



NY Waterway Must Have the Union Dry Dock Site, and Our Presence There Will be a Gift to the People of Hoboken

By Arthur E. Imperatore

Claims that NY Waterway has an alternative site in Weehawken for a repair and maintenance facility are just not true. The claim that we kept something secret is also not true. We fully briefed the Governor's Office on the situation in Weehawken in January, 2019.

We must have the Union Dry Dock site; and when we get there, we will be a gift to the taxpayers of Hoboken.

We will develop the Union Dry Dock site as an attractive amenity, looking more like a marina than a work area.

We will improve Hoboken Cove for recreational boaters and fishermen with a 430-foot wave attenuator to protect the cove, a kayak launch and a fishing pier - all at our own expense.

While we own 20,000 square feet of Hoboken Cove, we will not operate ferries there or dock there, allowing the people of Hoboken full use of the cove.

We will widen and beautify the walkway along Sinatra Drive.

We are paying taxes now on the Union Dry Dock site, even though Hoboken is blocking us from operating there. We will pay more taxes once the site is improved.

We will not be pushed off the Union Dry Dock site by a handful of people who want to improve the value of their condos by blocking us.

We will not be pushed off this site by a campaign of misinformation designed to mislead the people of Hoboken.

Misinformation about the Weehawken maintenance facility is part of that campaign.

NY Waterway has had a work dock with two barges on the Weehawken site in question for more than 10 years. The ferry company also had equipment storage and workshops on the land adjacent to this dock. This was a makeshift arrangement, less than satisfactory for the repair and maintenance of a fleet of 35 ferries, which must operate reliably every day.

NY Waterway has known for years that it ultimately would be forced to leave the upland portion of this site and has examined alternatives, resulting in the purchase of Union Dry Dock in November, 2017.

It also executed an agreement in April 2016 with the owners of the property adjacent to the Weehawken work dock allowing NY Waterway an easement to access the work dock once the company was evicted from the site. That agreement was filed with Hudson County and has been part of the public record for three years.

The image submitted by Fund for a Better Waterfront shows the Weehawken work dock and barges where they have been for years. The drawings show no operation on the land adjacent to the dock.

The 2016 agreement also allows NY Waterway to move the dock and barges 200 feet south on the Weehawken waterfront, but provides no land use, just the easement. NY Waterway examined that option and determined the second site would be too costly.

NY Waterway was evicted from the land area in question March 29, 2019. Since then, the company has been forced to conduct repair and maintenance operations from the two barges. The easement negotiated in 2016 allows workers to get to the dock and barges, nothing more.

Maintaining our ferry fleet without land access is an impossible situation.

It must be rectified if NY Waterway is to continue operating at the high level of service, including emergency service, on which the people of Hoboken, Hudson County and their leaders have come to rely.

NY Waterway must have the Union Dry Dock site and Hoboken taxpayers will be happy to have us. We will be a willing and able partner to all of the residents of Hoboken.

Arthur E. Imperatore is President & Founder of NY Waterway.