

VICTORIA GU


State Senate — District 38 —

September Updates & Mental Health Forum

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The summer really flew by. With a storm heading up the coast this weekend I hope we avoid the worst effects, but I encourage everyone to follow [RI EMA](#) for updates and [Ready.gov](#) for ways to prepare. Here are also local links to evacuation routes and shelters:

- Westerly Emergency Management: <http://westerlyri.gov/203/Emergency-Management>
- Charlestown EMA: <https://charlestownri.gov/emergencymanagement>
- South Kingstown Emergency Preparedness: <https://www.southkingstownri.com/197/Emergency-Preparedness>



Join the conversation &
be involved in advocating
for our community.

Mental Health & Wellness

Follow up forum

16 September

10:00 AM

Wilcox Library - Auditorium
44 Broad St Westerly RI 02891

Contact Mary Scialabba with any questions
maryqm2@yahoo.com

Second Mental Health Forum

Time/Date: Saturday Sep 16, 10am

Location: Wilcox Library - Auditorium (44 Broad St, Westerly)

Join us to learn about exciting new developments including Gateway mental health workers staffing 68 Pierce St in Westerly. We expect other mental health providers and organizations to be at this town forum as well. Congratulations to Town Council Member Mary Scialabba for leading this effort!

In the News

Under the regulations of the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Program (RICRMP), any construction, grading, or filling activities or other alterations within 200 feet of coastal feature associated with tidal waters or coastal ponds of the state or in CRMC's freshwater wetlands in the vicinity of the coast jurisdiction, requires plans for the proposed work be submitted to the Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) for review, evaluation, and comment prior to the proposed activity. Failure to do so is a violation of the RICRMP. After evaluation of the plans by CRMC staff, their comments and the requirements for the proposed activities are forwarded to the applicant.

It has come to the attention of the CRMC that you or your agent have undertaken the unauthorized construction of a sign on a coastal feature at your property located at Charlestown Beach Road, South Kingstown, Plat 95-4, Lot 3 without benefit of a CRMC assent or in violation of a Council Order.

This activity is in violation of the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Program. You are hereby issued an Official Finding and Notice of Violation number 23-0037, dated August 10, 2023. You must remove the unauthorized sign, in its entirety, from this site by August 18, 2023, to resolve this violation.

Failure to comply with this order shall be a violation of a duly adopted Council regulation, and shall be followed by the issuance of a Cease and Desist Order which shall be registered in the land evidence records for the above property.

Sincerely,



Brian Harrington, Sr. Environmental Scientist II
Coastal Resources Management Council

7018 0360 0000 8180 4167



CRMC issues takedown notice for the No Trespassing sign next to Charlestown Town Beach

This took a lot of back-and-forth between myself, [Coastal Resources Management Council of Rhode Island](#), and the property owner, but the large No Trespassing sign right by Charlestown Town Beach is finally gone! Thanks to Brian and the CRMC staff for working on this. This was just one example of the many shoreline signs that mislead the public, but it was one of the most prominent.

The letter above was dated Aug 10, 2023

Read the ProJo article here:

<https://www.providencejournal.com/story/news/local/2023/08/24/charlestown-beach-private-property-sign-is-removed-after-controversy/70657881007/>

Education/Workforce Development Town Hall Recap

Thank you so much to the panelists who represented a lot of different perspectives (students, school committee, K-12 educators, and university educators) at our Workforce Development town hall at the Westerly Education Center on August 3rd.

Afterwards, some professionals from different industries contacted us to get involved in trainings, demos, or other efforts at local schools. If this is something you're interested in, feel free to reach out to me!

Read the WesterlySun article here:

https://www.thewesterlysun.com/news/westerly/forum-explores-workforce-development/article_81053dee-330c-11ee-9109-5b24486daed4.html

West Nile Virus risk level high; more detected in Westerly

Rhode Island is showing high levels of EEE and WNV in mosquito samples: this year there were 2 new Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) findings in Glocester and 11 West Nile Virus findings: **five in Westerly**, two in Barrington, and one each in Cranston, Johnston, Richmond, and Tiverton.

With the state's EEE and WNV risk levels now considered high, DEM and RIDOH are urging Rhode Islanders to continue protecting themselves and their loved ones from mosquito bites until the first hard frost of autumn. A hard frost, which is meteorologically defined as three straight hours below 32 degrees, kills adult mosquitoes. Its timing varies widely across Rhode Island. It often occurs in northern communities such as Burrillville in early October and in southern, ocean-facing communities later.

Read more here: <https://dem.ri.gov/press-releases/state-announces-2-new-mosquito-samples-glocester-test-positive-eee-5-new-wnv>

Past Meetings / Events



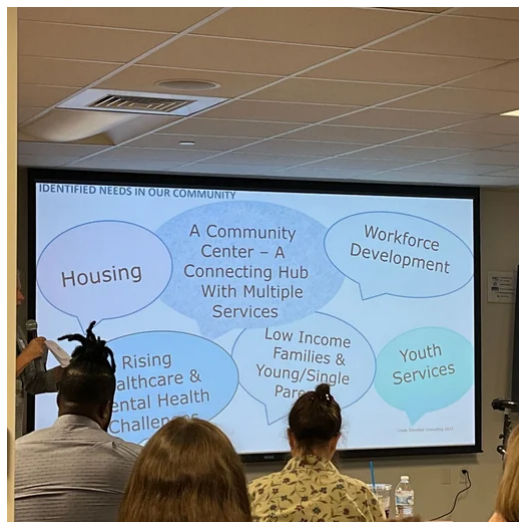
Visit to Affordable Housing Commissions

I visited a couple affordable housing commissions in the last few weeks- the Westerly commission and the South Kingstown commission (along with Melina Lodge from [Housing Network of Rhode Island](#)). The commissions are still in the early stages and there's a lot of enthusiasm to solve the problem. We are always available as a resource on state and federal funding opportunities!



Celebrating Women's Equality Day

Glad to celebrate [#WomensEqualityDay](#) with a film screening at [The United Theatre](#) hosted by [League of Women Voters - South County](#)! This day marks the anniversary of women winning the right to vote after decades of struggle. The 19th amendment was a start, but the work continues to this day to knock down other barriers to voting





Re-envisioning Tower Street Community Center

The re-envisioning Tower Street Community Center project had a public meeting in August, and everyone including myself were really excited about its potential. Many nonprofit partners are coming together to make it a community hub. Come and give your input at the next public meeting, which will be Mon Sep 18th 5:30pm at the Westerly Yacht Club



Visit from RI Housing Secretary Stefan Pryor

Thank you to our Housing Secretary, Stefan Pryor, for visiting Charlestown during the [Charlestown Seafood Festival](#) and also taking a tour up and down Route 1 to learn about the challenges and opportunities we have developing affordable housing in rural areas. We visited some existing affordable housing developments too, like Churchwoods and Shannock Village.

Thank you also Charlestown Council Member Stephen Stokes for being a wealth of information!



National Caucus of Environmental Legislators

Pictured here is the Rhode Island delegation to the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators. We learned a ton about what's needed in the transition to a clean and robust power grid, protecting wetlands and sequestering blue carbon, transportation policy, federal funding opportunities, and much more!

Upcoming Events / Places I'll Be

- Saturday Sep 16th / Sunday Sep 17th: If it doesn't get rained out, I'm going to stop by [Fall Fest](#) at Misquamicut Beach and [Youth Surf Competition / Beach Cleanup](#) at Westerly Town Beach
- Wed Sep 20th 8am: My usual monthly conversation with Frank Prosnitz on WBLQ Radio (1230AM)
- Wed September 20th 6:30pm at the Charlestown Police Station:
The Charlestown Democratic Town Committee will have a guest speaker, Jed Thorpe, Executive Director of Clean Water Action-RI, to talk about PFAS in our water and the future of the Bottle Bill.
- Thur September 21st at 10am: Ribbon-cutting to officially re-open South Kingstown's Marina Park Boat Ramp and Public Dock
- Commission Meetings: I'll continue visiting some local town commissions to keep up to date with what they're planning and share any relevant state resources. If you'd like me to join a meeting, please reach out!
victoria4ri@gmail.com



Programs You Can Apply For

Just launched after Labor Day! Rhode Island put \$25 million into a program to incentivize homeowners to adopt energy-efficient heat pumps, which can be used to replace a water heater or upgrade your heating and cooling systems. You can also get a federal tax credit on top of that. By making the switch to these environmentally friendly technologies, you can not only lower your carbon footprint but also enjoy cost savings on energy bills in the long run. **Income-eligible households can even get 100% of the cost of the installation and electrical upgrades (up to \$3k) covered.** Please read the website to figure out what incentives you may be eligible for. You can also schedule a virtual consultation.

To learn more and apply for the Clean Heat RI program, you can visit the program's official website <https://cleanheatri.com/i-am-a/homeowner/>

Friends of Victoria Gu, PO Box 116, Charlestown, RI 02813, United States, 4013880696

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