

Mariners' Advisory Committee

for the Bay & River Delaware

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Mr. Tom Noyes
Delaware Offshore Wind Energy Working Group
Dover, Delaware
December 5, 2017

Mr. Noyes and Members of the Working Group,
The Mariners' Advisory Committee is the Harbor Safety Committee for the Delaware Bay and River. It is the nexus for all issues relating to Navigation, Safety, and Maritime Commerce along the Delaware River watershed and its approaches from sea. Though I have been unable to attend all meetings of the working group, I remain engaged in the process and would like to express a few things for the consideration of the Working Group. Thus far, it appears that the creation of an offshore wind farm by the State of Delaware faces many obstacles and its future is far from certain.

Should the State of Delaware choose to move forward in the creation/leasing of such an area, it is important to involve members of the Port/Maritime community to speak to issues that frequently arise regarding offshore wind energy production. Specifically, maritime commerce and navigation safety limitations affect not only the siting of areas, but also implementation and installation. The offshore space is increasingly crowded with competing interests and various stakeholders are already engaged in robust proactive planning through the Ocean Planning process and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body, which the Mariners' Advisory Committee is a part of. It is critical that such engagement should occur at early stages to avoid costly and time-consuming delays in any project.

If Delaware is unable to achieve consensus regarding the active creation/leasing/implementation of a Delaware Offshore Wind Energy Area, it is worth noting that other neighboring states are moving forward with implementation and that ports along the Delaware could position themselves to benefit from the industry that will grow to build out and support those wind farms.

Deep draft terminals along the Delaware Bay and River have the potential to provide optimal transshipment locations for hardware imported from other countries, as well as the opportunity to repurpose existing underutilized industrial sites for wind energy related manufacturing. The current model of importing turbines from Europe will be replaced by local manufacturing, considering the region's need for turbines in the coming years. Smaller cities and towns along the Delaware Bay/Ocean stand uniquely positioned to benefit from supporting and hosting the small vessel fleet and personnel connected to wind farm construction.

This economic development potential is not only limited to a future project off the Delaware coast, but also planned projects off Delaware, Maryland and New Jersey. When viewed in aggregate, the projects in the Mid-Atlantic region represent a tremendous financial opportunity for a state that hosts manufacturing and support of offshore installations. By virtue of their proximity to the aforementioned BOEM lease areas, ports along the Delaware are the most geographically desirable location for that effort due to shorter transit times to the offshore work areas and excellent intermodal connections.

As the conversation moves forward in Delaware, the Mariners' Advisory Committee stands ready to engage further as consensus emerges and more specific details are available.

Respectfully,

Captain J. Stuart Griffin, Chairman
chairman@macdelriv.org

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