

Letters

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DiGiando and Councilor Szepatowski, in their decision to select upper Taylor Point over lot 47, both properly considered that even the slightest risk to just one person's health was not worth taking.

Although the scrutiny by the North End Concerned Citizens has delayed the decision process, their disclosures have made us all acutely aware that the water supply for the whole island is on the "third rock", that even the public water supply draws water from the underlying bedrock aquifer and should it become contaminated, there is no viable alternate source for water.

Town Administrator Keiser also deserves accolades for keeping an open mind, allowing his staff to continue to investigate alternate sites and putting his efforts into finding the best and most efficient location to service the entire community ahead of the political pressures that every previous administrator has had to contend with.

Finally, I would also like to applaud Council President David Long for putting aside his own personal preference in order to put an end to the bickering and pointing the town's attention toward future challenges and opportunities.

These days, it's not often that we see elected officials set aside their personal and political alliances in order to do the right thing.

It was discouraging to read letters admonishing his casting the deciding vote, but I truly believe once the facility is built and operational, Jamestowners will all have high regard for the courage and leadership that President Long demonstrated.

Sav Rebecchi
Sail Street

Vacuous highway barn reasoning

Several major facts are being overlooked relating to the council's recent capitulation on the highway barn location. Taylor Point is a key approach to the village area of the island which was a consideration when the police station was gussied up to accommodate first impressions decades earlier. But moreover, as walkers around Taylor Point can attest, the land in that area provides gorgeous ocean views of Newport, the bridge, and Newport harbor. Has anyone assessed the value of Jamestown's ocean view property of late?

We all know the state of Rhode Island is broke, and since we pay Rhode Island taxes regularly we do wonder how state officials can afford to give that "location, location" site away to the town of Jamestown for such a bargain price at great detriment to the pockets of all Rhode Islanders. But since the state in its infinite wisdom sees fit to do just that, why are Jamestowners wasting their own tax dollars building a barn garage in that location when we could sell the property at a great turnaround profit? This profit would pay for construction and upkeep of the garage barn for decades at the barn site already purchased off North Road with no need for further outlay of funds.

Mrs. Paul Gricus
Jamestown

Council president shows leadership

This letter was sent to Councilman David Long and forwarded to the Press.

Dear David,

We just wanted to let you know how much we appreciate your

courage in making the only decision possible for the highway barn to go forward. We agree that the barn would have been better located at the North End, but we understand your position that the reality is not the ideal. Pockets are too deep for the town to afford a long, drawn out battle and as you say the cost just keeps going up.

Contrary to the Jamestown Press letter writer, we hope you will continue as a strong leader for our town. We admire your courage and common-sense intelligence.

Thank you, David. Here's hoping we will soon see a new highway barn.

Sue and Bill Brayman
Jamestown

Tankers disrupt boating on the bay

As reported in the June 7 article, "Tanker shuts down Bay for Tuesday night yacht races," the June 5 Jamestown Yacht Club race was canceled when Coast Guard boats closed the East Passage by excluding all traffic from a security zone extending two miles in front, one mile behind, and one thousand yards to either side of an outbound liquid propane gas (LPG) tanker. The Newport Pell Bridge was also closed.

According to Assistant Attorney General Paul Roberti, who is handling the state's effort to prevent construction of a liquid natural gas (LNG) facility in Providence or Fall River, under federal regulations, all passages of tankers carrying LPG, LNG, anhydrous ammonia, or chlorine, will require similar closings of Narragansett Bay and the bridges under which the tankers pass. At present, we have 10 to 12 LPG transits a year.

Mr. Roberti went on to note that LPG is not as volatile as LNG, because it is stored at only -30 degrees F rather than -260 as is LNG. He said, "This means that the LPG vessels can be emptied out completely, whereas the cryogenic steel of the LNG vessels must be maintained at -260 for integrity purposes, and thus outgoing LNG

vessels must maintain 3 to 5 million gallons of LNG in the holding containers. That means LNG transits, unlike LPG transits, require security zones for incoming and outgoing transits."

Weaver's Cove, the proponent of the Fall River LNG site, is proposing 130 annual trips, so that the bay would be cleared some 260 times a year for LNG tankers, as well as 10 to 12 times for LPG transits. This would also involve more than 500 closures of the Newport and Mt. Hope bridges.

Note that the bay was apparently closed needlessly on June 5, since it was presumably an empty LPG tanker that was leaving the bay. Perhaps the Coast Guard was misinformed.

Your June 5 article suggested that races could be scheduled around the passage of the tankers. Even if the people involved could rearrange their schedules at the last minute, the tanker departure times are kept secret for security reasons. Weaver's Cove states that they plan tanker transits only for high tide, in daylight, and in good visibility - perfect for disruption of ordinary traffic. Accordingly, we must expect sudden and unplanned disruption of our cherished freedom to go for a boat ride, compete in a race, or reach the Newport Hospital in an emergency situation.

If either of the proposed LNG terminals is built the quality of life as we enjoy it will be profoundly damaged. To oppose their construction on that basis alone, or that plus the rather remote danger of an accident or a successful attack, might be NIMBYism. However, more than quality of life is at stake here. If the bay experiences 260 closures per year, all manner of traffic essential to our economy will be disrupted. Cruise ships operate on tight schedules; they won't come to Newport if they can't count on arriving and departing on time. All manner of tourist vessel traffic relies on the freedom of the bay. Countless high-profile racing yacht programs and regattas are based in Newport. If these

things disappear, with the dollars they bring in and the jobs they create, there will be a ripple effect throughout the rest of the economy; real estate values will drop, taxes will have to rise, and so on. It is no exaggeration to say that the economy of the state relies heavily on the prevention of the construction of these LNG terminals.

What can be done? At present, the construction of either terminal looks unlikely, because the Coast Guard has expressed reservations about the safety of navigation of the tankers. However, Weaver's Cove has not given up the fight. Therefore, persons with an interest should write their elected representatives, and their newspapers. Perhaps the Town Council can make a contribution to the legal battle being fought by Mr. Roberti and his colleagues. Our elected officials should take steps to see that the regulations that are effected are sensible, and properly administered; it seems unlikely that clearing a bunch of sailboats away from an empty tanker contributed anything to national security.

Michael de Angeli
Intrepid Lane

Editor's note: the author is the chairman of the town's Harbor Management Commission.


Thanks arts district advocates

The Conanicut Island Art Association thanks the many people who supported the effort to obtain an arts district designation for Jamestown.

Bruce Long, our state representative, deserves particular thanks. He worked diligently, bringing information to the CIAA and the Town Council. Artists, artisans, and gallery owners voiced their support. The Town Council listened, and allowed Representative Long to propose the legislation. State Senator Teresa Paiva-Weed was very supportive. Allie Sabalis, former president of the CIAA, coordinated the effort on the island, and was joined by others, including Priscilla Foley, Don Miller, Jocelyn Donaghue, and Kevin Somerville. Finally, Gail Bolger deserves our thanks for bringing the opportunity to our attention in the first place.

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