



## EAST PROVIDENCE WATERFRONT DISTRICT COMMISSION

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### Waterfront Commission Hearing Minutes DRAFT January 18, 2018

*Attendees:* William Fazioli, Acting Chairman  
John Pesce  
Peter Willey  
Paul Moura  
Luis Torrado  
Jay Kern

*Members absent:* Stephen Hardcastle  
Roy Coulombe

*Ex-Officio:* Diane Feather, Acting Planning Director  
Tim Chapman, City Manager  
Michael Walker, Commerce RI

*Staff:* Pamela M. Sherrill, Executive Director

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The meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM.

#### 1. ACTING CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

#### 2. OLD BUSINESS

- A. **VOTE:** On a motion by Mr. Pesce seconded by Mr. Willey, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2017 Waterfront Commission meeting.

#### 3. NEW BUSINESS

- A. **For Discussion:** Presentation by the Chevron Team: "Visioning the Southern Waterfront of East Providence"

Ms. Sherrill welcomed the Chevron team and indicated that the information presented will be invaluable to developers moving forward. Connie Hall, Chevron Real Estate Consultant, indicated that they couldn't come together to move forward with the Village on the Waterfront plan and have worked closely with four property owners, Chevron (including UNOCAL), G&W RR, and Tockwotton to re-envision the Southern Waterfront. Renee Schoonbeek provided a detailed look at opportunities, prefacing all by indicating that the presentation is illustrative only and details are subject to design by developers and state and local approvals including the Waterfront Commission. The illustrative concepts are based on the 2003 Waterfront Plan, state guide plan elements, outreach to property owners, businesses, and elected officials as well as input received at a July 2017 listening session at Tockwotton. Participants at the July meeting spoke of concern about Vets Memorial Parkway traffic congestion, and a variety of development opportunities to support existing businesses. The Chevron team was looking for public support for the vision, developed in concert with Chevron, UNOCAL, P&W RR, and Tockwotton, recognizing that four owners, working collaboratively, could help achieve a joint vision.



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Approximately 65% of the subject area is within the 100-year floodplain. One third of the plan area is close to being remediated. An objective is to make Waterfront Drive greener and more pedestrian oriented than the northern section. Four areas were identified with potential for early-, near-, medium- and long-term development, all with public access and open space. Funding strategies were presented. Public benefit would include 37 acres of flood protected development, 45 acres of open space including public access to 100% of the waterfront shoreline, 2800 mostly structured parking spaces, 26 acres of mixed use with retail, entertainment, hospitality and fewer residential units than previously approved, and a 1.2 mile extension of Waterfront Drive, all as a regional and even national draw.

Commission comments: support of diverse mixed use and not just residential development; complete I-195 ramp access is needed to and from the Waterfront; EP will become a regional and statewide draw; this vision will attract waterfront investment; RIDOT Director Alveti has been responsive to the need for better interstate access; political will is needed to support this tremendous vision; and kudos for taking a site with extensive areas within the 100-year flood zone and creatively turning the location into an asset.

Questions/comments from the public: Regrading should be considered to balance out the site infrastructure costs among all property owners to make all parcels viable for development. The city manager reiterated the importance of I-195 ramps and pedestrian and bicycle connections in Watchemoket to waterfront development, thanked Tockwotton and Live Nation for their vision on the waterfront, discussed relocation of the electrical towers to a less conspicuous location south of the bridge, thanked Chevron and Kettle Point developers for their investments, announced a February 6 presentation by URI students on concepts for Crook Point, and indicated that the council is very supportive. In response to a question regarding roundabouts, Ms. Schoonbeek indicated that this is only one suggestion for improving safety while calming traffic but is not necessarily the solution. There was support for water taxi connections.

- B. Vote:** Demeter LLC requested a 6-month extension from 12/20/17 to 6/20/18 on the allocation of up to \$488,000 from the Affordable Housing In-lieu Fund, conditional on a commitment of funding from RI Housing to Ivy Place for gap financing of mixed use redevelopment including affordable housing.

Cynthia Langlykke indicated that the project did not receive funding in the first two RI Housing grant rounds but that they are encouraged that they would be funded in March or April. Commissioners indicated that they felt misled in June to understand that RI Housing would grant funding within six months; expressed support for affordable housing rules and regulations that specify criteria for funding so that it is not on a first come, first served basis; supported phased construction of the townhouse portion of the project to meet available funding. If RI Housing funding is not received in March/April it is likely the project is at risk since it is difficult to get private financing for an affordable housing project. If the affordable housing rules and regulations are subject to the state process for promulgation of rules and regulations it could take six months for state approval.



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On a motion by Mr. Moura and seconded by Mr. Torrado, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve one final extension to Demeter LLC for gap financing of up to \$488,000 for the Ivy Place mixed use development on Ivy Street and Taunton Avenue, subject to approval by RI Housing by 6/20/18.

- C. Vote:** to select a vendor for fabrication of the stormwater management interpretive panel at Squantum Woods. Project is funded in part with a \$1,000 grant received from EATON 2016 Safety Week. On a motion by Mr. Pesce and seconded by Mr. Willey, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve Izone Imaging at \$864.98.
- D. Vote:** to accept the 2017 Annual Report and Financial Report. Discussion focused on revisiting the application fee structure to assure that the commission is fiscally sustainable. On a motion by Mr. Willey and seconded by Mr. Kern, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve.

#### 4. STAFF REPORT

Ms. Sherrill indicated that the FRAM redevelopment for 98 units is starting with a zone change for the parcel across the rail line with an application anticipated thereafter. She provided an update of a recent meeting with Mark Hastings of G&W RR regarding increased agency support for mixed use on the South Quay. The application for a 2-story addition at 90 Valley Street shall be deemed approved if no action is taken within 40 days of issuance of the Notice of Completeness (issued 1/17/18); the application is similar to prior relief and approval granted by the Waterfront Commission for the subject property in 2007 and has been positively reviewed by city staff and the commission's consultant architect. Chevron has begun the process to modify its TIF agreement due to increased costs for pier removal and Waterfront Drive construction. A Washington Trust account has been set up for the Affordable Housing In-lieu funds. No funds have been received to date from AR Building Co. A certificate of occupancy for Building 2, the first building, will not be issued until the in-lieu fees and Waterfront Commission fees are received.

#### 5. VOTE: ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM following a motion by Mr. Pesce, seconded by Mr. Willey and unanimous vote. The next meeting is February 15.

Respectfully submitted,

PAMELA M. SHERRILL, AICP  
*Executive Director*