



September
28, 2010

City Council President Gary McCarthy
Councilman Joseph Allen
Councilwoman Barbara Blanchard
Councilwoman Denise Brucker
Councilman Thomas Della Sala
Councilman Carl Erikson
Councilwoman Margaret King

Re: Proposed Riverside Park Dock

Dear Council Members:

The Stockade Association was formed in 1958 for the purpose of preserving, protecting and improving the Stockade Historic District while maintaining its residential nature. We currently have over 223 members. We also provide gardening, clean up activities, neighborhood watch patrols and other services to Riverside Park, which is treasured by the residents of the neighborhood. The City of Schenectady's plan to place a dock in the Mohawk River adjacent to Riverside Park and the Stockade neighborhood has engendered a great deal of concern and dialogue among the membership and other residents of the Stockade neighborhood that continues to this day.

An Association-sponsored public meeting with Steve Strichman and

John VanNorden on this issue was held on April 22, 2010 and over 100 people, including several council members, attended to learn more and voice their opinions. A vote was taken regarding the desirability of the plan for a dock as presented during the meeting. The results of the vote were 54 members opposed to the dock being placed at the Park, while 39 members voted in favor. Although a number of our members support the City's plan for the dock, a majority of the Stockade Association membership at the meeting expressed their opposition.

It was the Stockade Association members' understanding that the city as lead agency would include comments from the April 22nd meeting in the SEQR process for the dock. Although the President of the Association has already presented the vote results to the Council during a public comment period in April 2010, we are writing to you now to formally report the vote results and the reasons members are opposed, so that we are on the record.

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Stockade Association members opposed to the dock in Riverside Park express concern that the dock project will have a significant adverse impact. The Association membership's apprehension is primarily focused on three main issues: safety, disruption of the park and neighborhood, and aesthetics and use.

- **Safety** - Riverside Park and the Stockade neighborhood have had problems with crime, drugs, graffiti and vagrants for years especially at night. Our members are concerned that a dock will

have the potential to attract more crime and criminals, result in vandalism of boats (especially the Onrust) and the dock itself, and create a demand for more police responses, which could overburden the Schenectady Police Department. Residents on nearby streets are also concerned about increased crime outside the park by those traveling to and from the dock. In addition to crime, some have raised concerns about the proximity of the dock to the children's play area, which could be a dangerous attraction to young children.

- **Disruption** – The Stockade is plagued by a severe shortage of parking, especially on the streets feeding the park. Concerns are the dock will attract more visitors and cars to the neighborhood resulting in congestion. Although the City's proposal for the dock claims there is sufficient nearby parking, residents are skeptical and expect the dock will make the parking and traffic worse in the neighborhood. Nearby residents are concerned about increased noise because the dock has the potential to attract additional visitors and motorboats. Residents on streets leading to the park are close enough to be affected. Increased litter and trash left by visitors may create more demand for City park and sanitation services, which are already inadequate at Riverside.
- **Aesthetics and Use** –Opponents believe a three hundred foot metal dock, and its supporting infrastructure, will have the potential to negatively impact the view and the natural environment of the waterfront thereby depriving residents of

their existing enjoyment of the park. Concerns have also been raised about the impact of storing such a large dock in the park itself when not in use, and the potential for environmental damage and erosion of the shoreline. Concerns have been expressed that the Union College Crew teams, based adjacent to the Park, and a waterski school, based across from the Park, could be restricted by the dock's location near their practice area.

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A vote of the Stockade Association on April 22, 2010 opposed the dock plan because of concerns over the potential impact on the environment as stated above. The Association asks that the City Council consider the concerns raised by Stockade residents in April, and during subsequent public comment periods, before the council votes on the environmental review of the dock. We look forward to working with the City and the Council to arrive at a mutually agreeable resolution to the Association concerns. Thank you in

advance for considering our request.

Sincerely,

The Stockade Association

Sent by: Robert Stern, Corresponding Secretary
The Stockade Association
Suite 100, 32 Washington Ave.
Schenectady, NY 12305

cc: Mayor Brian Stratton
Steve Strichman