



Legislation Text

File #: R-46-20, Version: 1

Maritime Task Force - For the purpose of establishing a Maritime Task Force charged with conducting a comprehensive review of the waterfront maritime zoning districts in the City of Annapolis; assessing the current and projected future landscape of the Annapolis maritime industry; evaluating current programs and initiatives of private and public stakeholders; assessing public safety and uses of Annapolis waterways; and making recommendations to the City Council.

**CITY COUNCIL OF THE
City of Annapolis**

Resolution R-46-20

Introduced by: Alderman Arnett

Co-sponsored by: Alderman Savidge and Alderwoman Pindell Charles

Public Hearing

A **RESOLUTION** concerning

Maritime Task Force

FOR the purpose of establishing a Maritime Task Force charged with conducting a comprehensive review of the waterfront maritime zoning districts in the City of Annapolis; assessing the current and projected future landscape of the Annapolis maritime industry; evaluating current programs and initiatives of private and public stakeholders; assessing public safety and uses of Annapolis waterways; and making recommendations to the City Council.

WHEREAS, the Annapolis maritime economy, comprising waterside marinas and boatyards, creates a quintessential ambiance, provides open space, water access, and view sheds for residents and visitors alike, and is the face and brand of the City - rich in history, economically indispensable, and in constant need of vigilance and support; and

WHEREAS, the current waterfront maritime zoning districts were established in the late 1980's and with limited exception in the WMC (downtown) district, have remained relatively unchanged unlike the maritime economy, which has seen significant changes in character and uses; and

WHEREAS, land-intensive working boatyards face environmental challenges, commercial waterman have given way to recreational boaters, but the maritime industry and the Annapolis waterways remain a vital component to the Annapolis character, ambiance, and economy; and

WHEREAS, safety on the waterways is and must remain of paramount importance, and while we recognize the recreational benefits that on-the-water activities bring to participants and observers, the Annapolis waterways are becoming increasingly congested due to the growing popularity of

paddlecraft activities that now compete with traditional power and sail vessels for diminishing navigable space in the waterways; and

WHEREAS, State assessments do not reflect the limitation on uses that the waterfront maritime zoning districts impose, yet over the years property taxes have steadily risen resulting in increased rents to maritime tenants, forcing some that are not dependent on waterside access to relocate to low rent non-maritime zoning districts and leaving many property owners unable to meet current maritime zoning requirements; and

WHEREAS, shifts in maritime uses and the industry's economic focus since the initial adoption of the waterfront maritime zoning districts, has resulted in areas that no longer reflect the needs of today's maritime economy or the recreational boating populace; and

WHEREAS, the 1998 and 2009 Comprehensive Plans, the City's Maritime Advisory Board, and various Mayoral Transition Team Reports called for a comprehensive review of the waterfront maritime zoning districts; and

WHEREAS, the time is ripe for a comprehensive review of the waterfront maritime zoning districts because the City is currently in the process of developing a new Comprehensive Plan that will necessitate much needed planning relevant to the waterfront maritime zoning districts and maritime industry within the City; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to establish a Maritime Task Force charged with assessing the current and projected future landscape of the Annapolis maritime industry; evaluating current programs and initiatives of private and public stakeholders; conducting a comprehensive review of the waterfront maritime zoning districts in the City of Annapolis; assessing public safety and uses of Annapolis waterways; and making recommendations to the City Council.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL that establishment of a Maritime Task Force commissioned to assess the current and projected future landscape of the Annapolis maritime industry; evaluate current programs and initiatives of private and public stakeholders; conduct a comprehensive review of the waterfront maritime zoning districts in the City of Annapolis; assess public safety and uses of Annapolis waterways; and make recommendations to the City Council is hereby approved.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL that the Maritime Task Force shall be formed and function as follows:

1. All members of the Maritime Task Force shall be appointed by the Mayor. The Task Force, in consultation with the four waterside Alderpersons, shall be comprised of ~~12~~ 17 members as follows:
 - One representative from the Maritime Advisory Board.
 - One resident who lives in or near the WME zoning district.
 - One resident who lives in or near the WMM zoning district.
 - One resident who lives in or near the WMC zoning district.
 - One resident who lives in or near the WMI zoning district.

- One representative from a maritime organization.
- ~~Two~~ Four maritime property owners from either the WME, WMM, WMC, or WMI zoning districts.*
- Two maritime business owners from either the WME, WMM, WMC, or WMI zoning districts.*
- Two maritime business tenants from either the WME, WMM, WMC, or WMI zoning districts.*
- One member of a maritime trades association.
- One representative of the Annapolis Maritime Museum.
- One representative of a maritime environmental group.

*achieving representation from all four waterfront maritime zoning districts in some combination among these appointees.

2. The Task Force will be primarily staffed as assigned by the Director of Planning and Zoning, with assistance from one representative of the Maritime Advisory Board; the City Council Associate; MIT staff to assist with virtual meetings; the Economic Development Manager, and the Harbormaster.
3. Task Force members shall serve without compensation.
4. ~~The Task Force shall elect from among their appointed membership a chair, vice-chair, and a secretary.~~
54. The Task Force may establish subcommittees working committees including, but not limited to committees on: maritime zoning code; maritime industry; and community benefits (access to and safety on the water) as needed.
65. The Task Force shall meet as often as necessary to accomplish its goals and objectives, but shall schedule no less than quarterly meetings and report Findings and Recommendations to the City Council at the end of its term.
76. The Task Force may adopt rules of procedure as it deems necessary and appropriate for the conduct of its meetings and activities.
87. ~~The City Council shall oversee and direct the Task Force.~~ The City Council shall review any proposed amendments to the City Code and shall take into consideration the maritime portions of the 1998 and 2009 Comprehensive Plans; previous economic studies; the Legislative Referral Report(s) from the Maritime Advisory Board; and the current mayoral transition team recommendations concerning maritime issues.
98. The Task Force meetings shall be open to the public and the Task Force shall allow for public comments via oral or written testimony.
109. The Task Force shall reach out to maritime property owners, business owners, and business tenants in each of the maritime districts.

10. TASK FORCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- A. In accordance with all City laws related to special events, and in coordination with the Economic Development Manager, the Harbormaster, and the Public Information Officer, acknowledge the historical and economic impact and importance of the maritime businesses and maritime visitors to the

identity, character and economy of Annapolis by:

- (1) Actively promoting the maritime heritage of Annapolis through shore-side and on-the-water events, tours and other activities.
- (2) Encouraging vessel and paddlecraft visitation to Annapolis waterways.
- (3) Promoting strong relationships with the four City-based yacht clubs.
- (4) Actively promoting and supporting local water-based activities including sailing regattas, water tours and water adventures.
- (5) Actively marketing Annapolis as a maritime and yachting center for business location and visitation.

B. In coordination with the Director of Planning and Zoning, undertake actions to ensure the maritime industry's sustained health and viability in the face of competing economic pressures by:

- (1) Initiating a comprehensive review of the waterfront maritime zoning districts, including the identification of non-maritime uses contributing to, or compatible with, maintaining the maritime character and ambiance of Annapolis.
- (2) Identifying non-maritime uses to support and subsidize Annapolis's working maritime industry.
- (3) Exploring the implementation of economic development zone concepts to the existing waterfront maritime zoning districts.
- (4) Explore and make recommendations on the issue of fair tax assessment rates for maritime properties.

C. In coordination with the Harbormaster, promote accessibility to, and safe use of, Annapolis waterways for all types of recreational and commercial watercraft and paddlecraft by:

- (1) Initiating a comprehensive review of the use of Annapolis waterways, including use of Annapolis Harbor, Back Creek, and Weems Creek for resident and visiting boaters, boat ramps and other shore-connected accessibility for sail and power vessels and paddlecraft; and use of street-end landings for residents, visiting boaters, and water taxis.
- (2) Establishing a comprehensive waterways and harbor master plan for Annapolis Harbor, Back Creek, and Weems Creek.

D. In coordination with the Harbormaster, acknowledge the importance of the City Dock waterfront - City-owned as well as privately owned - to the character and ambiance of Annapolis by:

- (1) Subject to all federal, state and other grant or legal restrictions, provide recommendations for integrating new non-exclusive uses into current and future City-owned waterfront property that may include charter fishing, appropriately located short-term paddlecraft access, transient boater access and services, periodic visits by historic vessels, and educational events on and off the water.
- (2) Encouraging privately owned commercial waterfront entities to accommodate similar activities.
- (3) Reviewing and making recommendations related to maintenance of recreational boater slips and water taxi access for pickup and drop-off of visiting boaters.

4410. TASK FORCE DELIVERABLES:

A. Evaluation of and recommendations on the existing waterfront maritime zoning districts.

- (1) Effectiveness of the four waterfront maritime zoning districts after 33 years in place:
 - (a) Have the objectives of the legislation been met?
 - (b) What has not worked?
 - (c) What has worked?
- (2) Short-term recommendations for immediate legislative changes.
- (3) Long-term recommendations for legislative changes.

B. Evaluation of and recommendations on actions to ensure the maritime industry's sustainable health and viability other than zoning issues.

- (1) Economic Development Zone development and applications.
- (2) Tax Assessment systems.
- (3) Differential City Tax Rate.
- (4) Economic development actions and assistance from the City.

C. Evaluation of and recommendations on accessibility to and safe use of Annapolis waterways.

- (1) City Dock Waterfront relative to current City Dock planning.

4211. TASK FORCE TIMELINE AND MILESTONES:

~~**Deliverable A:** Evaluation of waterfront maritime zoning districts effectiveness and use recommendation.~~

- ~~(1) Quarterly Progress Report to the City Council presented by a representative of the Maritime Advisory Board due November 30, 2020.~~

~~**Deliverable B:** Evaluation of Maritime Industry's sustainability.~~

- ~~(2) Quarterly Progress Report to the City Council presented by a representative of the Maritime Advisory Board due April 30, 2021.~~

~~**Deliverable C:** Evaluation of Annapolis waterway accessibility and safe use.~~

- ~~(3) Quarterly Progress Report to the City Council presented by a representative of the Maritime Advisory Board due July 31, 2021.~~

Deliverable DA: Findings and Recommendations.

- (4) The Task Force shall present its findings and recommendations to the City Council at a meeting to be held no later than ~~September 30, 2021~~ May 31, 2021.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL that the term of the Maritime Task Force shall expire on ~~September 30, 2021~~ May 31, 2021.

EXPLANATION

Underlining indicates matter added.

[~~Strikethrough~~] indicates matter stricken.