



EAST PROVIDENCE WATERFRONT DISTRICT COMMISSION

Waterfront Commission Meeting Minutes Thursday, May 20, 2021 – 6:30 PM

A remote/virtual meeting was held in accordance with Governor Gina Raimondo’s EXECUTIVE ORDER 20-46, JUNE 12, 2020, FORTY-SECOND SUPPLEMENTAL EMERGENCY DECLARATION - PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS, EXTENDED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER 21-49, MAY 12, 2021, ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SECOND SUPPLEMENTAL EMERGENCY DECLARATION – EXTENSION OF EXECUTIVE ORDERS.

Commissioners present via video and audio:

William Fazioli, Chair	Jennifer Griffith
Steve Hardcastle, Treasurer	Luis Torrado
Paul Moura, Secretary	Rick Lawson
Domenic Pontarelli	Mike Walker

Voting Members Absent:

Tim Conley, Vice Chair
Peter Willey
David Sluter
David O’Connell

Staff present via video and audio:

Chris Martin, Executive Director	Dominic Leonardo, Waterfront Intern
Amy Goins, Legal Counsel	Hanna Wells, Waterfront Intern

1. **CHAIRMAN’S OPENING REMARKS** The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM and gave an overview of remote meeting protocol.
2. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. **VOTE:** The motion by Mr. Pontarelli to approve the minutes of April 14, 2021 was seconded by Mr. Lawson and passed by a unanimous voice vote.
3. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. **DISCUSSION:** East Point Design Workshop
 - Applicant:** Noble Development, LLC
 - Owner:** W. Mark Russo, Esq. Special Master
 - Address:** Roger Williams Boulevard and Bourne Avenue
 - Map/ Block/ Lot:** Map 203, Block 1, Lot 4 & Map 203, Block 13, Lots 4 & 5
 - Zoning/ Acreage:** Phillipsdale Sub-District/ 27.11 Acres

The applicant, Richard Baccari, gave an overview of the proposed development. East Point will be a 382 Unit development over 27 acres in the Phillipsdale Sub-District of the East Providence Waterfront District, off of Roger Williams Ave and Bourne Ave, next to Phillipsdale Landing. The development will be done over two parcels, one being the 18+ acre Coastal Side, along the Seekonk River and the other is the 9 acre Inland Side, abutting Omega Pond. The site is in receivership with the former owner and the City of East Providence. The layout will consist of 80 single family or flat-style units and the remainder are going to be multi-family units. The site has a railroad that bisects the two parcels, so the applicant is working with G&W Railroad to design the crossing that will be required to connect the parcels.

Lyn Small of Northeast Engineers and Jeremy Lake of Union Studio presented the overview of the site plans. Beginning on the Inland Side, Ms. Small discussed the unit breakdown as three apartment buildings (two 50-unit structures and one 34-unit structure) and three townhouse buildings (two 3-unit buildings and one 4-unit building), along with garages—144 units total. The main road coming from Roger Williams ave follows the curb cut through and creates a 30’ wide roadway with sidewalks and a bike lane on the road. There will be public access along the water as a portion of the required Urban Coastal Greenway

and public parking available. There will be a railway crossing that will be engineered to accommodate both vehicles and pedestrians, as well as utilities (water & sewer). The main road from Roger Williams Ave will extend through, over the rail and end at the water in a public parking area on the Coastal Side, which connects to the Urban Coastal Greenway that will line the exterior of the parcel from the Northwest to the Southeast. The coastal side will be made up of multiple unit types, including single family units, duplex units and a large apartment complex with 136 units. The unit count on the Coastal Side is 248, bringing the total unit count to 382 units. There will be public space created throughout, including a central area on top of an ELUR.

Christina Carson from Union Studios walked through the design and architecture of the single, duplex & townhouse unit types on the Coastal and Inland sides. Geoff Campbell from RDC discussed the design and architecture of the apartments on the Coastal and Inland sides, acknowledging that the submitted plans are very conceptual and there is still a lot of design to be done.

The Commission commented that there still needs to be an overall theme that carries through the development. It feels disjointed as it's designed now. The applicant acknowledged this and will work on creating a more cohesive design feeling. The Commission also asked what the buffer was going to be between the homes and the public space. The applicant provided that there will be landscaping to delineate and demarcate the public from private areas within the development, especially at the Urban Coastal Greenway and in public paths that lead back from the greenway to the interior of the development. Mr. Fontecchio addressed the need to have units that face onto the street respond to the urban environment and not feel closed off. Define the public vs private space. Ms. Bradford noted that there should be another public access connection between the large apartment building and the single family unit #13 as well as re-thinking the spacing of public access area between the single family units 8 & 9. She also emphasized the need to work with the North to South grade along the apartment building on the Coastal Side. Ms. Bradford also asked for more context to make the main road feel like a boulevard—make it feel more like a “main street.” On the Inland side, Ms. Bradford commented that there are opportunities behind the car barns for the landscape to respond to the easements between them and the railroad. She also commented there could be more shade trees in the parking lot on the Inland Side.

4. STAFF REPORT.

Mr. Martin provided a staff report. There is movement on a number of the Valley Street properties that are up for sale—one ownership group is in negotiations to purchase some properties there. RIDOT is looking at the possibility of adding a stop or extending service to Phillipsdale, based on conversations Mr. Martin has had with them. This would address the increasing need for transit options there with the increase in commercial activity at Phillipsdale in addition to the future development at East Point. The draft Affordable Housing ordinance that went to the Planning board on April 29th was continued on grounds of policy questions, not content of the updated ordinance. Mr. Martin and the Planning Department will work on next steps with that. The First Street bike lane pilot is getting closer to launch. We estimate a launch happening sometime shortly after Memorial Day.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 3rd, 2021, which will be a Hearing Panel and Waterfront Commission hearing on an application for a conditional use at Phillipsdale Landing for aquaculture use.

5. VOTE: ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Pontarelli, seconded by Mr. Hardcastle to adjourn. On voice vote the Waterfront Commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
CHRIS MARTIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR