



STAFF REPORT ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

To: Mayor Gavin Buckley

From: Victoria Buckland, Acting City Manager

Date: June 11, 2025

Subject: O-21-25: Annapolis Harbor Lines at 423 Chester Avenue on Back Creek

Purpose of legislation

The purpose of this legislation is to change the Annapolis harbor line on Back Creek at 423 Chester Avenue in the vicinity of the Safe Harbor Annapolis piers; and matters generally related to harbor lines.

Impact of legislation on operations

The Harbormaster's Office has identified several concerns regarding the potential impact on navigation with Safe Harbor Marina's proposed alteration of the existing harbor line.

This particular section of Back Creek currently experiences considerable boating traffic; the proposed modification to the harbor line would exacerbate the existing congestion. While the interest of Safe Harbor Marina in accommodating larger vessels is understood, it is essential to carefully consider the broader implications for safe public access and enjoyment of City waterways. Moreover, such adjustments are not typically made between private marina/slip owners exercising their riparian rights; likewise, the City is not required to make any such adjustment to the harbor line when making improvements to its property.

If any harbor line adjustment is considered by the City it should be authorized only as a direct offset to any impacts resulting from the City's development of a City street end area, but not provide additional benefits to the requester of that change (as described below). Otherwise, precedent will be established for other marinas to pursue comparable harbor line extensions whenever the City takes action at its properties.

This request to alter the harbor line was prompted by Safe Harbor Marina's contention that its slips will be impacted by the City's project planned for Sixth Street. The City's project may impede the use of three or four slips currently accommodating vessels 40 feet in length, but it will not preclude the use of these slips by smaller vessels. While the City has the right to exercise its riparian rights at Sixth Street without accommodation to any potentially impacted slip owners, Safe Harbor Marina is requesting a change that would significantly increase the size of its slips beyond its current vessel capacity. Currently, Safe Harbor Marina has 200 slips. The requested change would afford reconfiguration of Safe Harbor Marina to include two 115-foot slips, one 95-foot slip, one 80-foot slip, two 70-foot slips and one 45-foot slip. These larger boats will require more room to maneuver which will impact the increasingly busy waterways and existing mooring fields.

Prepared by Tyler Northfield, Acting Harbormaster