

November 26, 17

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Land Use Regulation
P.O. Box 420, Mail Code 501-02A
501 East State Street
Trenton, NJ 08625

RE: NJDEP Waterfront Development Permit Application by Port Imperial Ferry Corp. d/b/a NY Waterway for Block 259, Lot 1; 901 Sinatra Drive, City of Hoboken, Hudson County

Attn: Hudson County Section Chief

To Whom It May Concern:

As a mother of two young children and active Hoboken resident, I urge you to reject the application for the waterfront development permit referenced above. NY Waterway's proposed use for a refueling and repair facility along this busy stretch of Hoboken's waterfront park would seriously threaten the safety, health and well-being of Hoboken residents and visitors.

NY Waterway's plan to place a bustling industrial facility right in the middle of two very active, well-used parks – Maxwell Place Park (including Hoboken Cove) and Castle Point Park - is an accident waiting to happen. Many community organizations, including the Hoboken Cove Community Boathouse, use the beach and cove at this park for weekly kayaking and paddleboard lessons; the City of Water Day Festival, hosted annually by the Waterfront Alliance, brings hundreds of visitors from all over the NYC area to the Hoboken Waterfront, introducing them to the water via boating, kayak and paddleboard excursions. NY Waterway's proposal places all of these people in danger from ferry traffic. Indeed, last summer a NY Waterway ferry collided with a group of 10 kayakers near 39th street in NYC, injuring five of them (see attached NY Times story).

In addition, air pollution from the proposed facility endangers the long-term health of the thousands of people – residents, commuters and tourists – who enjoy the beach, waterfront walkway and skateboard park that directly border the proposed site. While I support the increased use of ferries and other forms of public transport, I believe that NY Waterway has other, more suitable options available to them for such a facility.

Our community has fought for years to reclaim the waterfront from the industries that long ago abandoned it, and today the political and public support to complete the transformation into a public park is stronger than ever.

Sincerely,

Heather Gibbons

N.Y. / REGION

10 Kayakers Rescued From Hudson River After Collision With Ferry

By CHRISTOPHER MELE and RICK ROJAS AUG. 30, 2016

Ten kayakers were rescued after five of them were injured in a collision with a ferry on the Hudson River near West 39th Street on Tuesday, the authorities said.

The kayakers, nine clients of Manhattan Kayak Company and one of the company's employees, were headed south on the river when the collision occurred, Inspector David Driscoll, the commander of the New York Police Department's Harbor Unit, said at a news conference on Tuesday night. At least two of the kayakers were struck by a NY Waterway ferry, the police said.

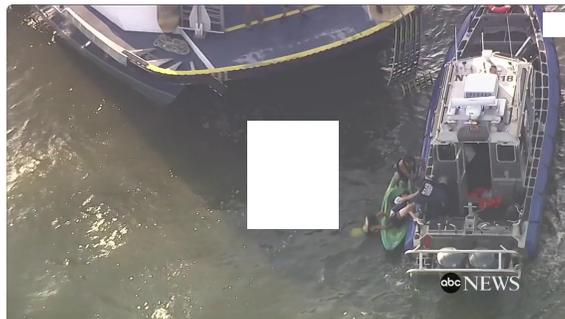
The employee, whose name was not released, sustained the most serious injuries, with one arm appearing to be partially severed, Inspector Driscoll said. The inspector said the employee had lost "a lot of blood" and "was lapsing in and out of consciousness." Officer Tommy Le of the Harbor Unit said he had applied a tourniquet to the man's arm.

Two men and two women sustained minor injuries in the collision, including cuts to the head and injuries to their backs and shoulders, the authorities said.

The kayaker with the most serious injuries was taken to Bellevue Hospital Center and the four others, whose conditions were not immediately available, were brought to Mount Sinai St. Luke's, the Fire Department said.

Inspector Driscoll said the ferry captain had taken a Breathalyzer test, which recorded no alcohol. Pat Smith, a spokesman for NY Waterway, said, "We're cooperating fully with the United States Coast Guard and the New York Police Department in this investigation."

A crew from the Coast Guard's Staten Island station helped the Police Department rescue the kayakers, said Petty Officer Sabrina Clarke, a Coast Guard spokeswoman.



 **ABC News**
@ABC

As many as 10 kayakers rescued from Hudson River after being hit by ferry, NYPD says. abcn.ws/2cpz9gF
6:48 PM - Aug 30, 2016

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The episode, which occurred around 5:55 p.m. near Pier 79 at 12th Avenue and 39th Street, brought to light the conflicts that can arise between recreational and commercial users of the river.

Eric Stiller, the owner of the Manhattan Kayak Company, which offers rentals, tours and classes, said in a phone interview on Tuesday night that he was thankful that all of the kayakers had survived. He said the injured employee, a longtime professional guide, saw the ferry coming and waved his paddle in the air to get the captain's attention.

"It had to be horrifying to see that it was not being responded to," he said, adding that this was the first episode of its kind in the company's 20-year history.

He said the group of kayakers were gathered like a herd in kayaks colored bright yellow, red, orange and green at the time of the collision, which he said happened about 30 to 45 minutes after the group set out.

Graeme Birchall, president of the Downtown Boathouse, which provides free public kayaking in Manhattan, said the episode on Tuesday was an "outlier." The nonprofit organization has organized more than 300,000 kayak outings without a collision, he said.

He said kayaking on the Hudson was safer than being a bicyclist on the city's streets. "The harbor is fundamentally larger, much more open and much more visible," he said.

Kaitlin Petersen, president of the Manhattan Community Boathouse, which offers free kayak trips, said that ferries could have blind spots that made seeing recreational users on the river difficult.

While it was unclear what exactly had happened, Ms. Petersen said weather, sun glare or other factors could have come into play.

Kayakers are not required to announce themselves to harbor officials, but Ms. Petersen said it was advisable for recreational users to have a marine radio with them to listen to harbor traffic for vessels coming and going, she said.

She said her group made it a point to allow larger commercial vessels a wide berth.

"We're the smallest thing on the river, so you adapt accordingly," she said. At the sight of a ship, she added, "we wait, we see what they're doing and then we keep going."

Ms. Petersen said she hoped that kayakers would not be restricted from the river as a result of the collision.

"This is a very terrible thing to have happened," she said, "but it does not make the Hudson a more or less safe place for kayakers."

Correction: September 3, 2016

An article in some editions on Wednesday about a collision between kayakers and a ferry in the Hudson River, using information from Fire Department officials, misstated the approximate location of the accident in some copies. It was near West 39th Street, not 34th Street.

A version of this article appears in print on August 31, 2016, on Page A20 of the New York edition with the headline: Kayakers Pulled From Hudson in Crash With Ferry.