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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FREEDOM GROUP IS FORMED TO
PROTECT BROAD BAY FROM
COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

******ORGANIZATION OPPOSES EXPANSION OF
OSSIPPEE LAKE MARINA******

March 18, 2002, Freedom, NH – A group of Freedom property owners today announced the formation of the Broad Bay Alliance, an organization consisting of individuals and groups committed to protecting the environment and character of Broad Bay.

The immediate focus of the Alliance is opposition to the expansion of Ossipee Lake Marina. Alliance co-founders Bruce Guckert and David Smith said more than 60 individuals and several organizations have signaled their support of the new group.

On March 12th Ossipee Realty Corporation, whose principal is Kevin Price of Londonderry, NH, applied for a special exception to Freedom's zoning to allow expansion of the Marina's acreage by one-third as well as new buildings, parking lots, bathrooms and increased boat capacity. The Marina is in Freedom's General Residential District.

According to the Alliance the application is “after the fact” because much of the expansion has already taken place without the necessary approvals.

The group points to public documents that show the expansion began in 1998 after Price’s company purchased 2.4 acres of residential shorefront property adjacent to the Marina and built public access roads, parking lots and bathrooms, none of which had the required town approvals. The public documents and a chronology of events are posted on the group's Internet website at www.zoningissues.org.

In addition to documenting alleged local zoning violations, the website details how wetlands were filled at the Marina to construct a shoreline road. In June 2001 the State Department of Environmental Services cited Price for filling the wetlands and remediation of the violation is currently under the jurisdiction of the NHDES Wetlands Division.

In making the announcement today the Alliance said that many people had observed the alleged violations at the Marina but did not know whether to report them to zoning officials, the Selectmen, a State agency or one of the area's environmental groups.

"When it became clear that there was no single entity to collect the information and provide it to the appropriate authorities, we created one," they said. "Our goal is to protect Broad Bay by ensuring the integrity of our laws. We are a collective voice for abutting property owners, Broad Bay homeowner groups and non-profit organizations that share that goal."

Built in the mid-1960's Ossipee Lake Marina is considered a grandfathered non-conforming use under Freedom zoning. Located in the General Residential District it is surrounded by residential homes, YMCA Camp Nellie Huckins and the Ossipee Village Beach Club. Price purchased the Marina in 1997.

"The limited scope of the Marina's grandfathered operations under Freedom zoning is a matter of law that was known to Mr. Price when he purchased the property," the group said in making its announcement.

Other allegations detailed on the group's website include expanded food sales, commercial lights that intrude on the Bay's residential properties and lack of compliance with the terms of a previously granted special exception for boat storage on the property.

"These actions have been documented by property owners and by the town itself over a sustained period of time. Our enjoyment of the Bay has been compromised and the value of our property is threatened," the group stated.

"If the Zoning Board of Adjustment were to grant an "after the fact" special exception in this matter it would set a dangerous precedent and establish a clear plan of action for future developers to subvert the intent of Freedom's zoning ordinance. That makes this an issue of concern for the entire community."

The group urges the public to access its www.zoningissues.org website and to e-mail their comments to feedback@zoningissues.org prior to March 26th at which time the Freedom ZBA will consider the Marina's application.

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