

October 2009 Monthly Report

FINANCIAL SUMMARY: There were no budget deficiencies or anomalies.

BUDGET BALANCE:

- Planning Division 72%
- Zoning Division 74%
- Community Development Division 92%
- Inspection Division 88%

PERMIT REVENUE:

<i>MONTH</i>	<i>Building</i>	<i>Plumbing</i>	<i>Mechanical</i>	<i>Electrical</i>	<i>Late filing/ Re-inspection</i>
July	\$15,213	\$1,934	\$4,604	\$12,373	\$500
August	\$37,776	\$2,783	\$8,995	\$4,679	\$500
September	\$54,285	\$1,864	\$13,566	\$5,606	\$500
October	\$54,358	\$6,700	\$12,144	\$10,941	-
TOTAL	\$161,632	\$13,281	\$39,309	\$33,599	\$1,500

PROJECTS:

- Historic Preservation Planner: Ms. Dana Titcomb began work on October 13, 2009. She attended her first HDC meeting on October 20th and was introduced to the City Council on October 28th.
- RIPTA Street Benches: RIPTA contacted the PZD&I Department and advised that there are eight (8) benches that could not be used in Portsmouth. RIPTA was pleased with the effective and expeditious manner in which Newport's benches and bike racks were installed in 2009. As a result, we have been offered these additional eight (8) benches for Newport without additional charge. PZD&I is coordinating with Scott Wheeler to have these delivered to Newport. The benches will be installed in November in pre-approved downtown street locations.
- Plumbing/Mechanical Inspector: Second interviews were held with finalists for this position. A top candidate has been selected. This process should be finalized in November.
- Planning Challenge Grant – The Planning Department received notice from Statewide Planning that the Planning Challenge Grant awards would be made in December 2009.
- Newport "People Mover" Project: Staff has been working with the Chamber of Commerce and the Newport Convention and Visitor's Bureau to develop plans for a shuttle type service that would serve America's Cup and Memorial Boulevard (Easton's Beach to Visitor's Center). The Chamber has paid for a consulting study that would provide options, types of vehicle, and route alternatives.

- Building A Healthy Newport Environment Committee: Staff participated in a meeting on October 13th in which the focus was next year's EPA grant funding (CARE) also applying for diesel vehicle retrofits for municipal vehicles, school buses and Viking Bus tours.
- Island Transportation Study: Staff attended the public workshop on October 21st in Middletown that was conducted by the AIPC and VHB. Significant public input was provided on desired islandwide transportation improvements including roadways, rail, bussing, bike lanes, and other transportation concepts. This project is being funded by the State and will eventually lead to priority projects to be funded in future Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) submittals.
- Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update (CLUP): The waterfront working meeting, held Monday, October 5, 2009 at City Hall, was well attended by nearly two-dozen citizens. Ms. Crean added that for thought should be given to Rhode Island guidelines on sea level rise. The group discussed FEMA standards and the freeboard issue raising concerns with literal implementation of FEMA standards and consequences on community aesthetics and historic character.

The group, seeking to highlight priorities, outlined a brief list of topics: public access; working waterfront, e.g. fishing pier, shipyard, IYRS; collateral benefits (qualitative and quantitative) of the waterfront; and, historic preservation, without stifling innovation. Priorities of land use: water dependent uses, e.g. IYRS; mixed uses, Bowen's Wharf; and, residential uses where appropriate and supported by infrastructure. Harbor aesthetics and land-side design standards were discussed.

The group received a brief introduction of URI and Newport initiatives in the harbor area. Ms. Crean presented the recent studies conducted along Newport's harbor and waterfront areas. The group discussed defining public spaces and encouraging public use of private property for access wherever necessary and acceptable. Performance zoning was discussed to achieve legal agreements securing public amenities for certain zoning benefits in order to strike reasonable compromises and balance between development and preservation.

The group decided any vision for the waterfront was necessary to build community consensus. Moreover the group sought to measure progress. Finally, a hierarchy of decisions and prioritization of outcomes was viewed as essential to achieving successful implementation. The Chair closed the meeting by describing the next immediate steps. The Planning Board must draft preliminary concepts as culled from the working meetings. A public meeting to discuss findings is tentatively set for mid-November.

- Broadway Streetscape Project: A public informational meeting was held on October 1st from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers to display the work completed to date, make a short presentation, obtain public input, and answer any questions the public may have regarding the project. The event was very well attended by approximately 50 people. All of the design options for the Broadway Corridor were on display, and City Staff and the consultants were available to discuss the designs and answer questions. After a presentation made by Paige Bronk and the senior consultants, the audience was invited to comment. All 19 comments were recorded by staff. Public input forms were distributed and several filled out and returned. The public had until November 1 to submit their comments regarding the draft plans. Staff continued to research the possibility of utilizing "Safe Routes to School" grant funds to pay for selected improvements near Thompson and Cranston-Calvert.
- Safe Routes to School (SRTS): Staff reviewed copies of previously-funded Safe Routes to School applications at Statewide Planning to see what will be necessary for Newport to be successful in applying for the next round of funding later this fall. School Superintendent Jack Ambrogio indicated

that the Planning Department may work directly with the principals of Thompson Middle School and the Cranston-Calvert School to initiate a SRTS program and grant applications.

- Carey School: Control and management of the property to the City, from the School Department, became official on October 1st. The City's Facility Maintenance team worked for several weekend days to conduct repairs, change locks, dispose of waste material, and clean the basement (moisture and mold concerns). Air circulation and dehumidification equipment has been installed.
- Sheffield School: Discussions regarding future development at the school are ongoing.
- 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 majority of the site construction for Coastal Extreme Brewing was completed. Interior fittings are being completed this fall.
- Harbor Shuttle Landside Improvements: The RIDOT and Solicitor's Office approved the contract documents for Reagan Construction of Newport, Rhode Island. Materials, floats, have been ordered in anticipation of construction. The contractor will mobilize in early November.
- Perrotti Park Dredging: The Planning Board, Waterfront Commission and City Council endorsed and approved of the CRMC/RIDEM joint application for dredging. The application was subsequently approved by CRMC/RIDEM and USACE. The Planning Department/Harbormaster will issue the RFP for a dredging contractor through the Purchasing Department.
- Community Rating System (CRS): The Building Official is working with the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA) to develop and submit paperwork to reach the first level (Level 9) of the CRS program. This will eventually lead to a 5% savings in flood insurance policies. There are only three other Rhode Island communities that are currently participating in the program with the highest discount being 10% of the cost of a flood insurance policy.
- Building/Inspection Division Number of Inspections:

❖ Building	32
❖ Electrical	36
❖ Plumbing/Mechanical	47
❖ Municipal/Minimum Housing	99

New Construction Projects Underway

Stop and Shop on Bellevue renovation project is complete.
Renovations and restoration has begun at the Casino Theater on Freebody Street

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:

Historic Preservation and Historic District Commission: Fifteen new applications were received in October for one regular meeting. One Design Review Subcommittee meeting was held in October.

Critical Area Review Board: One meeting was held for one application for property on Brenton Road.

Zoning Board of Review: One regular meeting was held in October. Ten new petitions were received. All new applications are digitized for filing, distribution and posting on our website.

Planning Board: One regular Planning Board meeting was held. The Planning Board considered the Special Use permit converting 35 Champlin St. from single-family to two-family (R-10A) Zone. The Board reviewed, and endorsed, the CRMC applications for dredging at Perrotti Park and the ultraviolet filter at Easton's Pond.

Building Board of Appeals: No meeting this month.

ZONING

Deputy Zoning Officers: In October, the DZOs responded to 20 Noise calls, 11 Citations, 3 Trash Violations, 5 Short-term rental registration violations, 2 weekly rental violations and 1 assist.

Zoning Violations: Six zoning complaints for owners of properties with noise violations and property nuisance complaints were filed in municipal court. All matters for successful plead out with compliance to the charges. The total amount of fines collected in October 2009 is \$3,776.00.

Scanning & Document Retrieval: Scanning was continued through the month of October, but it is a long process that will require continued months of effort to complete the digital archiving of paper documents. Building permit scanning slowed as there was but one person from the Municipal Court sent to provide assistance through the community service program. We are still dependent upon the MIS department to obtain and install a central storage drive to hold the digitized information before we can link the information to the Vision Appraisal, Opal and GIS software.

GIS: Plat map updates and corrections were made. The zoning officer attended a 3-day user's conference in Nashua, NH. Many new tips and tricks were taught expanding the capabilities of the ARCMAP software we now use. We are preparing land maps for the upcoming Comprehensive Land Use Plan update. We are still awaiting the installation of GIS software to allow us the posting of maps to our website. A parking meter is prepared for the Economic Development Office.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

CDBG 2009 Grant Award: Contracts were signed between the City and the State, and between the City and the CDBG Sub-recipients.

CDBG Stimulus: The CDBG-R contract (City and State of RI) was signed on October 20 and the contract with the contractor, Narragansett Improvement Company, was signed on October 21. A pre-construction meeting was held at the job site on October 30. The project area includes Beacon Street to the Middletown line and Hillside Avenue between Beacon Street and Sunset Blvd, and will include paving and sidewalk repairs. Work is expected to begin on November 3 or 4.

Residential Rehabilitation Loans: No activity in the loan program this October.

CDBG Grant Activities: Grant Closeout materials have been submitted to the State for FY 2003 grant and are being prepared for FY 2004, which is fully disbursed.

The improvements for the Sullivan School playground ((protective surfacing, new play equipment, and upgrades to existing swing sets) will be completed in early November.

Respectfully submitted: Paige R. Bronk, AICP, Director