

**WILLIAM A. DI LIBERO**

Town Administrator

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**TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN**

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10B

November 25, 2009

Mr. Joseph Dias, Chief  
RI DEM – Planning Division  
235 Promenade Street  
Providence, RI 02908

**RE: Parkland Acquisition Grant Request**

Dear Mr. Dias:

Please find attached the Rhode Island Recreation Acquisition and Development Grant Program application. With this application, I am writing to request a grant in the amount of \$200,000 from the RIDEM for the purchase of Plat 5, Lot 23 abutting Ninigret Pond in Charlestown, Rhode Island. I have enclosed a GIS map showing parcel 5-23 bordered by Sportsman Road, the Mud Cove parcel and the southerly portion of the driving range. Town staff took GPS measurements to establish the pond depth at the parcel.

It is the intent of the Town to purchase this lot for use as a boat ramp accessing Ninigret Pond. The lot borders the Town's driving range and the DEM owned Mud Cove property. It is the intent of the Town to integrate this lot/boat ramp into a picnic, park, trails and parking area that utilizes the Mud Cove property, and the boat ramp. Further, through this project the driving range area will be expanded to include a play and picnic area in addition to parking for trails and the boat ramp, a pavilion and a composting toilet.

I hope the Department will look favorably on this request.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this project.

Very truly yours,

William A. DiLibero

CC: Charlestown Town Council  
Charlestown Recreation Department  
Charlestown Recreation Commission  
W. Michael Sullivan, RIDEM Director

mailed 12/15/09



## **COSTS / FINANACIAL DATA**

### ***Estimate of Project Costs by Element:***

Land Acquisition: \$800,000

Architectural / Engineering Fees: T.B.D.

Demolition / Removal Costs: None

Development Construction Costs:  
Town Boat Ramp construction T.B.D.

Other Costs (specify):

**Total Costs: \$800,000**

### ***PROPOSED FUNDING SOURCES:***

**State:** Rhode Island Open Space Grant: \$200,000

**Local:** Appropriation: \$600,000 for land acquisition. The Town will seek Fish and Wildlife funding for the construction of the boat ramp.

In-kind Services:  
\*\* may not exceed 25%

Other: Funding towards purchase price

**Total Funding: \$800,000**

### **Public Participation:**

Renovation of existing facilities or new facility development less than \$25,000 (Grants) shall require the consent of the local governing body.

Projects in excess of \$25,000 (Grants) shall require public notice and at least 1 public hearing or meeting held not more the 120 days prior to the grant submission.

Date of Public Meeting or Hearing: January 11, 2010

Date of Town/City Council meeting approving submission of this application: December 14, 2007

## **SECTION A – PLANNING CONSISTENCY**

### ***25 Points Available***

1. ***Local Planning Consistency: (10 Points)***

The proposal satisfies priority needs documented in the Community Comprehensive Land Use Plan and conforms to the plan's acquisition and development schedule for project priority, timeline and cost. Identify the neighborhood or community needs for this project by citing references from the local plan.

See Planning Consistency - attached

2. ***State Planning Consistency: (10 Points)***

The project satisfies priority needs documented in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), Greenspace and Greenways Plan and any other State Guide Plan elements identified by the RRRC. Points will be awarded based on the number and/or importance of recommended actions supported by the proposal. Cite Plans and References.

3. ***Applicant Priority: (5 Points)***

The applicant's highest priority application will receive 5 points. Additional application will receive progressively fewer points.

## **SECTION B -- OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

### ***10 Points Available***

**1. *Operation & Maintenance Requirement: (5 Points)***

Explain the operation and maintenance needs, including budget, equipment and labor for the proposed project. Explain how the municipality will fund the maintenance.

- The play and picnic area and boat ramp will be mowed on a regular basis by the Public Works Department.
- The town will monitor and maintain trash in the area.
- The Conservation Commission and DPW staff, if needed, will maintain on a bi-annual basis.

**2. *Maintenance Record: (5 Points)***

Explain applicant's maintenance of other outdoor recreation facilities in the municipality.

The town mows all of its open space fields and lawn areas on a regular basis. The town maintains signage, access and entrances to the in Charlestown. The town has recently re-built a sheep barn on South Farm (off Old Coach Road), a town owned open space parcel.

The town maintains ball fields, tennis courts, a playground, swimming area and open space at Ninigret Park. The town operates and maintains two town beaches.

## SECTION C – BONUS FEATURES

### *22 Points Available*

1. ***The project addresses multi-community or regional needs. (3 points)***  
The project will access to Ninigret Salt Pond to the general community in Charlestown and neighboring towns.
  
2. ***The project is part of a multi-phase project with a Master Plan. (3 Points)*** (Master Plan must be submitted with the application)  
This project will share resources with the RIDEM Mud Cove hiking area and the Charlestown Driving Range/Park Recreation area.
  
3. ***The project will improve the economy of an area.*** For example, the project spurs job creation, town center redevelopment or development of a facility in an area identified for revitalization in State or community programs. ***(5 Points)***
  
4. ***Project includes redevelopment of a Brownfield as defined by DEM Remediation Regulations. (5 Points)***
  
4. ***Special or Innovative Design Features: (3 Points)***  
Examples include “green design” features e.g. recycled materials, water or energy conservation, preservation of an historical feature, landscaping or habitat restoration.  
  
The area will host a composting toilet at the shore pavilion/parking area.
  
5. ***Exceptional Features: (3 Points)***  
The project has special features not noted elsewhere in the application. For example, promotes arts, tourism or special programming.  
The project will provide public access to Ninigret Pond. This pond has limited public access to non-abutters of the pond.

## **SECTION D – PROJECT MERIT**

### ***22 Points Available***

- 1. Project is based on the need and/or demand for the proposed recreational activity in the area: (10 Points)**  
Project will address need for the type of recreational activity in the area. SCORP and Local Comprehensive Plan detail areas requiring additional recreation facilities.
- 2. Expanded Usage: (10 Points)** The project adds recreational amenities or hours of usage (e.g. additional fields are added to a facility or lights are added so it can be used at nights)
- 3. Multiple Uses: (5 Points)** the project integrates a variety of recreational opportunities providing activities for a mix of age groups and degrees of physical abilities.
- 4. Improved User Comfort or Safety: (5 Points)** The project improves user comfort or safety such as the additional of sanitary facilities, fencing to separate recreational activities, benches, shade trees or shelters.
- 5. Equity, Service and Accessibility: (20 Points) The project will:**
  - a) Expand recreational opportunities to disadvantaged segments of the population
  - b) project is located within or provides service to a neighborhood identified in which low income and/or minority residents are over-represented
  - c) project is located in a densely populated neighborhood or neighborhood identified for revitalization by State or community plan
  - d) project is provides features which expand the recreational opportunities for physically challenged individuals ( such features to be in excess of normally mandated barrier-free accessibility standards)
  - e) The project is served by public transportation (within ¼ mile of a bus stop) or is proximate to a bikeway.

## 1. Local Planning Consistency:

The proposal satisfies priority needs documented in the Community Comprehensive Land Use Plan and conforms to the plan's acquisition and development schedule for project priority, timeline and cost. Identify the neighborhood or community needs for this project by citing references from the local plan.

Several sections of the Charlestown Comprehensive Plan 5-Year Update address the need for open space acquisition and development to ensure that the current and future residents of Charlestown have adequate access to the shoreline. In the Open Space and Recreation section of the Plan, Policy 1 states: "*Protect natural resources, cultural resources, important views and visual corridors through open space acquisition, dedications or purchase/transfer of development rights*". More specifically under that policy, it states that the Town should continue to collaborate/partner with U.S. Fish and Wildlife, The Nature Conservancy, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, South County Conservancy, Rhode Island Audubon Society and private developers (through the land development process) regarding open space acquisition and conservation.

Policy 3 of the Plan Update states: "*Continue to provide opportunities for active and passive recreation throughout the Town*". Coupling this goal with the above stated sections of Policy 1, it is clear that the intent is for the Town to pursue partnerships with local agencies and organizations to increase the Town's active, as well as passive, opportunities for recreation.

Policy 4 most specifically addresses the details of this application by stating: "*Continue to provide and expand opportunities for access to fresh/salt water resources while protecting the resources from adverse impacts of overuse*". More specifically the plan goes on to say:

- Continue to develop small-scale access ways to the shore, which would allow a few visitors each, such as anglers, hikers, or people who wish to sit and look at the water.
  - Consider use of municipally-owned tax sale lots and easements to provide limited shore access.
  - Provide limited parking (if any) at or near shore access points.
  - Notify residents of sites and any restrictions.
- Investigate historic rights-of-way to the shore through deed research, and re-establish as necessary.
  - Continue to work with CRMC to identify rights-of-way to the shore.
- Ensure adequate facilities (parking, sanitary facilities and trash disposal) at Town beach and shore access sites.

- Recognize that availability of parking limits use of the Town beaches. To avoid excessive beach crowding, shuttle bus service from a remote “green” parking area (possibly at Ninigret Park) should only be considered if additional waterfront property is developed as a municipal beach.
- Inventory/improve all town-owned beach facilities.
- Investigate the potential for additional boat ramps or small boat put-ins (including kayak and canoes) to facilitate designation of a “blue trail” with destinations along the salt ponds (Charlestown Comprehensive Plan 5-Year Update, Open Space and Recreation Section, p13)

Additionally, the Natural Resources section of the Plan Update makes the protection and appreciation of Charlestown’s natural resources a major priority. Policy 6 states: “*Promote appreciation of natural resources by residents and visitors*”. The policy is further explained by the list of the following steps that can be taken to accomplish this goal:

- Promote access to and appreciation of many of the natural resources as appropriate through the continued development of shore access points, hiking paths, and other opportunities for outdoor activities.
  - Develop small-scale access ways to the shore, which would allow a few visitors each, such as anglers, hikers, or people who wish to sit and look at the water.
  - Implement recommendations of *The Charlestown Improvements Project: Making Green Connections to Commerce and Community* to construct a series of elevated walkways and viewing platforms in the recently acquired White Cedar Swamp, located between Post Road (Route 1) and Old Post Road (Route 1A). Apply for grants through possible federal, state and private funding sources to promote access to and education regarding this rare habitat, located in the proposed business center of town.
- Continue educational efforts and group activities that raise awareness of environmental protection.
- Provide public access to the shoreline.
  - Investigate historic rights-of-way to the shore through deed research, and re-establish as necessary.
  - Continue to work with CRMC to identify rights-of-way to the shore.
  - Consider several town-owned waterfront properties for public access (Charlestown Comprehensive Plan Update, Natural Resources Section, p 10).