



EAST PROVIDENCE WATERFRONT DISTRICT COMMISSION

Waterfront Commission

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 14, 2021 – 6:30 PM

A remote/virtual meeting was held in accordance with Governor Gina Raimondo's **EXECUTIVE ORDER 20-46, JUNE 12, 2020, FORTY-SECOND SUPPLEMENTAL EMERGENCY DECLARATION - PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS, EXTENDED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER 21-30, MARCH 31, 2021, ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THIRD SUPPLEMENTAL EMERGENCY DECLARATION – EXTENSION OF EXECUTIVE ORDERS.**

Commissioners present via video and audio:

William Fazioli, Chair	Jennifer Griffith
Steve Hardcastle, Treasurer	Luis Torrado
David O'Connell	Mayor Robert DaSilva
Tim Conley, Vice Chair	Daniel Borges, DPW
Peter Willey	

Voting Members Absent:

Paul Moura, Secretary
David Sluter
Rick Lawson
Domenic Pontarelli

Staff present via video and audio:

Chris Martin, Executive Director

Dominic Leonardo, Waterfront Intern

1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM and gave an overview of remote meeting protocol.

2. OLD BUSINESS

A. VOTE: The motion by Ms. Lawson to approve the minutes of March 18, 2021 was seconded by Mr. O'Connell and passed by a unanimous voice vote.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. The Chair introduced Preston Halperin of Bourne Holdings for an update on the development at Phillipsdale Landing. Mr. Halperin and his partners have owned the property since 2015 and have been instrumental in updating the allowed uses within the Phillipsdale sub-district. This has been key in adding new and sustainable tenants to the development. The development has gone from less than 5% occupancy in 2014 to almost 90% occupancy today. The work done there over the last 6 years has remediated environmental contamination, updated the heating, cooling and electrical systems and restored the dozen buildings—which are on the national historic register. Phillipsdale is now home to tenants ranging from manufacturers of leather goods, woodworking and restoration, to car restoration, art fabrication, storage, erosion control material manufacturing, wine importing, crossfit, youth hockey, cheerleading, a food bank and more.

B. The Chair gave a presentation on the 2020 Census timeline. The apportionment data release will happen on April 30, 2021. This will give the statewide population counts and will determine whether Rhode Island will maintain their two congressional seats or if the state will lose one, based on the population count. Most of the rest of the data will come out in the fall/ winter of 2021/ 2022. The American Community Survey estimates show that East Providence is seeing declines in population, especially the younger population—while the City's population of 75+ is going up. This population decline will see a loss of the main economic driving force of Millennials (ages 25-40) in East Providence. To halt this trend, East Providence needs to replenish its population and labor force. Increasing available housing stock is one way to address this. The potential is there in East Providence and along the Waterfront to do this.

4. STAFF REPORT.

Mr. Martin provided a staff report. There have been no new development applications yet, though he does anticipate something soon for East Point very soon. The Affordable Housing draft amendment will be on the April 29th Planning Board agenda and then hopefully on the next council docket after that in May. The \$200k in-lieu payment was made to One Neighborhood Builders for their purchase of Sutton Place on 3/26/21. This 36 unit Affordable Housing project will put East Providence over the 10% required threshold for Affordable Housing. Sage Environmental won the award for the Brownfields Project of the Year from the Environmental Business Council of New England for the remediation work done at Kettle Point. The award ceremony will be on June 10th. Mr. Martin gave an update that the City has recommended to Chevron to study the feasibility of an ADA kayak launch at Bold Point Park. This location was approved by CRMC and Chevron now will submit the application with the City/ EPWC support. Mr. Martin stated that the 1st Street Bike Lane pilot will be launched this spring, pending confirmation from the contractor that would do the striping on the street. Mr. Martin was part of the selection committee on the Crook Point Bridge design competition, which was created to generate excitement around the idea of redeveloping the area around the Crook Point Bridge while maintaining the historic integrity of the structure and creating better public access to the waterfront on both sides of the Seekonk River. The winner of the design competition will be announced soon.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 20th, 2021.

5. VOTE: ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Torrado, seconded by Mr. Hardcastle to adjourn. On voice vote the Waterfront Commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

CHRIS MARTIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR