

Friends of the Waterfront's NEWPORT WATERFRONT WATCHER



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Letter from the President

I am now entering my 4th year as President of FOW as the organization celebrates its 43rd year. We remain committed to our goal of preserving and promoting public waterfront access. I want to thank the Board, volunteers and donors for helping in achieving our mission for yet another year. It's a busy start to 2026. We continue to monitor the developments of Newport Harbor Hotel, Perry Mill Wharf and Grand Banks/Palm Beach Marina (formerly Casey's). We expect work to begin on King Park, Perrotti Park and Ann St. Pier in the fall/winter 2026. It is our understanding Waites Wharf continues to be tied up in court with appeals. FOW has briefed the City on our concerns with two waterfront properties not meeting their public access obligations. We anticipate meeting on a 3rd in the coming weeks. All this takes time, research and legal guidance which is why we continue to rely on your support to help us with our financial obligations. We are an all volunteer organization so your donations support our efforts to fulfill our mission. We hope you will find this newsletter informative and take the time to join or renew your membership. All donations are tax deductible. Just visit our website: newportwaterfront.org and click on the join/donate button. We are trying to reach a goal of 1000 members this year. If you're already a member, tell a friend. The more members we have, the more we can accomplish. Thank you!

Lynda Stevenson



The harbor walk hasn't been very pedestrian friendly lately

Pine Street Driftway Project

The purpose of the project is to prevent stormwater from Washington St. and the Pine St. driftway from flowing at high velocity directly down the asphalted slope onto the blue rocks beach. The fully asphalted embankment as well as the stone and mortar seawall at the shoreline was breaking off and being deposited on the beach. The existing wooden guard rail acted as a barrier for people and personal water craft from easily reaching the shoreline. Existing shoreline granite curbs are being reused as steps down to the beach and a thin band of rip rap has been installed as scour protection for the wall. The former roadway will be graded into a gentle swale south of the sidewalk to infiltrate storm water and the remainder of the roadway and slope will be stabilized with sod. A new handicap ramp and concrete sidewalk will provide ADA compliant passage across the previous road opening.



Pine St. Driftway under construction



The new section will include a promenade deck accessed from America’s Cup Ave. and have retail stores on the south side and hotel space on the north. At the waterfront end, there will be a multi level restaurant. The exciting part is they are opening up the walkway along the water for public access and it will connect from Perrotti Park to Bowen’s Wharf. This will be a significant addition to the Harbor Walk that FOW has been advocating for the past 43 years!



The City did a great job having the Elm St. pier rebuilt in time for the busy summer season. It has a handicap accessible dock and the float was replaced off the end for swimmers.

Nick Giacobbi gives presentation on Newport Harbor Hotel plans at FOW annual meeting in December

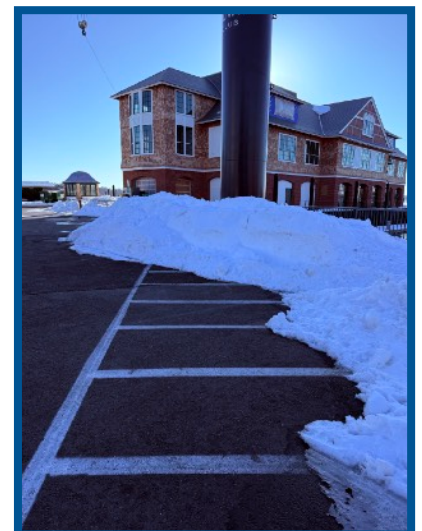
Guests at our annual meeting, held at the Marriott Hotel, saw an in depth slide show on the proposed plans for the Newport Harbor Hotel on America’s Cup Avenue. The property was purchased by the Procaccianti Company who expects to renovate the existing waterfront part of the hotel and construct a new building that will sit perpendicular to it. The new part will be raised (as is required because it’s in a flood zone) and parking will be underneath.



The Peregrine Group (owners of Hammetts Hotel and Yachting Center) have done a fantastic job of adding new harbor walk signs on their property. The upgraded signs were purchased by them and installed in collaboration with FOW.

Perry Mill

Construction has continued on this property and we have yet to access a waterfront harbor walk.



Ann St. Pier



After a 12 year battle, the City is finally moving ahead with plans for the extension of the Ann St. Pier. A new 210' floating dock will be added for transient day boats and overnight boats under 40'. Permits have been submitted and work is expected to begin at the end of the year.



Lee's Wharf

The Gardiner House requested to add parking and a loading zone on Lee's Wharf. Currently, there is no parking allowed. FOW had a multi year battle with the City to clear this right of way so as to have a view of the water from Thames St. Since this is a CRMC designated right of way, FOW felt it would set a bad precedent to add parking and a loading zone and the City Council agreed. It was voted down.

Grand Banks/Palm Beach Motor Yachts Marina (formerly Casey's)

Casey's Marina at Spring Wharf was sold in June 2025 to Grand Banks/Palm Beach motor yachts. A complete renovation of the property and marina is planned but currently they are just doing maintenance repairs on the marina. Public access exists around the perimeter of the property and FOW has had meetings with the new owners and been assured the public access will be enhanced.

Waites Wharf

Harbour Realty Assoc. was granted permits to build two hotel buildings and two residential buildings on the property owned by Mr. Abruzese. The buildings will also include a wedding venue in addition to a large restaurant. The marina has also been granted a permit to reconfigure its outside dock. The owners have agreed to enhance the public access and renovate the area at the end of West Extension St. Currently, the hotel development is being appealed by neighbors.



Newport Onshore

FOW has raised concerns that the property is not complying with its public access obligations. We are working with the City and the ownership to correct the issues. This sign has been removed but harbor walk signs have yet to be installed. There is public access along the north side of the property and on to the connecting deck.





It was another successful Earth Day Clean Up in King Park in April. Huge thank you to everyone that turned out to help us!



We had a great turnout for the FOW Summer Concert Series held in King Park. We were blessed with fantastic weather for all 5 concerts and enjoyed some terrific music.



FOW participated for the 2nd year at Sail Newport's Community Day in May. We had over 70 seashells painted by children and families that we later placed along the Harbor Walk.

Upcoming events: Please check our Facebook page and website for upcoming events. A guided harbor walk is being planned for April which will cover the north part. Additional walks will be held throughout the year. Earth Day Clean Up in King Park will be April 18th and our Summer Concert series begins June 26th.

www.newportwaterfront.org



WATCHDOGS OF THE WATERFRONT

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Send to Friends of the Waterfront, PO Box 932, Newport, RI 02840 Thank You!