

Hello Maine Department of Environmental Protection,

For your urgent attention, please read the public comments on application #L-20386-4P-P-N.

Rockland's best natural resource is its harbor. I was drawn to Rockland as an avid swimmer and boater. I was happy to see visual access to the water from Ocean Street restored when Safe Harbor and the city of Rockland cut down the wall of arborvitae trees that grew along the water's edge, blocking the harbor view from Ocean Street and the Ocean Street Playground..

Alarm bells started going off in the summer of 2021 when Safe Harbor brought in boats far too large for the inner harbor. The big yachts at the Safe Harbor docks with their flying bridges, stacked with bulbous satellite and radar equipment are the new wall, blocking visual access to the harbor beyond these giant fiberglass ego-stroking monstrosities. The large yachts often dock for extended periods of time (3 weeks for King Baby in 2020) while waiting for the owners to fly in for their weekend in Maine.

Regarding the new harbor plans, the expansion of the pier on the east side is the absolute worst idea, mixing large yacht traffic with swimmers at the only public beach in Rockland. A far better location for the big boats would be where Dragon Cement is decommissioning their barge pier. Dredging the inner harbor to accommodate big boats will damage the tidal flats where endangered sea birds feed at low tide.

Keeping the big boats away from the inner harbor is consistent with the current arrangements in the mooring field where larger boats don't occupy the narrow and shallow parts of the harbor close to shore.

Instead of a pretty New England harbor scene when the Friendship Sloops gather for their annual Rockland regatta, the Safe Harbor docks look like a Miami yacht club! Big yachts commonly display neon signage and bright LED mast lights. They also leave cabin lights and big screen televisions illuminated all night, adding light pollution to the waterfront. This summer a cruise ship ran their diesel generator all day, adding noise and air pollution where people walk and swim. The new plan is catering to the 1% cruising around on big ships several stories above the water. Creating more dock space for these fuel guzzling behemoths is not in the public's nor the environment's best interest. I don't believe this is what the U.S. The Department of the Interior had in mind when making a grant available to Yachting Solutions to provide more facilities to the boating public. If you took a survey, you would likely learn that the boating public in ME, most operate boats around 30 feet in length.

Please make the Rockland harbor safe for swimmers and small boats. Keep noise, light, and water pollution away from the town beach. I believe Safe Harbor wants to be good stewards to the town and preserve the character of the harbor that attracted them to Rockland. They just need guidance on where to locate their big boat facilities.

TOWN BEACH WITHOUT THE PIER EXTENSIONS FOR LARGE BOATS



TOWN BEACH WITH THE PIER EXTENSIONS AND DREDGING



Sincerely,
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