



EAST PROVIDENCE WATERFRONT DISTRICT COMMISSION

Waterfront Commission Meeting Minutes February 20, 2020

Attendees: William Fazioli, Chair
Tim Conley, Vice Chair
Paul Moura, Secretary
Steven Hardcastle, Treasurer
Rick Lawson
Peter Willey
Jennifer Griffith
Domenic Pontarelli
Luis Torrado
David O'Connell
James Moran, Planning Department
Steve Coutu, DPW
Mike Walker, Commerce RI
Jeffery Crawford, DEM

Absent: David Sluter

Staff: Pamela M. Sherrill, AICP, Executive Director
Chris Martin, Waterfront Planner
Sara Bradford, Bradford Associates

1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM and confirmed quorum. The Chair gave opening remarks on a credit review done by Moody's and that the Waterfront Commission was a prime topic of the economic development in the City of East Providence, with at least six of the City's top employers located within the Waterfront District. University Orthopedics has over 250 employees and their daily visits from patients range from 600-800/ day. We hope to hear the outcome of the credit review soon. The Chair also mentioned the presentation he did for the East Providence Chamber of Commerce with highlights within the Waterfront District.

2. OLD BUSINESS

A. VOTE: On a motion by Mr. Moura, seconded by Mr. Hardcastle, January 16, 2020 meeting minutes were voted unanimously.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Hearing: to consider Design Review Committee and Hearing Panel advisory opinions for a conditional use for "public utility not otherwise mentioned" for a 2,807 kilowatt direct current solar array system proposed for installation on a 9.3-acre site which is undergoing active environmental remediation, with distribution to National Grid.

Project: Kearsarge Solar Facility

Owner: Arpad J. Merva Revocable Living Trust

Applicant: Kearsarge Solar LLC
Location: 0, 7, and 105 Dexter Road
Assessor's: Map 204, Block 01, Lots 17, 17.1 and 18
Zoning: Dexter Road Sub-district

- a. **Vote:** Previous testimony by Andrew Bernstein & Todd Greene before the Design Review Committee (DRC) and Hearing Panel (HP), documents submitted to the DRC and Hearing Panel, and the acceptance of Todd Greene as an expert witness were submitted by the applicant for the record. So moved by Mr. Lawson and seconded by Mr. O'Connell with a unanimous vote.

There was discussion on the Commission about the Forbes Street solar field in East Providence and if there are any issues that have come from that. None have been brought up yet, as noted by DPW. The Commission reconfirmed the total of the personal property taxes to be collected will be \$280k over 25 years. The applicant confirms this at a rate of \$5 per kilowatt of A/C as established by state law. The underlying property tax stays the same. The solar panels will be made in the USA, owned by Q Cell, which is based in Korea. The Commission states that the economic benefit of property being remediated and avoiding further contamination is highly valuable, as is the renewable energy component of the project.

No public comment.

Mr. Pontarelli made a motion, seconded by Moura, for the Waterfront Commission to move to accept the advisory opinions of the Design Review Committee and the Hearing Panel, based on Kearsarge Solar LLC's application, February 6, 2020 narrative, plan set received January 30, 2020, comments from City staff, the Planner's Memorandum, the Commission's landscape architectural consultant, the Applicant's testimony and public testimony. The Commission finds that the project is in conformance with the purposes of Article IX, "Waterfront Special Development Districts" regulations of the East Providence Zoning Ordinance and therefore votes to approve the conditional use of a "public utility not otherwise mentioned" for a proposed 2,807 kilowatt direct current solar array system with distribution to National Grid subject to the following:

- A. The Applicant shall meet all applicable Federal, State and local requirements and obtain all applicable Federal, State and local permits.
- B. All comments received from the Fire Marshall, City Engineer, and Bradford Associates, landscape architect consultant, shall be addressed.
- C. Design Review Committee landscaping, fencing, and educational signage recommendations.
- D. Submission and approval of a decommissioning estimate, plan and surety, to the satisfaction of the Waterfront Commission executive director and the City of East Providence solicitor.

Mr. O'Connell – Aye Mr. Conley -- Aye Mr. Pontarelli – Aye

Mr. Torrado - Aye
Mr. Lawson - Aye

Mr. Willey – Aye
Mr. Hardcastle – Aye
Chair votes Aye

Ms. Griffith - Aye
Mr. Moura - Aye

Motion passes.

- b. **Vote:** On a motion by Mr. Moura, seconded by Mr. Lawson, and voted unanimously, the Waterfront Commission Hearing was closed at 7:47 PM.

4. Staff Report

Ms. Sherrill gave an update on the zoning regulation changes and how they've contributed to a positive impact, specifically at Phillipsdale, which is seeing a flurry of new activity within the past month: new CrossFit tenant, Enotap was featured in the Providence Journal, We Share Hope will be a new tenant and a microbrewery has shown interest in the location. Ms. Sherrill noted that Kent Lorenz recorded his deed restrictions for the affordable units at 59 Purchase Street, the monitoring agreement was signed and he received a check from the Waterfront Commission for \$116,600 as a municipal subsidy. This shows that the affordable housing requirement of 10% is being met.

5. **VOTE:** A motion was made by Mr. O'Connell, seconded by Mr. Hardcastle, and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 7:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

CHRIS MARTIN, WATERFRONT PLANNER