and a total length of approximately 100’.

327 Riverside Ave: approved by 2018-06-009, extending to 75’ beyond MLW for a minimum water depth of 1.5’ and a total length of approximately 100’.

303 Riverside Ave: (to the right of the proposed facility) approved by 1983-12-013, extending to approximately 95’ beyond MLW for less than 3’ depth and a total length of approximately 125’.



Google Earth Imagery March 2025, with approximate length of proposed facility in yellow

In the image above, the yellow line at the subject lot is approximately 108' total length, showing the facility is similar to the two most recent facilities approved.

It is the opinion of reviewing staff that the applicant has met the burdens of proof for granting of a Variance.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION:

The applicant is requesting Assent to build a dock that extends 90' beyond MLW, obtaining a water depth of 2 feet. The facility is similar in nature to others approved by the CRMC. The applicant has submitted a written Variance request and staff is of the opinion that the applicant has met the burdens of proof to obtain the length Variance.

There are no objections to Council approval of this application. Should the Council approve the application, standard stipulations will be prepared.

Signed

Staff Biologist