

August 2008 Monthly Report

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

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

Budget balance:

- Planning Division 86%
- Zoning Division 87%
- Community Development Division 93%
- Inspection Division 91%

Permit Revenue: Building \$35,951; Plumbing \$1,612; Mechanical \$8,132; Electrical \$6,947; Late filing/re-inspection \$4,187.

PROJECTS:

- National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS): Staff conducted additional meetings with state and federal officials to review projects within floodplains. The goal is to reduce flood insurance rates through implementation of federal incentives.
- Sign Ordinance Amendment: The revisions to the sign ordinance were received by City Council and forwarded to the Planning Board for review and recommendation.
- Arts and Entertainment District: Staff is finalizing the design for the brochure to promote the district.
- Sheffield School: The Comprehensive Land Use Plan amendment was approved by Statewide Planning review in late August. The Planning Board will now consider rezoning of the structure from R-10 to Limited Business.
- RIPTA Bikerack and Bench Grant: Staff completed the field sheets for RIDOT and RIPTA. The bike racks and benches should arrive by September.
- U.S. Navy Hospital: Planners and Manager/Administrators from the three island communities met with the Office of Economic Adjustment to continue refining the bylaws and to answer questions. Also, staff met with EDC to discuss the future relationship between the communities and the state.
- SAMP Plan: The draft regulations and plan continue to be revised by all three island communities and CRMC. The plan provides a regulatory framework from which developers will work in redeveloping the West Side of Aquidneck Island.
- John H. Chafee Boulevard/BankNewport: Staff and CCRI have continued coordinating to modify Girard Avenue extension. Modification of Girard Avenue extension is a RIDOT condition for the approval of a traffic signal at Chafee and J. T. Connell Highway. As per RIDOT's directive, the street will be converted to 1-way in from Connell Highway. This will create space for an aisle of diagonal parking to serve the ball fields as well as CCRI. The City will pay for the plan with CDBG funds and CCRI has agreed to pay for the actual improvements.

- J.T. Connell Development Parcel: Staff continues to finalize a lease for the front 1.5 acre lot for a prime tenant and review the preliminary development plans for the site. An RFP was developed, advertised and distributed for the back three acres. The deadline for submittals was August 22, 2008.
- Waterfront Planning: Grant proposals have been developed by URI to conduct a market analysis for the waterfront. Also, staff is coordinating with URI staff to accurately map waterfront parcel zones, current land uses and likely activity along the water.
- Hazard Mitigation Plan: Emergency Management and Homeland Security Co. was selected through the qualifications based system to assist in completion of the Hazard Mitigation Plan, i.e. receive conditional FEMA approval.
- Harbor Shuttle: The RIDOT Structural Division continues its review of plan revisions of construction drawings and specifications for Perrotti Park and Ann Street Pier improvements.
- Broadway: Project scope is nearly complete for the streetscape improvement project including pedestrian crossing, curb, sidewalk, parking, and roadway parking improvements. Staff anticipates releasing an RFQ in September.
- Perrotti Park Dredging: Bourne Engineering is revising engineering plans for dredging permits. The Planning, Harbormaster, and Grant Coordinator Departments have engaged a permit application specialist to complete the documents and submit to CRMC Dredging Coordinator.
- Community Development Block Grant: The Girard Avenue sidewalk was put out to bid and the low bidder was Grandview Construction of Tiverton with a bid of \$99,665. The state approved a CDBG budget amendment to transfer \$20,000 from the “Newport Heights Mixed Use Building,” (which is not going forward due to ledge), to the Girard sidewalk project to cover the full cost. The construction of new basketball courts at Sullivan School is underway. The Hillside Avenue sidewalk repairs are complete and the Miantonomi Park wall has been repaired.
- EDA Revolving Loan Fund: Staff attended a mandatory 1-day training for Revolving Loan Fund administrators in Philadelphia on August 22.
- Deputy Zoning Officers: Fifty-six calls were investigated for noise issues resulting in eight citations. One illegal sign (strobe light) was removed at the request of the Deputy Zoning Officer. One non-compliant sidewalk café was corrected. Seven properties were found to be out of compliance with the short-term rental registrations. Three properties were warned for over-crowding by the Deputy Zoning Officer. Two trash violations were reported to Zoning Officer, two unlawful weekly rentals were reported to the Zoning Officer. Pizza Hollywood was summoned to municipal court for show of cause hearing based on the Deputy Zoning Officer’s observations.
- Building a Healthy Newport Environment Committee: Staff is working with the group to analyze air pollution data and to understand the source of the emissions. The group may be seeking additional funding for localized testing of air.
- Digital Scanning and Website: Staff from PZD&I and MIS coordinated to develop a means for scanning new board and commission application submittals to be linked to our website for public viewing, including Zoning Board of Review and Historic District applications. New application packages can be

viewed through our Departmental website. This has resulted in a decrease in copy usage. Staff is also now experimenting on scanning of large, map sized documents for the same purpose.

- Building/Inspection Division Number of Inspections:
 - ❖ Building 55
 - ❖ Electrical 57
 - ❖ Plumbing/Mechanical 49
 - ❖ Municipal/Minimum Housing 75

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:

Historic Preservation and Historic District Commission: The Historic District Commission held one regular meeting in August. The HDC subcommittee held one city hall meeting and two on-site inspection meetings. Six new applications were received; six new or continued applications were approved. With volunteer assistance, all 2006 and 2007 staff-approved building permits were followed up on and nearly all were found to be in compliance.

Critical Area Review Board: No applications were received for board review.

Zoning Board of Review: One regular meeting and one special meeting were held to address the lengthy agenda. Three new petitions were received.

Planning Board: One Planning Board meeting was held at which several petitions were reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan plus one CRMC application, one demolition permit application and the Board began review of the sign ordinance revision

GENERAL STATUS:

In addition to the projects referenced above, an Alternate Building Official was hired to serve on an “on-call basis” as approved in the FY 2008-09 budget. Mr. John Desautel will assist the department with special projects, plan review and when Bill Hanley is out of the office. August was an exceptionally high month for late filing fees (contractors caught doing work without permits).

Respectfully submitted: Paige R. Bronk, Director