ABSTRACT
Working waterfront space is limited, leading to competition for coastal space among different waterfront dependent industries such as fisheries as well as non-waterfront dependent users. The emergence of offshore wind power in the northeast US is squeezing already scarce port resources, exacerbating competition for these spaces, and generating conflict. The recent focus on wind generation has augmented demand for port space to serve as staging areas for this offshore development. Although the development of wind power will occur offshore, Connecticut ports are anticipating port use by wind companies with winning bids. This paper focuses on the competition for waterfront space on the Thames River of Connecticut. The paper describes the process behind the development of the State Pier project at New London and examines the key actors involved in this development. Comparative information from other ports will be assessed as well.

INTRODUCTION
Working waterfronts are assets of the Blue Economy: areas of land-based water access critical to operations of water-dependent enterprises. Supporting a variety of water dependent users, a critical infrastructure is thus established in order to provide water services. Nationally, the amount of the economic potential of our nation’s ports is estimated at $1 trillion (McLay, 2012) and around $30 billion in Massachusetts alone (Harbors Institute, 2013). These requirements intersect or overlap with port characteristics desired by commercial, charter/boat and recreational fisheries.

OBJECTIVES
This paper seeks to examine the shoreline impacts associated with the emerging offshore wind industry respect to the Port of New London, particularly related to the fishing industry in the Port of New London, Connecticut. Specifically, we explore the governance of the Port of New London facility and the distributional consequences of those decisions, with reference to the fishing industry and focus on process and outcome: what is the nature of the processes by which the port space has been reconfigured and contested and the conflicts that have been generated, who benefits and how; who is left out and why.

CASE STUDY
In May 2018, Connecticut selected Deepwater Wind to supply the state’s first energy produced from an offshore wind farm: 200 MW of energy from their proposed 25 turbine Revolution Wind development located in federal waters off Martha’s Vineyard. Deepwater Wind was acquired by Ørsted and then sold half their interest in Deepwater Wind to EverSource, New England’s largest energy company, creating the North East Offshore partnership. In January 2019, the CT Port authority (CPA) announced Gateway as the new operator of the New London State Pier. Weeks later Gateway gave all state pier tenants notice to vacate the pier within 60 days. This included two fishing companies, the salt company DRIV and 45 Longshoremen. Ørsted/Eversource announced their intention to designate the New London State Pier the Northeast Hub for all Wind Turbine Generator activity for all their northeast projects and to make a capital investment of at least $57 million plus $30 million in lease fees towards their use of the State Pier over a decade. A permit request for the construction was submitted to the US Army Corps of Engineers and CT Dept of Energy and Environmental Protection in 2020 but as of Nov. 2021 has not been permitted.

METHODS
We attended virtual meetings of the CPA, reviewed relevant documents and the analysis of submitted public responses to US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regarding the proposed plans for the New London State Pier improvements and transition to a staging area for the wind energy joint venture by Ørsted and EverSource and conducted content analysis of the public comments in order to map out and to some extent, quantify the discursive landscape surrounding the State Pier project, what comprises public benefit in this case and who is or should receive it.

RESULTS

DISCUSSION
New London State Pier provides a revealing example of conflicts over waterfront use and space. Conflict has emerged between existing port users and the Connecticut Port Authority as the use of the entire port area has apparently given to offshore wind energy (OWE) developer Ørsted-Eversource, displacing all existing users of the facilities with no opposition for public submission of permits (Ebbin and Trumbull, 2021). The redesign has also impacted other businesses within New London’s working waterfront. Concern on the part of Cross Sound Ferry about navigation of its ferries around the newly configured pier was serious enough for Ørsted to design changes in the new Blue Economy looks to reshape port usage in the Thames River, generating both winners and losers: two fishing companies losing port access and at the same time, new potential opportunities may be opening for fishing businesses to work servicing the wind industry’s needs. This paper explores the processes by which port space has been reconfigured and examines the nature of the ensuing conflicts and impacts involving the local fishing industry. Comparative information from other ports will be assessed as well.