



# EAST PROVIDENCE WATERFRONT DISTRICT COMMISSION

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## Waterfront Commission Meeting Minutes April 18, 2019

<i>Attendees:</i>	William Fazioli, Chair Steven Hardcastle Tim Conley Peter Willey Paul Moura Luis Torrado Rick Lawson Jennifer Griffith
<i>Absent:</i>	Roy Coulombe David Sluter
<i>Ex-officio:</i>	Diane Feather, Acting Planning Director Mike Walker, Commerce RI
<i>Staff:</i>	Pamela M. Sherrill, AICP, Executive Director

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The chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. New commissioners Rick Lawson and Jennifer Griffith, City Council appointees, were welcomed. The chair recognized the service of Jay Kern. He indicated that this promises to be a busy spring with the April 24, 2019 Henderson Bridge public meeting, anticipated start of construction of the Residences at Bold Point this summer, Colonial Mills occupancy this summer, and continued apartment construction at Kettle Point with strong leasing. He recognized the strong community spirit demonstrated by University Orthopedics with a June 22, 2019 5K race and Aspen Aerogels with Earth Day cleanups. He indicated that Bold Point concerts are entering their third year of a three-year lease with a dozen performances announced. He concluded by saying that there is strong interest in Opportunity Zone investments with the recent announcement of final regulations.

### 1. NEW BUSINESS

**A. DISCUSSION:** Introductory discussion with the Economic Development Commission. The Chair welcomed members of the EDC. Jim Moran, economic development planner and staff to the EDC, explained the commission's mission based on a 1980s Urban Development Grant that is the basis of its very successful revolving loan fund. Currently approximately \$500,000 is out in loans with repayment schedules typically 5 years or less. The EDC is looking for ways that the EDC and Waterfront Commission can partner, recognizing that the EDC has been instrumental in making loans to Waterfront Commission projects. The [www.eastprovidencebusiness.com](http://www.eastprovidencebusiness.com) website has been a positive platform for attracting developers and posting the Opportunity Zone prospectus. Both commissions were supportive of conducting a study of the economic impact of the proposed music venue, including consideration of the multiplier effect on local and regional economies. The commissions will look toward continuing ways to collaborate.

### B. PUBLIC HEARING

- 1. VOTE:** Public hearing to consider advisory opinion of the Hearing Panel regarding a parking deviation for the Black Duck Tavern proposed seasonal patio with outdoor seating, a permitted use.

Owner/Applicant: DMC Properties, LLC  
Location: 31-35 Warren Ave  
Assessor's Map 016, Block 05, Lot 002  
Project: Black Duck Tavern Patio  
Zoning: Bold Point Sub-district

Mr. Cory Brailsford, partner in DMC Properties, described the patio project and indicated that sufficient parking is available for the Black Duck Tavern and patio expansion at the Comedy Club (same ownership) and on-street on Warren Ave. The chair indicated that testimony, staff reports and conditions of positive advisory opinion had been presented at the Hearing Panel hearing. There were no public comments.

The hearing was closed on a motion by Mr. Moura, seconded by Mr. Lawson and voted unanimously.

On a motion by Mr. Lawson, seconded by Mr. Moura, the commission voted to accept the advisory opinion of the Hearing Panel to grant a parking deviation for the Black Duck Tavern proposed seasonal patio with outdoor seating, subject to the following conditions:

- Installation of emergency only gates on the First Street and Comedy Connection side of the patio.
- Installation of bike racks on the patio fence along First Street.
- Installation of screening around the jointly used trash and recycling dumpsters per Sec. 19-483(b)(21).

Furthermore, requesting that the Waterfront Commission submit a request to Steve Coutu, DPW Director, to request that the City Council post First Street between Mauran and Warren Avenues NO PARKING ANY TIME, due to limited roadway width, share the road bike lanes, and numerous curb cuts.

And furthermore, recommending that the Waterfront Commission and the Planning Department work with any consultant selected as part of the upcoming EDA/EDC Main Street Watchemoket Square grant to recommend improved parking signage and striping on Warren Avenue.

Mr. Conley – Aye Mr. Moura – Aye Mr. Lawson – Aye Ms. Griffith – Aye  
Mr. Willey – Aye Mr. Hardcastle – Aye Mr. Torrado – Aye Chair votes – Aye

- C. FY18 Audit.** The Waterfront Commission audit presentation was taken out of order. Greg Parisi, Baxter Dansereau- Accountants, provided highlights of the FY19 audit, including how payment of \$552,500 in dedicated in-lieu funding for affordable housing, and write-off \$61,000 of bad debt from the SBA Green Loan fund skewed the overall finances of the commission. General operations in non-restricted accounts were \$16,000

lower than FY 17 due in part to lower application fee receipts, increased salary, and legal fees associated with an appeal.

Commissioners expressed concern that current Waterfront Commission finances are unsustainable and that it is incumbent that the commission be more aggressive in procuring funding. The chair outlined steps he has taken to reach out to Rep. Gregg Amore and Sen. Valerie Lawson with requests for state funding. General discussion ensued regarding strategies to reach out to East Providence's House and Senate delegation. Ms. Sherrill will review the conditions of the EDA grant that funded EATON's relocation to East Providence to determine if there is a potential for increasing monthly rent payment to the Waterfront Commission. She will also reach out to Mr. Parisi to determine how accounting for restrictive accounts can be separated so that they do not skew overall budget reporting.

On a motion by Mr. Willey, seconded by Mr. Hardcastle, the commission voted unanimously to adopt the FY18 audit:

Mr. Conley – Aye Mr. Moura – Aye Mr. Lawson – Aye Ms. Griffith – Aye  
Mr. Willey – Aye Mr. Hardcastle – Aye Mr. Torrado – Aye Chair votes – Aye

**D. DISCUSSION:** Henderson Bridge Replacement Update

Ms. Sherrill invited all to attend the Henderson Bridge update meeting April 24, 2019 at the Riviera Restaurant at 7 PM. She indicated that RIDOT has been responsive to city comments including providing Waterfront Drive access. Commissioners acknowledged that the bridge has to be replaced, questioned if two lanes are adequate, and are looking to redevelopment of state-owned land.

**E. VOTE:** FY19 Q3 financial report. Ms. Sherrill indicated that this is one of the few quarters where income exceeded expenses, due in part to income from permit fees for Kettle Point Apartment Bldg 4 and 30 Veterans Memorial Parkway.

On a motion by Mr. Moura, seconded by Mr. Lawson, the commission voted unanimously to accept the FY19 Q3 report:

Mr. Conley – Aye Mr. Moura – Aye Mr. Lawson – Aye Ms. Griffith – Aye  
Mr. Willey – Aye Mr. Hardcastle – Aye Mr. Torrado – Aye Chair votes – Aye

**2. STAFF REPORT.** Ms. Sherrill is hopeful that the Kettle Point pier/boardwalk will be transferred to the City by June. Kettle Point apartment leasing is strong; occupancy of Bldg 4 is anticipated in October. Additional project information is anticipated for the University Orthopedic rehab condo and AR Builders' hybrid townhouse. A May 9, 2019 kickoff meeting has been scheduled by Chevron for the UNOCAL TIF. The mayor has sent a request to both Chevron and RI Waterfront Enterprises, LLC for a Public Private Partnership for I-195 WB on-ramp funding.

**3. VOTE: ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Mr. Moura, seconded by Mr. Hardcastle, and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
PAMELA M. SHERRILL, AICP, *Executive Director*