

The New Haven Register (nhregister.com), Serving New Haven, CT

---

News > Metro

## \$1 million grant will spur bulkhead work in West Haven

Monday, December 6, 2010

By Amanda Pinto, Register Staff

[apinto@nhregister.com](mailto:apinto@nhregister.com)

---

WEST HAVEN — A \$2 million project that would lead to the development of the West River area of New Haven Harbor took a big step forward Thursday.

Gov. M. Jodi Rell announced the state would likely pitch in \$1 million toward replacing a deteriorating bulkhead damaged in a 2007 storm. Upon completion, 15 to 20 acres of waterfront property will be ready for development, Mayor John M. Picard said.

"It's huge; we could not do this without the bulkhead," Planning and Development Commissioner Eileen Buckheit said. "It is the first step in revitalizing Water Street and the whole neighborhood."

Rell said the \$1 million is expected to be approved by the state Bond Commission Friday.

The announcement is a milestone in an effort that began in 2007, Buckheit said. Initially, the state indicated it wouldn't provide any money, but Buckheit and others fought and focused on the fact that it is in a brownfield remediation area, Buckheit said.

The site has also been identified as the future headquarters for steel door manufacturer Bilco, Rell said.

"Replacing this wall, which keeps the shoreline from eroding, an especially important job at a brownfield site, is really the key to getting the whole project rolling," Rell said in a statement.

"Once the wall is replaced, the environmental remediation can move ahead and economic development, including the new Bilco headquarters, can proceed. That will ensure the company's 80 jobs stay in West Haven."

Site plans call for a marina, five-story office building, a hotel and retail and recreational space, Rell and city officials said.

The new bulkhead will make the property marketable to developers, help create jobs and catalyze economic stability, Picard has said.

Buckheit said the state funding "virtually ensures" the city will get a grant of \$1 million from the U.S. Economic Development Administration in the spring.

The announcement came the same day the state awarded West Haven \$105,000 for removing an invasive plant, phragmites, from 95 acres at the Cove River, Buckheit said.

At a conference regarding that grant Thursday morning, Rell jokingly asked Picard what he wanted for West Haven and

he told her “a million for the bulkhead,” Picard said.

He had no idea she would announce likely funding for the project later that afternoon.

“I think it’s incredible,” Picard said of Rell’s announcement. “It’s a very exciting project that was done without any local tax dollars.”

Call Amanda Pinto at 203-789-5734.

---

URL: [http://www.nhregister.com/articles/2010/12/06/news/metro/bb2\\_mon\\_whbulkhead120610.prt](http://www.nhregister.com/articles/2010/12/06/news/metro/bb2_mon_whbulkhead120610.prt)

© 2010 nhregister.com, a **Journal Register** Property