



**Annual Report**  
*of the*  
**Planning Board**

City of Newport, Rhode Island  
2025

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## *From the Chair*

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Dear Mayor Holder and the City Council:

The Planning Board had a busy and successful year!

- We considered 25 applications and recommendations, and all planning, zoning, and HDC applications went online October 1.
- Members of the Board participated in six external working groups and committees, a joint workshop with the City Council on zoning updates related to housing, and the launch of the Comprehensive Plan Update.
- Staff developed Newport’s Vision Zero: Safety Action Plan, resulting in resolutions No. 2025-21, adopting a plan with a goal to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries on City streets by 2034.
- Last but by no means least, the American Planning Association recognized the City of Newport’s approach to buildout analysis and planning with its 2025 Excellence in Housing Planning Award – an outstanding culmination of staff and Board work over the past several years under the leadership of retired Chair Jeff Brooks and Planning Director Patricia Reynolds.

This was the second full year implementing new state-mandated zoning amendments. These changes have generated significant efficiencies in processing applications. Additionally, 4 of the Development Plan Review (DPR) Applications reviewed by The Planning Board in 2025 included proposed residential dwelling units. Subsequently, the Planning Board approved a total of 56 new residential dwelling units for construction.

In the year ahead, in addition to its regular work, the Planning Board and staff will shepherd the development of the Comprehensive Plan Update for Council approval, engaging the community to lay a foundation that can ensure that Newport’s future is indeed bright!

Margaret Polski  
Chair, Newport Planning Board

## Meeting Schedule and Attendance

The Planning Board typically met the first Monday of the month. The months of May and September were irregularly scheduled due to an observed city holiday. There was no regularly scheduled meeting in July. The February 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting was cancelled, and there were two specially-scheduled meetings; one in May and one in June.

Planning Board Member 2025 Meeting Date	Jeffrey Brooks – Chair	Margaret Polski – Vice Chair	Richard Cromwell – Secretary	Theresa Stokes	Paul McGreevy	Patricia Antonelli	Jarrold Pimentel	Frederick Huntsberry	Kevin Michaud	Adam Moore
January 6	Absent	Present	Present	Absent	Present	Present	Present	Term Began June 2025	Term Began August 2025	Present
February 3	Meeting Cancelled									Resigned January
March 3	Present	Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present			
April 1	Present	Present	Present	Absent	Present	Present	Present			
May 12*	Present	Present	Present	Absent	Present	Present	Present			
May 15**	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present			
June 2	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present			
June 16**	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	
August 4	Present	Absent	Present	Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	
September 8*	Present	Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	
October 6	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	
November 3	Term ended	Present	Absent	Present	Absent	Present	Present	Present	Present	
December 1		Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Absent	

\* Irregularly scheduled meeting due to observed city holiday.

\*\* Special Meeting.

**Staff Attendance:**

Patricia Reynolds, Administrative Officer to the Planning Board and Director of Planning & Development was present at all meetings.

Rebecca Trefethen, City Planner present at the all meetings except the June 16 Special Meeting.

Hayden McDermott, Assistant Planner was present at all meetings except the December meeting.

Dylan Conley, Assistant City Solicitor was present at the January thru May, and September meetings.

Peter Friedrichs, Assistant City Solicitor was present the June, August, November and December meetings.

## Applications Reviewed

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The Planning Board reviewed the following applications. Please note, all applications requiring final review and approval are completed by the Administrative Officer and reported to the Planning Board at the next scheduled Planning Board meeting.

### Development Plans:

- **Waites Wharf (North Lot), Development Plan under Unified Development Review, TAP 32, Lots 155 & 206**  
Application of Harbour Realty, LLC, applicant, and Harbour Realty, LLC, and 20 West Extension, LLC, owners, to construct two new structures to the north of Waites Wharf – a hotel building with 54 transient guest bedrooms and a restaurant, and a 7-unit multifamily residential building. Zoned WB-Waterfront Business.
- **Waites Wharf (South Lot Lot), Development Plan under Unified Development Review, TAP 32, Lots 268, 272, 248 & 293**  
Application of Harbour Realty, LLC, applicant, and Harbour Realty, LLC, Waites Wharf Realty Association, LLC, Tomorl, LLC, and Thomas Abruzese, owners, to construct two new structures to the south of Waites Wharf – a hotel building with 35 transient guest bedrooms and a restaurant/event/wedding venue, and a 7-unit multifamily residential building. Zoned WB-Waterfront Business.
- **525 Broadway, Development Plan under Unified Development Review, TAP 06, Lots 001 & 352**  
Application of 525 Broadway LLC, owner and applicant, to construct two multi-family residential buildings with a combined total of 38 one-bedroom dwelling units in Newport. Zoned R-10 Residential.
- **102 – 106 Girard Ave, Development Plan, TAP 03, Lot 011**  
Application of NRI 104-108 Girard Partnership to construct a 1,400 sq. ft. building addition containing 4 dwelling units to the westernmost building of the 3 recently constructed apartment buildings on the lot. Zoned R-10 Residential.
- **49 America’s Cup Ave, Development Plan under Unified Development Review, TAP 24, Lot 178**  
Application of 49 Newport Hotel, LLC, applicant and owner, for the expansion of the existing transient guest facility, increasing the number of rooms to 164 (153 allowed) and adding retail space while providing 168 parking spaces (219 spaces required), and including a public access walkway the full length of the waterfront boundary of the property as an extension of the Newport Harbor Walk. Zoned WB-Waterfront Business.
- **160 Carroll Ave, Development Plan under Unified Development Review, TAP 41, Lot 030**  
Application to construct a new “Alumni Building” and two covered pavilions, to relocate the existing archery range to the north side of the property, and to provide ten new parking spaces. The interior of the existing lodge is to be reconfigured. Zoned R-40A Residential.

### Subdivisions – Minor:

- **525 Broadway, Minor Subdivision under Unified Development Review; Preliminary, TAP 06, Lots 001 & 352**  
Application of St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church to reconfigure the property line between two (2) existing lots with Lot 1 to consist of 40,824 sq. ft. of land with a bell tower, and Lot 352 to consist of 47,032 sq. ft. of land and the entirety of the church building footprint and parking area. Property is zoned R-10 Residential.
- **71 & 75 Tilden Avenue, Minor Subdivision, TAP 18, Lots 56-4 & 37**  
Application of Robin Kelly & Lisa Tenerowicz to adjust the lot line between two existing substandard lots with existing single-family residences. Zoned R-10 Residential.
- **96 & 100 Harrison Ave, Minor Subdivision, TAP 41, Lots 413 & 10-4**  
Application of David Elwell & Richard Lee Berkowitz to reconfigure the lot line between two existing lots, transferring a 39,948 sq. ft. parcel of land with a historic cottage from Lot 413 to Lot 10-4, with resulting lots sized 40,057 sq. ft. and 111,320 sq. ft., respectively. Zoned R-40 Residential with Historic Overlay.
- **221 Third Street & 186 Admiral Kalbfus, Minor Subdivision, TAP 04, Lot 73**  
Application of WRP Enterprises, Ltd. to subdivide one existing lot containing three existing commercial buildings into two lots. Zoned Innovation Hub – Maker Tech (IH-MT) subdistrict. *Minor subdivisions not involving unified development review or street creation are now administratively approvable per RIGL § 45-23-38.*
- **6 & 0 Lucas Ave, Minor Subdivision under Unified Development Review; Preliminary, TAP 39, Lots 293 & 295**  
Application of Brian F. and Jill P. Spitzer to merge two (2) existing nonconforming lots with an existing single-family residence and a garage into one (1) 3,959 sq. ft. lot to provide for the construction of a new single-family residential structure. Zoned R-10 Residential.
- **173-175 Coggeshall Ave, Minor Subdivision under Unified Development Review; Preliminary, TAP 37, Lot 074**  
Application of Fleury Properties, LLC to subdivide an existing lot into two lots, with Proposed Lot 1 consisting of 18,874 sq. ft. with an existing multi-family residential structure, and Proposed Lot 2 consisting of 10,702 sq. ft. of land area. Zoned R-10A Residential.

### Subdivisions – Administrative

*Administrative subdivisions are reviewed and decided by the Administrative Officer to the Planning Board. Decisions are reported to the Planning Board at the next scheduled meeting.*

- **138 & 138 ½ Carroll Ave, Administrative Subdivision, TAP 37, Lot 074**

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Application of Brian Connolly, and John & Mary Kane Life Estates to adjust the lot line between two existing lots, resulting in lots sized 16,571 sq. ft. for Lot 462 and 24,795 sq. ft. for Lot 476. Zoned R-10A Residential.

- **Florence Gray Center, Administrative Subdivision, TAP 5, Lots 99 & 100**

Application of the Newport Housing Authority and the State of Rhode Island, Department of Education to adjust the shared lot line between the lots of the Florence Gray Center (Lot 99) and The Met High School (Lot 100) so that the building footprint of the Florence Gray Center is entirely within Lot 99. Zoned R-10 Residential.

- **42 & 43.5 Harrison Ave, Administrative Subdivision, TAP 41, Lots 021 & 412**

Application of John J. Greichen Jr. et. al. to adjust the lot line between two existing lots, resulting in lots sized 12,773 sq. ft. for Lot 412 and 16,413 sq. ft. for Lot 21. Zoned R-10 Residential.

- **59 & 61 Kay Boulevard, Administrative Subdivision, TAP 11, Lots 373 & 765**

Application of David G. Bazarsky & Carol R. Bazarsky Revocable Trusts to adjust the lot line between two existing single-family lots, resulting in lots sized 55,317 sq. ft. for Lot 373 and 27,435 sq. ft. for Lot 765. Lots are zoned R-10A Residential.

- **64 Bateman Ave & 4 Kerins Terrace, Administrative Subdivision, TAP 40, Lots 160 & 452**

Application of Drew Estabrook & John Shehan (owners of 4 Kerins Terr) and Mark & Katherine Watts (owners of 64 Bateman Ave) to adjust the irregularly shaped lot line between two existing single-family lots, sized 13,186 sq. ft. and 10,256 sq. ft., resulting in no net transfer of lot area. Lots are zoned R-10A Residential.

- **104, 108 & 112 Mill Street, Administrative Subdivision, TAP 25, Lots 81, 82 & 83**

Application of James Small & Fiona Grant, owners and applicants, to merge Lots 81 & 82, as well as to adjust the boundary between existing Lot 82 and 83 to the west. The resulting lots are 9,949 sq. ft. in size for Lot 81 and 8,153 sq. ft. in size for Lot 83. Zoned R-3 Residential.

- **Watts Dormitory, Administrative Subdivision, TAP 36, Lots 036, 096, 098, 102, 103, & 104**

Application of Salve Regina University, applicant, and SRU Holdings, LLC, owner, to merge six (6) existing lots into one (1) 261,047 sq. ft. lot to provide for the construction of the Watts Dormitory. Access to the site is provided via Shepard, Lawrence, and Victoria Avenues. Zoned R-60 Residential.

- **126-128 Carroll Ave, Administrative Subdivision, TAP 40, Lots 468 & 495**

Application of Richard & Terry Grosvenor to adjust the lot line between two conforming lots, transferring 4.095 sq. ft. from Lot 468 to Lot 495. Lot 468 contains a new, under construction, single-family residence with an accessory dwelling unit, and Lot 495 contains an existing single-family residence. Zoned R-20 Residential.

- **0 Ridge Road, Administrative Subdivision, TAP 44, Lots 39 & 115**

Application of John H. Manice 2012 GST Trust, et al, to supersede and nullify the previously approved but unrealized 1981 subdivisions of unimproved Lots 39 & 115, remerging Lots S-1, S-2, & S-3 into Lot 39, and remerging Lots N-1, N-2, N-3, N-4, N-5, N-6, & N-7 into Lot 115. The subdivision also adjusts the boundary line between the previous Lots 39 & 115, transferring 13,321 sf from Lot 39 to Lot 115. Zoned R-120 Residential with Historic Overlay.

- **Newport Pell Bridge Realignment Project Parcels, Administrative Subdivision, State Highway Plat nos. 3026, 3027 & 3038**

The Rhode Island Department of Transportation discontinued a portion of the existing state highway line and established a new state highway line. The subdivision established the lot lines of Parcels 1, 3, and 4, which are 2.3 acres, 10.3 acres, and 8.5 acres in size, respectively. Zoned UV-Urban Village.

### **Findings and Recommendation to the City Council regarding Zoning Ordinance Amendments:**

- **Seaview Ave – Petition to Amend the Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan & Associated Ordinance**

On June 16<sup>th</sup> and August 4<sup>th</sup>, the Planning Board reviewed the petition of Erin E. Flynn, owner of 7 Seaview Avenue (TAP 31, Lot 16) to amend the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) of the Comprehensive Plan. The Board reviewed this proposed amendment for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

- **Amendments to the Newport Zoning Ordinance – Opinion of Conformity with the Comprehensive Plan**

On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Planning Board reviewed proposed amendments that would allow for additional Zoning Board alternates, and for additional standards of approval for substandard lot dimensional requirements, the creation of intermediate R-4 and R-6 zoning districts and subsequent dimensional standards, an adjustment to minimum setbacks permitted in the R-3 residential district, dimensional standards for decks and temporary use permits. The Board reviewed these amendments for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application – Project Year 24. Certification of Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan**

On May 12<sup>th</sup> and June 16<sup>th</sup>, the Planning Board reviewed the projects proposed for the Project Year 24 CDBG application to certify all proposed projects were consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan. Projects included funding for the North End Basketball / Skatepark, funding for operating support for the Mckinny Cooperative Shelter, funding for safety and security updates at the Newport Housing Authority, funding to support after-school programs for the Boys and Girls Club of Newport County, funding for EBCAP Dental to purchase new dental equipment, and funding for the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center Hunger Relief Program.

## ***Working Groups & Committees, Plans & Ongoing Work***

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**Members of the Planning Board participated in the following plans, action items, working groups and committees:**

- Tree and Open Space Commission
- Waterfront Commission
- Energy and Environment Commission

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- Housing & Zoning Working Group / Comprehensive Plan Working Group
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

### **Vision Zero: Safe Streets for All**

In 2024, the City was asked to participate in the statewide Vision Zero: Safe Streets for All program to develop a Vision Zero goal and accompanying Safety Action Plan to eliminate road user fatalities in our community – a sentiment found in Council Resolutions, such as No.2024-79, which directs “city administration to draft suggested deterrents to said motor vehicle behavior by way of ordinance changes or ordinance additions”. Staff worked with Consultant Toole Design and the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) to develop Newport’s Vision Zero: Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan. Staff presented materials and updates to Council throughout this process in January, April and May of 2025, resulting in the accompanying resolutions No. 2025-21, adopting the Vision Zero Safety Action Plan and goal of eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries on City streets by 2034.

### **Joint Workshop: City Council & Planning Board**

On February 5<sup>th</sup>, the Planning Board participated in a joint workshop with City Council for a presentation containing the second half of the “Zoning Quick Fixes” presented by Zoning Officer, Nick Armour and zoning updates related to the Housing Chapter, presented by Director Reynolds. Presentations included proposed ordinance changes regarding Guest Houses, Short Term Rentals, Transient Guest Facilities, policies for Short Term Rental enforcement, and changes to the fees for Planning and Zoning applications.

### **Comprehensive Plan Update**

In August of 2025, the City of Newport accepted the contract presented by Interface Studio for the 2027 Comprehensive Plan Update. The Comprehensive Plan is a document that sets the city’s future vision and priorities, guiding growth, development, and policy for decades. The plan includes decisions on land use, policy changes, and spending priorities in public projects. The update process is an 18-month project that involves data collection, community engagement, thorough analysis, and many working groups. While Planning Staff are managing this project, 3 Planning Board members are part of the biweekly core-team meeting group (Frederick Huntsberry, Kevin Michaud, and Theresa Stokes) to assist in the oversight of the project. Additionally, 3 Planning Board members will serve as participants in the future Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee – Margaret Polski, Richard Cromwell and Jarrod Pimentel. The entire Planning Board is regularly updated on the project’s status at their regularly-scheduled monthly meeting by Staff and/or the Consultant team.

In October of 2025, Staff hosted members from Interface Studio to set the groundwork for an official project launch. Within their packed visit, the Consultants were able to meet with Chairs of Boards and Commissions, Councilors, City Staff from every department, and most importantly, the Newport Community. Staff were additionally present at the Broadway Street Fair with an interactive map activity, informational take-aways, and a visioning sticker activity.

Currently, Staff and Interface are fervently preparing for our first public workshop on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. It is designed to be a family-friendly night to engage community members of all ages while sharing what a Comprehensive Plan is, and learning more about Newport’s aspirations. Additionally, December 2<sup>nd</sup> will mark the launch of a Community Survey designed for people who live, work, and play in Newport to share their

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thoughts, and ideas. As it's crucial for the Consultants to understand the Newport Community throughout every season, Staff look forward to additional Community Engagement workshops in the spring and summer of 2026. In addition, based on the success of the Broadway Street Fair, Staff will be tabling at many events throughout the year, including a December 6<sup>th</sup> Winter Walkabout at the Seaman's Institute. Staff and the Consultant look forward to the official establishment of the NCPAC and content-specific Focus Groups to aid in this effort of pop-up engagement within the Newport Community.

Overall, this is an opportunity for all of the Newport Community to learn more about how the Comprehensive Plan informs our policies and laws, and for the City of Newport to learn more about the needs and wants of the entire population in a concise package delivered by Interface.

### **Online Applications**

Rhode Island state law required that all planning, zoning and HDC applications go fully online by October 1st, 2025. Planning staff worked with State reps and other departments to get all planning application types into an online format via the OpenGov platform. Planning applications are now fully online, which allows Staff to view all existing applications throughout departments on a parcel, therefore allowing for an increase in interdepartmental communication.

### **Award for Excellence – Housing Planning**

The Newport, RI Buildout Analysis and Comprehensive Plan Housing Chapter, led by Director Reynolds, Assistant Planner McDermott, the Planning Board, and Consultants Libra Planners was recognized by the American Planning Association – Rhode Island Chapter for its comprehensive approach to planning and granted the 2025 Excellence in Housing Planning Award.

### *Trainings*

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All members of the Planning Board are required to complete training concerning the effects of development in a flood plain and/or effects of sea level rise as required by the R.I. General Law §45-22-7(j).

## Staff

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- The Board received regular updates on the Technical Review Committee reviews through the City Planner Trefethen and Planning Director Patricia Reynolds.
- The Department of Planning and Development received a Housing Fellow through the State Department of Housing, Elijah Mensah. Housing Planner Mensah worked with the Department of Planning & Development throughout 2025 on housing-centric projects while studying the current state of housing in Newport.
- City Planner Trefethen provided planning insight as a member of the Interdepartmental Traffic Committee (ITC) at each monthly meeting. Through this role, City Planner Trefethen developed a method to evaluate pedestrian use of intersections presented to the ITC for better comprehension of the need for crosswalks, and other pedestrian and bike infrastructure.
- Assistant Planner McDermott worked with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), other City Staff, and Bike Newport to development a framework that will allow the City to evaluate projects that are eligible for Green and Complete Streets design integration. This framework is in the final stages of development, and will be used by BPAC and City Staff to enact the Green and Complete Streets policy the City has adopted, as well as implement goals and policies from Keep Newport Moving, the City's existing Transportation Master Plan.
- Assistant Planner McDermott, City Planner Trefethen and Director Reynolds attended multiple BPAC meetings to present various plans, such as the Vision Zero Safety Action Plan, and Keep Newport Moving. Additionally, Staff attended BPAC meetings throughout the Green and Complete Streets Framework development process, and for informational discussions on the process of road maintenance in the City.
- Director Reynolds, City Planner Trefethen, and Assistant Planner Hayden McDermott worked regularly with the Aquidneck Resilience Team and municipal planners from Town of Middletown and Town of Portsmouth, and the Navy Base on regional resiliency. Staff will also be supporting Aquidneck Resilience's island-wide Climate Resilience Plan through technical working groups. The Climate Resilience Plan is a major regional effort funded by the NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge award, and stewarded by Aquidneck Resilience and the selected Consultant, Cascadia.
- City Planner Trefethen and Assistant Planner McDermott processed Street Café applications for the 2025 Summer Season, and developed an evaluation checklist for site inspections.

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- Assistant Planner McDermott continued to serve on the Newport Tree Canopy Advisory Committee as part of a new Urban Forests for Rhode Island Technical Assistance grant received from the RIDOH and USDA. The program aims to assess Newport’s existing tree canopy, particularly within designated Environmental Justice census tracts, and to develop urban forestry management plans and policy changes to preserve and expand Newport’s tree canopy.
- In January of 2025, Director Reynolds and Assistant Planner McDermott participated in the RI Climate Resilience Learning Network’s workshop Exploring Managed Retreat: Pathways to Community-Led Resilience.
- In March of 2025, City Planner Trefethen and Housing Planner Mensah participated in the RI League of Cities and Towns Annual Convention.
- In May of 2025, City Planner Trefethen was selected as 1 of 40 candidates from around the world for the “Young Leaders Program” by the Urban Future & EUROCITIES Organizations. This program is a specialized track for participants under 30 who demonstrate a passion and skill for innovative urban planning to join the Urban Futures Conference and hone their skills through instruction from international industry leaders.
- In June of 2025, City Planner Trefethen, Assistant Planner McDermott and Housing Planner Mensah participated in the Congress of the New Urbanism Annual Conference in Providence, RI.
- In October of 2025, Assistant Planner McDermott attended the RI Stormwater Innovation Center’s 2025 Stormwater Innovation Expo.
- On November 6th, Director Reynolds gave a presentation on the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 1036 – Roadway Cross Section Reallocation: A guide to decision-making framework at the Southern New England American Planning Association (SNEAPA) Regional Conference. City Planner Trefethen and Assistant Planner McDermott also participated in the SNEAPA conference.
- Director Reynolds worked regularly with community partners on Elizabeth Brook Watershed resilience planning and potential redevelopment of parcels available from the RIDOT Pell Bridge Realignment Project throughout the year.

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