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Dear Dr. Woods:

Thank you for submitting the most recent Draft Master Plan to the Harbor Management Commission (HMC) with your cover letter of August 1, 2014. The HMC understands that the Planning Board will hold a public hearing on October 7, 2014 concerning the Draft Master Plan in advance of its consideration of adoption of the document.

Stamford's waterfront is of central importance with respect to the city's economy, culture, and quality of life. That prominence is the core value of the Stamford Harbor Management Plan which was drafted by the HMC and subsequently approved by the State of Connecticut and then enacted by the Board of Representatives on March 20, 2009. Among its provisions is the following:

The Plan's goals and objectives are directed toward achieving balance between the objective of harbor-related recreational, commercial and community development opportunities on the one hand, and protection of natural coastal resources and the existing character and quality of life in the city on the other. The goals and objectives also establish the basis for the Plan's management policies and area-specific guidelines and recommendations. (p. 1-4)

Furthermore, the Plan anticipates the coordination of its implementation in conjunction with other city agencies, including the Stamford Planning Board:

The Plan complements the Stamford Master Plan and the city's coastal area management program as well as the city's waterfront zoning regulations by focusing on issues most pertinent to the safe, orderly, and beneficial use of the waters of the SHMA (Stamford Harbor Management Area) and protection of the SHMA's natural coastal resources. Together, the Plan and the Master Plan will function as the principal guides for use and conservation of Stamford's harbors and waterfront resources. (p. 1-4)

Stamford's current master plan, adopted in 2002, includes a number of provisions affecting waterfront use and development, including the following specific recommendation for one of the city's most important waterfront properties:

**2A12. Protect and promote water-dependent uses, recreation and boating.** Water-dependent uses include ferries, water taxis, boating, marinas, boat repairs, dry dock and other uses dependent on marine access. Yacht Haven—on the HELCO (Northeast

Utilities) site—is one of Stamford’s major waterfront assets and the city’s last remaining ship service facility. It should be maintained; and its capacity, capability and integrity should not be compromised in any redevelopment scheme for the property. Additional marine-oriented recreational uses should be encouraged to develop along the harbor.

The Harbor Management Commission’s primary consultant Geoffrey Steadman, who has served as the HMC’s professional staff since it was created, was engaged by BFJ Planning in connection with the preparation of the proposed master plan. With our approval, Mr. Steadman wrote and submitted a comprehensive 33-page document entitled "Stamford's Coastal Vision For Conservation, Economic Development, and Beneficial Land-Use in the Coastal Management Area" on February 6, 2014, that included language similar to that referenced above from the current master plan and which was intended to ensure the most effective coordination and consistency between the Master Plan and Harbor Management Plan. Among the recommended provisions in Mr. Steadman’s document is the following with respect to the waterfront property described in the 2002 Master Plan as the HELCO (Northeast Utilities) site:

Boatyard Peninsula: The unique physical suitability of this site to accommodate water-dependent uses needed to support the recreational boating industry, including, but not limited to, boat maintenance, repair, berthing, hauling, and storage services for which there is a reasonable demand, is recognized. Commensurate with the site’s suitability and prominence and status as one of Stamford’s major waterfront assets, highest priority and preference should be given to continuation of the traditional water-dependent use of the site. The authority and provisions of the Master Plan, Harbor Management Plan, Zoning Regulations, and Connecticut Coastal Management Act should be applied to ensure that any redevelopment plans do not compromise the capacity, capability, and integrity of this site to provide recreational boating services of local and regional significance. Any future development of this site should provide for continuation of traditionally provided boat maintenance, repair, berthing, hauling, and storage services, without significant reduction of the traditional level of service and capacity provided on the site.

Pursuant to Stamford City Ordinance 6-62 and Connecticut General Statutes Section 22a-113p, our commission has carefully reviewed the Draft Master Plan for consistency with the Stamford Harbor Management Plan. We find no language in the Draft Master Plan comparable to any of the above-quoted provisions and no substantive reference therein to the Harbor Management Plan. Thus, at its meeting on September 16, 2014 the HMC approved a motion to transmit this letter to the Planning Board advising that we find that the current version of the Draft Master Plan is not consistent with the Stamford Harbor Management Plan.

The HMC can offer specific recommendations to the Planning Board that would address the above deficiencies and looks forward to working cooperatively with the Board and other city

agencies to address our concerns and to otherwise implement Stamford's goals for the beneficial use and conservation of its coastal and harbor resources.

The Commission reserves its right to provide additional comments concerning the Draft Master Plan prior to or during the October 7, 2014 public hearing.

If you have any questions or require any additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully submitted



Dr. Damian Ortelli

Chairman, Stamford Harbor Management Commission

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