



Are you on board?

15 State Street Suite 1100
Boston, MA 02109
617 223 8667
bostonharbornow.org

Board of Trustees

Meaghan Hooper-Berdik
Grace Macomber Bird
Kevin Clarke
Robert Delhome
Jamie M. Fay
Robert Golledge
Greg Herrema
Ann Lagasse
Malia Lazu
Mary Kay Leonard
Shelagh Mahoney
Andrew McElwee
James Miner
Martin O'Neill
Elaine Richardson
Bud Ris
Demetriouse Russell
Nalini Sharma
Cathy Douglas Stone
Kishore Varanasi
Richard Walker
Betsy Wall

Ex-Officio Members

Katherine F. Abbott
Rev. Mariama White-Hammond
Michael Creasey
Fred Laskey
Rebecca Tepper
Andrew Hargens

Lifetime Trustees

Governor Michael Dukakis
Governor William Weld

President & CEO

Katherine F. Abbott

April 2, 2024

Senator Barry Finegold, Chair, Joint Committee on Economic
Development and Emerging Technologies

Representative Jerald Parisella, Chair, Joint Committee on Economic
Development and Emerging Technologies

The State House
24 Beacon Street
Rm 511A
Boston, MA 01233

Dear Chairman Finegold and Parisella:

Boston Harbor Now believes that Senate Bill 2692 (SB2692), *An Act Relative to Economic Development on the Mystic River*, is a substantial improvement upon past iterations of proposals and public legislation due to its commitment to maintaining Chapter 91 protections for the property in question. Senator DiDomenico is to be commended for elevating the discourse and for his appreciable regard for this valuable waterfront parcel under consideration.

Boston Harbor Now is heartened by the resolve enshrined in the legislation in Section 1(c) and (d) which prioritizes the assessment and analysis of the Commonwealth's 10 Designated Port Areas (DPA's). Protecting this process signifies fidelity to the incredibly high standard that must be applied to these very unique and limited waterfront resources. Allowing the Department of Environmental Protection and the Office of Coastal Zone Management to complete this comprehensive study is a critical next step to avoid the need for future legislation. The study is an essential exercise for the entire Commonwealth to uphold the public trust and safeguard DPA's for their highest and best deep water maritime related uses.

Many of the guarantees in the community mitigation agreement and in the legislation, particularly the requirements to provide high quality, public waterfront open space, are in line with the spirit of what should be considered when the Commonwealth deliberates on the future of all or any part of these DPA's. Any loss of irreplaceable deep water access is to be taken seriously.

Deep water berthing is a precious commodity, and it is rare in Boston and the surrounding coastal communities. While maintaining Chapter 91



Are you on board?

15 State Street Suite 1100
Boston, MA 02109
617 223 8667
bostonharbornow.org

protections, implementing the Commonwealth's DPA study, including public waterfront park space, and other substantial mitigation are welcomed, there is one major component not yet included in the current plans, the legislation, or the mitigation agreement. Namely, the inclusion of substantial water transportation. Water transportation is the missing link that Boston Harbor Now strongly advocates be added to any final project for the parcel delineated in SB2692.

Adding a substantial water transportation component at this site will impact travel in the region. A multi-purpose terminal that could accommodate commuters from Everett and neighboring communities as well as event traffic would alleviate traffic congestion by efficiently connecting this area to Commuter Rail hubs at North and South Station, as well as the MBTA at Long Wharf.

Providing a multi-purpose water transportation terminal connects the region via Boston Harbor and partially addresses the intent of the DPA. An ability to serve as a water transportation hub for communities north of the Mystic River, and possibly accommodate large or small cruise ships, might not only benefit neighboring Encore Boston Harbor, but also support other economic drivers in the region. It will also help strengthen a comprehensive Harbor-wide water transportation network which includes the Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park and expand access to a waterfront for all by developing the harbor's edge consistent with Harborwalk 2.0.

As you consider this legislation and this project, we urge you to maintain the commitment to Chapter 91, completion of the Commonwealth's DPA study before any other changes to these critical areas, and mitigation such as a waterfront public park and Harborwalk 2.0. We ask that you add a water transportation terminal. We believe that it is an obvious necessity for this project and will be something that we will continue to advocate for as the process unfolds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katherine F. Abbott".

Katherine F. Abbott
President and CEO
Boston Harbor Now