



CITY OF WARWICK

FRANK J. PICOZZI, MAYOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Stephen P. McAllister, Council President
Warwick City Council Members
Lynn D'Abrosca, City Clerk

FROM: Warwick Planning Department
Thomas Kravitz, Planning Director

DATE: November 28, 2023

SUBJECT: Resolution in Support of the City of Warwick's National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act ("NHLPA") Application to Obtain the Warwick Lighthouse

The Warwick Lighthouse, also known as Warwick Light Station, is a historic lighthouse property located at 1350 Warwick Neck Avenue ("The Property"). On May 15, 2023, the General Services Administration ("GSA"), a United States government agency, issued a Notice of Availability for the Warwick Lighthouse property, declaring that any eligible entities with interest in acquiring the property should submit a letter of interest to the GSA by July 14, 2023.

On June 21, 2023, Mayor Picozzi sent a letter of interest to U.S. GSA, initiating a process that the City of Warwick could utilize to potentially acquire a historic lighthouse property under the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act of 2000. As a required part of the NHLPA application that the City of Warwick must complete by December 8 of this year, the City Council is asked to pass a resolution certifying that the City of Warwick possesses the requisite desire and capability to accept and maintain a historic lighthouse property.

The federal government requires specifically that the property be used, "exclusively for education, park, recreation, cultural, or historic preservation purposes for the general public." Mayor Picozzi has advocated for the City of Warwick to acquire the property because the city is best-positioned to preserve the property, guarantee public access, and use the space to create recreational and educational opportunities both today and for future generations.

The lighthouse property is offered by the federal government at no cost, however if successful the City of Warwick would be required to maintain the property in accordance with U.S. and R.I. historic preservation requirements. Like with the Conimicut Shoals Lighthouse that was obtained by the City via the same process, the preferred primary source of funding projects on the property would be through congressional earmark or historic preservation grant funds.

The City is partnering with the Warwick Neck Improvement Association (“WNIA”) in its application to GSA to acquire the lighthouse property. WNIA is a 503(c)(3) registered community non-profit organization located in Warwick Neck that is interested in the betterment of the neighborhood and also would like for the City to obtain the lighthouse property.

Estimates of full restoration costs for the lighthouse structure, the lightkeeper’s house structure, and for the garage structure have been provided to the City by Abcore Restoration Company, Inc. These estimates represent a full top-of-the-line restoration of all three structures, and are as follows:

Restoration of Warwick Lighthouse Tower - \$140,350.00
Restoration of Warwick Lighthouse Keeper’s Cottage - \$484,400.00
Restoration of Warwick Lighthouse Garage - \$68,450.00

While a full restoration of all three structures is not necessary at this time, the Abcore cost estimates have been included to provide the City Council with context for the current condition of the structures on the property. The condition of the lighthouse itself and the garage are good, however the lightkeeper’s house structure would require some restorative measures due to the house’s long-term vacancy. The City’s Department of Public Works has in-house carpentry staff that is capable of carrying out many of the restoration and maintenance projects that would be required to return the property’s structures to operational condition, lowering the expected cost of the restorative work relative to what could be achieved by the city hiring an external firm through the competitive bidding process.

The Mayor plans to include a \$60,000 budget request per year for five years to restore and maintain the property, should the City of Warwick be selected by the U.S. GSA to acquire the subject property. The specific availability and scheduling of the use of the property is to be administered by the Department of Parks and Recreation, which already manages a diverse portfolio of recreational facilities for use by the city’s residents and visitors.

As a part of its NHLPA application, the City must submit a certified copy of a resolution, certificate of authority, or similar public document executed by its governing body, that states its desire and ability to acquire the surplus Federal property, and designates the person legally authorized to apply for the property. The resolution or certification to acquire property must contain the following:

- a. A statement that the application is being made for acquisition of the property under the provisions of the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. § 470w-7) and procedures promulgated thereunder.
- b. Identification of the name, location, acreage, and General Services Administration Control Number, if applicable, of the property requested.
- c. An authorization to acquire the property exclusively for education, park, recreation, cultural, or historic preservation purposes for the general public.

- d. A certification that the Applicant is authorized, willing, and able to assume liability and responsibility for the development, maintenance, and operation of the property.
- e. A designation by title of a specific official to act as the authorized representative in all matters pertaining to the transfer of the property.
- f. A certification that the Applicant is willing and authorized to pay the administrative expenses incident to the transfer.