Revitalization Tools & Strategies for Rhode Island’s Urban and Village Centers

Monday, June 26, 2017
3:00 – 5:00 PM

Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce
30 Exchange Terrace, Providence

Tom Liguori Presentation:

Projects Utilizing Various State (and Federal) Tools

- Westerly Education Center
  - Brownfield Remediation & Economic Development Fund Grant: $712,000
  - Legislative appropriations of $750,000 & $1,250,000 treated as lease payments in Leas to Rhode Island Office of Commissioner of Post-Secondary Education
  - Royce Family Fund: $2,500,000+
  - Town of Westerly: $250,000
  - Other Philanthropy: $270,000
  - Training equipment provided by Electric Boat

The school is not in the Westerly Downtown Historic District on the National Register, but abuts it. RIHPHC endorsement of “industrial” design quieted local “concern.”

For more information: [http://www.westerlyedcenter.org/](http://www.westerlyedcenter.org/)
• **Weekapaug Inn—Rhode Island and Federal Historic Tax Credits**
  o Availability and access, including on-site visits upon request of Virginia Hesse, Principal Architect, Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission, together with Edward “Ted” Sanderson, now retiring Executive Director.
  o R.I. Division of Taxation professional and flexible in determining Qualified Rehabilitation Expenditures upon which tax credits would be calculated, including willingness to consider legal arguments.

For more information: [http://weekapauginn.com/](http://weekapauginn.com/)
Ocean House

- Fire storm and chorus of “Save the Ocean House” erupted in Westerly when a New Canaan, CT developer entered a Purchase and Sales Agreement to purchase this shuttered Civil War era property and announced he would tear it down and subdivide the property into 5 “as of right” subdivision lots. Chuck Royce obtained a short-term option to purchase the developer’s agreement, with the ability to extend the option with a hefty non-refundable payment;
  - On June 17, 2004, he hosted a walk-through and meeting at the Ocean House for representatives of historic preservation organizations. Among those attending were Edward Sanderson, Executive Director of RIHPHC, Virginia Hesse, RIHPHC’s Principal Historical Architect, Wendy Nicholas of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Janet Zwolinski of Preserve Rhode Island, and Westerly Town Planner William Haase. Because of his concern that the structure’s condition might make restoration imprudent, infeasible, and not economically viable, at Mr. Royce’s request, the preservation experts “identified certain features of the Ocean House Hotel that we believed are important for its character” and “Ocean House Development Criteria...that could be incorporated into a proposed...zoning ordinance” to regulate the renovation, restoration, or replacement of it.
  - The development criteria were delivered on June 24, 2004.
  - It was not a tax credit project, but without RIHPHC participation at the outset, it could not have been accomplished.
- Additionally, the project required every permit administered by RIDEM Division of Water Resources. It provided expedited consideration of revisions during the municipal permitting process. Because municipal boards meet only monthly, the RIDEM flexibility facilitated the approval process greatly.

For more information: [https://www.oceanhouseri.com/](https://www.oceanhouseri.com/)
• United Theatre
  o Downtown revitalization component. Rehabilitation of 1926 theatre adjacent to the “Montgomery Ward” building in order to restore theatre and create integrated visual and performing arts facility with the capability to house existing tenants, RI Public Television, and Westerly Artists Cooperative Gallery, as well as potentially a satellite campus of the RI Philharmonic Music School.
    ▪ Multi-plex of historic replica theater with 20-35 seats, meeting/film theater with 100 +/- seats, and a main theater for film and live performances with 300+ seats.
  o Recipient of both RI Historic Tax Credits and RI Cultural Development Bond grant.
  o Applications for Federal Historic Tax Credits and New Market Tax.
  o Credits are under consideration with Barbara Sokoloff.

For more information: http://www.unitedtheatre.org/

An architectural rendering of what the new theatre will look like