

MacNeil, Jami

From: MacNeil, Jami
Sent: Monday, November 08, 2021 8:12 AM
To: Marjorie Strauss
Subject: RE: Application #L-20386-4P-P-N

Dear Ms. Strauss,

Thank you for your comments regarding the expansion of an existing marina in Rockland Harbor as proposed by SHM Rockland, LLC. The Department is currently reviewing the application (#L-20386-4P-P-N) under Maine's Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA). The Department accepted the application as complete for processing on July 26, 2021. The deadline for public comments on the application closed on November 4, 2021. The Department anticipates issuing a decision on the project within the next few weeks.

To answer your specific question about how we assess environmental impact:

Under the NRPA, the project must meet a set of standards including, among others, no unreasonable harm to wildlife habitats and fisheries, and no violation of any state water quality law. In making this determination, the Department considers a number of factors including, among others, the size and nature of the proposed activity, the proposed construction methods, the project location, and review comments from biologists with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and from the Maine Department of Marine Resources. We also consider other information in the application, such as the Site Conditions Report prepared by a professional wetland scientist. Public comments are also considered. If a permit is approved, the Department may include any number of conditions to further minimize environmental impact of the project, such as time-of-year work restrictions and the use of turbidity curtains around the dredge area to limit the effect of temporary sediment displacement.

The Department's explanation for its decision on this application, whether it is an approval or a denial, will be written into the Department Order. A copy of the final order will be sent to all persons who have submitted written comments on the project.

Your comments will be added to the file and will be considered during the review of the project.

Sincerely,

-Jami MacNeil (she/her)

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Maine Department of Environmental Protection
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From: Marjorie Strauss <mavis1048@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 01, 2021 8:42 AM
To: MacNeil, Jami <Jami.MacNeil@maine.gov>
Subject: Application #L-20386-4P-P-N

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To Jami MacNeil and the Department of Environmental Protection,

I am writing to state my strong objection to the proposed, revised plan for Rockland, Maine's harbor. I understand that the project will be stalled or stopped if the Maine DEP finds evidence of potentially negative impact on the natural environment.

I would like to know what steps are being taken to assess the environmental impact? And will the results of this assessment be presented to the public before a decision is made to go forward? I have just viewed the plans and there appears to be a very large area that will have to be dredged. How will that not affect the environment? Then of course there is the addition of a huge grid of cement moorings to accommodate large yachts, and won't that "affect" the environment? And then there is the invasion literally of large yachts - and won't they affect the environment with their fuels and waste, not to mention creating an influx of their owners making the area a "private" living space that will be off limits to the rest of us? And what about the areas that are now assessable to the public? The wonderful boardwalk and Sandy Beach? Can you say that this will still be open to local residents and visitors?

As a resident of Rockland's South End, I join my neighbors in objecting to this plan. Our harbor is small, and this plan is overwhelming. I also object to the changes to Sandy Beach—a beach I go to regularly and swim at, as do many residents and visiting tourists. It is wonderful to have a public beach that's accessible to everyone. Further, our board walk is used constantly by residents and visitors alike. It offers public access to our water, and harbor.

Rockland's Harbor cannot accommodate an increased number of boats—especially large yachts. This is a working community and our residents are employed in businesses, and nonprofits locally—including Pen Bay-Maine Health Hospital. Changing the look and accommodating wealthy yacht owners will further erode and eliminate the affordability of living in this area. Already, rents have skyrocketed and our hard-working employees are being driven out. With this outrageous plan for our Harbor, local people will be driven out.

And what about our local fishermen? Permitting and accommodating huge yachts will overwhelm the harbor, making it crowded, exclusive, and unavailable to visitors, in addition to residents.

Can you definitively say that this won't affect the quality of the Harbor's water? Adding yachts will severely impact the water's quality and result in significant pollution, and environmentally unsafe conditions.

This plan seriously endangers and impacts the quality of Rockland's Harbor, and Rockland, and I speak for many local citizens in objecting and calling for the rejection this plan.

Sincerely and with respect,
Marjorie Strauss