

PLANNING, ZONING, DEVELOPMENT &
INSPECTIONS

May 2009 Monthly Report

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

There were no budget deficiencies or anomalies. Financial expenditures are on target.

BUDGET BALANCE:

- Planning Division 15%
- Zoning Division 06%
- Community Development Division 24%
- Inspection Division 08%

Permit Revenue: Building \$91,573; Plumbing \$2,168; Mechanical \$4,062; Electrical \$10,956; Late filing/re-inspection \$1,000.

PROJECTS:

- Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update (CLUP): The Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update Subcommittee met again on May 11th to finalize a media strategy for the first participatory meeting of the update process. This public meeting is scheduled for June 4, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall. Staff conducted interviews with the media in an attempt to promote this public input meeting and increase attendance.
- Broadway Streetscape Project: The contract between the City and the Louis Berger Group, Inc. was finalized and signed. This preliminary engineering project is scheduled for completion within six months. A Steering Committee of local businesses and citizens was formed. The consulting team led a kick-off meeting on May 14th with this group which included a walk of the Broadway project area to gather information and input from committee members.
- U.S. Navy Hospital: Staff attended a meeting with State, U.S. Navy, and AIPC officials on May 12th to discuss the legal complexities of the potential Indian claim for surplus Navy properties including the U.S. Navy Hospital. The U.S. Navy provided a deadline to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) of June 5th to provide all required documentation. Navy legal and BRAC staff indicated that they do not believe that the Indian claim will be successful in light of BRAC requirements (market value, liability and proof of reservation).
- Sign Ordinance Amendment: Staff has been continuing to monitor this review and provide comments and changes to the City Manager and City Council as needed.
- Sheffield School: Staff is still in discussions with developers that submitted proposals.
- Carey School: The City and School Department have been communicating to schedule future access to the property and so to ensure that the City has all needed building information. Bids for appraisal work are being submitted and the appraisal will occur in June/July.
- Pell Bridge Realignment Project: Staff met with RIDOT on May 19th, 2009 on the property and to discuss designs and options for the realignment project. City staff is attempting to maximize development potential while ensuring roadway capacity improvements.
- Historic District Zoning Ordinance Amendment: The proposed ordinance amendment is under review by the Planning Board. A special meeting of the Planning Board is scheduled for June 8, 2009.

- SAMP Plan (West Side): CRMC has now approved the new regulations which impact future development along the West Side and the U.S. Navy Hospital property. For more information, go to this website: <http://www.crmc.ri.gov/samp/aquidneck.html>
- SAMP Plan (Ocean): Staff continues to participate at ongoing meetings at URI for the CRMC Ocean Special Area Management Plan that will address aquaculture, fishing, boating, and alternative energy including wind farms. For more information, visit the SAMP web site at <http://seagrant.gso.uri.edu/oceansamp/>
- J.T. Connell Development Parcel: The Coastal Extreme Brewing development broke ground in May by initiating land clearing and grading work. Building permit review is now being completed.
- Island wide Transportation Study: Staff participated in meetings to initiate this project with the AIPC and the hired firm of VHB. Rhode Island Statewide Planning and RIDOT have provided a large grant to the AIPC for this island wide consulting project. This project will study issues and multi-modal options for all state roadways on the island. In addition, staff participated in a meeting with the Federal Highway Administration on May 26th to plan for a future transportation education program to be held in all three island communities. Select intersections will be studied in each community.
- Waterfront Planning: Staff presented to the Rhode Island Harbors and Ports Committee on May 8th at the NCCVB regarding ongoing waterfront planning, implementation and needs. The Economic Analysis has begun with the hiring of FXM by URI. This work will be completed by the end of the summer. In addition, staff is coordinating with URI staff to accurately map waterfront parcel zones, public access ways (local and CRMC), current land uses and likely activity along the water, and to study harbor walk options. Staff met with Friends of the Waterfront regarding making a pedestrian connection between Lee's Wharf and Howard Wharf which will require the removal of some fencing and possibly the addition of stairs.
- RIEMA and FEMA: Staff attended a meeting on May 13th which addressed the new map modifications to the FEMA floodplain maps. These maps will be provided to the municipalities and the public in digital form soon. Staff presented at the Region I FEMA conference on May 20th at the Hyatt Regency. The topic was "Local Perception of FEMA."
- Harbor Shuttle Landside Improvements: The pre-bid for dock construction at Perrotti Park took place May 20, 2009. Bids are due June 8, 2009. Planning Department personnel are working with the Harbormaster, and Purchasing Division to answer questions and assure a smooth bid process.
- Perrotti Park Dredging: Dredging permit drawings require further revision. Application narrative has been drafted. Permit applications must be finalized for CRMC.
- Building/Inspection Division Number of Inspections:

❖ Building	37
❖ Electrical	56
❖ Plumbing/Mechanical	50
❖ Municipal/Minimum Housing	72

New Construction Projects Underway

231 Maple Avenue - Coddington Cove 16 new two family residences
 129-131 Pelham Street - Channing Church 51' of tower being dismantled and rebuilt

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:

Historic Preservation and Historic District Commission: Eight new applications were received in May. One regular meeting was held. One Design Review Subcommittee meeting was held. A vacancy exists for a Historic Planner position.

Critical Area Review Board: There were no meetings held in May.

Zoning Board of Review: One regular meeting was held in May. Seventeen new petitions were received. All new applications are digitized for filing and distribution.

Planning Board: One regular Planning Board meeting was held, three Special Use Permits and thirteen dimensionally nonconforming Special Use Permits were reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Board approved two demolition permits, for the former Cluny Convent and the former Boathouse Restaurant on lower Thames Street.

Building Board of Appeals: The appeal of the variance of RI State Building Code Section 1612.5,1,1.1-1.3 and Appendix G Section 105 that was granted for 10 Brown and Howard Wharf (Ice House).will now be heard by the State Building Board of Appeals on June 14, 2009

ZONING

- Deputy Zoning Officers: For May, the DZOs responded to numerous noise calls in light of the warmer weather. (See attached reports). There were 10 noise citations issued.
- Zoning Violations: Five zoning complaints were filed in municipal court.
- Scanning & Document Retrieval: We began utilizing the services and labor of Municipal Court defendants in providing 40 hours of community service by scanning building permit plans into the computer.
- GIS: Update of plat maps continued and is an ongoing process. Interactive maps are now ready for posting to the website. This requires purchase of ArcPublisher which has been postponed due to spending freeze and is awaiting possible funding in next year's budget. A permanent link between the maps and the Tax Assessor's data is being developed. Preliminary digitized FEMA flood maps were obtained and added as an additional layer.
- Pictometry This aerial photography software has been installed and is now being utilized for zoning investigations and as a presentation aide before the Zoning Board of Review.
- Sidewalk Café Permits The office reviewed 7 and recommended council approval on 7 sidewalk café permits. We also provided the city clerk with a handout of rules and regulations to be handed out when the permit is issued.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

CDBG Stimulus: The City was invited to submit formal application for CDBG-R Stimulus funding for the 4 projects that were included in "pre-application" form in the CDBG Small Cities application. The application included the following projects: Repaving Hillside Ave/Beacon Street adjacent to Newport Heights Phase 4; Repaving Bayview Avenue; Florence Gray Center Gymnasium Improvements; and Exterior Renovations to the Women's Resource Center. A decision regarding the allocation of the CDBG Stimulus funding is expected in early June.

Residential Rehabilitation Loans: No new loans were approved this month. \$4,990 was disbursed for invoices in 3 closed loans.

CDBG Grant Activities: Gymnasium soundproofing improvements (GY 2008) were completed at the EBCAP Head Start facility on Chafee Blvd. Exterior renovations at Harbor House elderly housing (GY 2007) are nearing completion.

Respectfully submitted: Paige R. Bronk, AICP, Director