

Editorial: Wonderment on the waterfront



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A wonderful convergence of vision, people and opportunity placed a giant troll along a forgotten outcropping of East Providence waterfront, and the result is nothing short of remarkable. It is also repeatable, in East Providence and elsewhere.

Since she was [unveiled to the public more than a week ago](#), "Mrs. Skipper" has been a resounding success. Crowds have flocked to Kettle Point to discover and appreciate her, with a sense of wonder rarely seen in this era of technology-driven sensory overload.

Throughout the long holiday weekend, visitors from near and far traveled by car, bike and even boat to find the city's new public art installation. They were not disappointed. The troll is fascinating, inspiring, and truly delightful, delivered with a message of love and urgency for the natural world. And though she is new on the scene, the story of her arrival began many years ago.

This stretch of East Providence shoreline, like miles of the city's shoreline, was controlled by big oil companies, home to vast stretches of large tank farms. As those were being decommissioned and dismantled, the city began working with new developers, with new visions for its waterfront, under the influence of the East Providence Waterfront District Commission.

At Kettle Point, where developers drew up plans for a large condominium development and medical facility, the city secured public access to the water from this remote section of the property. It includes public parking and a path to the water, it is adjacent to the East Bay Bike Path, and it includes a large pier that the developers rehabilitated.

That vision and those agreements were the foundation upon which "Mrs. Skipper" sits. The rest is a wonderful combination of artistry, passion, problem-solving, volunteerism and teamwork, from too many to mention here.

Hopefully all communities seek similar opportunities in their own remote corners and along forgotten paths. The execution may be challenging, but the vision is clear. Invite artistry, embed a message, unlock public spaces, and welcome wonder.

Bravo to everyone who brought "Mrs. Skipper" to East Providence. Your example is inspiring.