

## Economic Initiatives 2006–2007

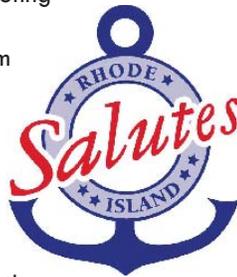
The first law of sound chamber of commerce operations is to be responsive to and reflect accurately the economic and civic needs of the local community. Over the past couple years the Newport County Chamber has initiated and actively participated in a number of dynamic and important economic and business development initiatives that have directly enhanced the quality of business and living within Newport County. The following is a highlight of those many activities of the Newport County Chamber.

### Central Newport Plan/Newport Redevelopment Agency

The Chamber is an active participant with the City of Newport's initiative to evaluate pedestrian traffic, parking, and design issues for downtown Newport. The first projects under review are the creation of a parking garage at Mary Street and a new intersection at Broadway and Marlboro Streets. The Chamber contributed \$25,000 to the plan.

### Rhode Island Salutes

The Chamber created and launched in the Spring of 2005 a statewide marketing program entitled Rhode Island Salutes. The program provides Rhode Island National Guard and United States Navy personnel and their families purchasing discounts on a variety of goods, services, and products across the state. Rhode Island Salutes is our way of saying thank you to our Rhode Island National Guard and military personnel and families for all their special efforts in serving state and country. The Chamber also created a special web site at [www.risalutes.com](http://www.risalutes.com).



### Melville/Marine Trades Expansion

The Chamber, working directly with the RI Congressional Delegation, Governor's Office, RI Economic Development Corporation and the United States Navy, is working on the transfer of over 30 acres of Navy waterfront property in Portsmouth to enable the Melville Marine District landowners and tenants to greatly expand their businesses, keeping the marine industry prospering and expanding here in the East Bay. This innovative and complicated real estate transaction will make the Melville area one of the top boat building and service areas in the North East.

### Newport–Bristol Heritage Passage

The Chamber secured state funding to study the feasibility of creating an East Bay regional marketing initiative that will highlight the many important historical, cultural attractions and museums between Bristol and Newport. A regional planning committee has developed a comprehensive marketing plan entitled the Newport–Bristol Heritage Passage. The Chamber worked closely with Destination Bristol and the Newport County Attractions Council to launch an ad campaign and new web site at [www.newportbristol.com](http://www.newportbristol.com).



### Lower Thames Street Planning

The Chamber provided funds to hire an architectural firm and business planner to work with the Lower Thames Street (Newport) merchants to develop a streetscape improvement and business marketing plan during the Summer 2005. The Chamber also funded the creation of a visitor's brochure touting the many retail, dining and historic attractions of Lower Thames Street.

### \$100 Billion Investment Unveiled



The Procaccianti Group unveiled plans to develop "O2 Newport", in the North End of Newport a world-class destination which will include a high-end hotel, residential, retail and commercial space, as well as entertainment and recreation venues. The \$1.4 billion investment envisioned for the mixed-use development represents the largest private real estate investment in the State's history. The Chamber will continue to work with local, state and federal officials to move the plan into an economic investment reality.

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### LNG Transit Study

The Chamber received a grant from the Rhode Island Turnpike & Bridge Authority in 2006 to review the economic impacts of proposed LNG tanker transit through Narragansett and Mt. Hope Bays.

### RI Defense Economy Planning

Since 2003 the Chamber is administered a major state grant on behalf of the Rhode Island House Defense Study Commission and the Governor's Base Realignment & Closure Commission (BRAC). The national BRAC will evaluate all military installations throughout the United States, and during the Summer of 2005 Rhode Island became one of the significant gainers in military positions through the BRAC process. The Chamber along with the RI Economic Development Corporation issued a 2006 report on the importance of defense industries to the state economy.

### West Side Master Plan

The Chamber on behalf of the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission, has received a \$600,000 federal grant to develop a comprehensive land use and economic development plan for the entire west side of Aquidneck Island. The Chamber is working closely with the West Side Master Plan Taskforce in plan development and implementation. The final plan has been presented for public review and approval.

### Bellevue Gardens Redevelopment Project

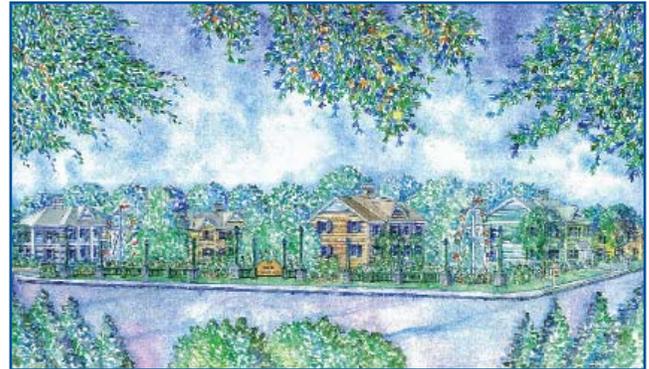


Bliss Properties, Inc., long time owner and operator of the Bellevue Gardens Shopping Center in Newport, is planning to redevelop the retail center into a mixed-use residential and commercial village center.

The plans call for a residential above retail setting in a much improved park-like environment, thereby improving the scale and massing of the strip center to be more in alignment with the buildings across the street. In effect, it will bring back the village center concept of a turn of the century New England neighborhood.

The Chamber has been working with the owners of Bellevue Gardens for several years in support of this innovative means to increase commercial property value and most importantly, bring new life and activity to the gateway to historic Bellevue Avenue.

### The Landings



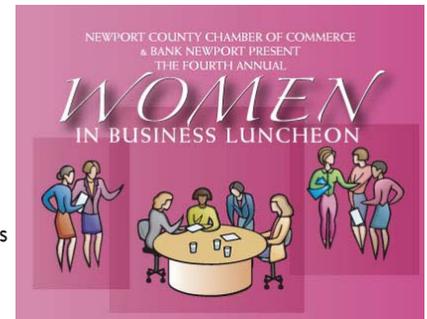
THE LANDINGS is a proposed redevelopment of the Navy's former Anchorage Housing area. Upon completion, the redevelopment of Anchorage will transform its current condition as a rental property to a vibrant community offering an affordable housing alternative to the residents and local workforce of Aquidneck Island.

### World Heritage Designation for Newport

The Chamber was an active member of the Newport World Heritage Planning Committee seeking designation from the United Nations for Newport as a World Heritage Site. The Chamber also funded the creation of a new web link at [www.newportworldheritage.org](http://www.newportworldheritage.org)

### Chamber Launches Newport County Women in Business Forums in 2007

In recognition of the networking needs of professional women in business, the Chamber launched the Newport County Women in Business Forums, featuring top women leaders from throughout the region.



### Aquidneck Corporate Park Improvement Study

The Chamber received and administered a \$30,000 state grant to conduct a comprehensive improvement study for Aquidneck Island's largest business park in Middletown. In 2005 the Chamber contributed \$10,000 towards a buildout analysis and new landscaping plan. The Chamber will receive a \$100,000 federal grant to begin park improvements in 2007.

### Portsmouth Town Center Plan

The Chamber successfully raised over \$20,000 to underwrite the Portsmouth Town Center Study. This study included a strong public review process that developed a comprehensive improvement plan and new town center identity for an important area of Portsmouth. The Town approved a "Town Center Plan" zoning amendment in October 2004 and in May 2005 \$225,000 in federal funds were appropriated for the project. The Chamber is working with the Portsmouth Town Center Committee.