



**Richmond Community Alliance**  
Encouraging constructive community engagement and action

## **NEWSLETTER**

No. 20 July 17, 2024

### **Peaks**

#### ***Easier Access to Information via Notify Me***

At Tuesday's Town Council meeting, the Town Administrator confirmed there will be an insert in the upcoming tax bills with detailed information on how to sign up for Notify Me. The town's notification system allows residents to sign up for timely reminders about town meetings, events, voter registration, elections and emergency alerts. There will also be an insert for the Housing Survey.

### **Other Items of Note**

#### ***Final Plan Approval of The Preserve Phase 2B***

The final plan of Phase 2B within The Preserve was approved administratively on June 12, 2024. Phase 2B within The Preserve is a Major Land Development Project that was first submitted for review on December 14, 2021. The plan includes 58 total residential units and additional member amenities within two planned clubhouses.

The approved plan includes the following:

- 2 'Hilltop' Clubhouses with 19 units each and commercial amenities (38 total units)
- 13 Multi-family residences
- 7 Single-family residences
- 8 previously approved (2019) novelty dwelling structures (tiny houses)

The process to approve the plan took over 2.5 years due to questions regarding how The Preserve would satisfy the inclusionary zoning requirements, unpaid taxes, lack of RIDEM OWTS permits, lack of street names and E911 designation, and other required documentation.

Final plan approval documents can be found by searching the following link for Book 370 and Page 221: <https://www.searchiqs.com/RIRIC/>

Engineering and site plans for the site can be found at:

[https://clerkshq.com/Content/Attachments/Richmond-ri/240528p\\_D1.pdf?clientSite=Richmond-ri](https://clerkshq.com/Content/Attachments/Richmond-ri/240528p_D1.pdf?clientSite=Richmond-ri)

### ***Volunteers Needed for Town Committees and Commissions***

The town is constantly looking for volunteers for its Committees and Commissions. Currently, the town is in need of volunteers to serve on the Elder Affairs Commission. This Commission has not met in years due to vacancies and lack of a quorum.

The purpose of the Elder Affairs Commission is to “advise the town council on all matters of particular interest to older citizens, and shall serve as an information and advocacy resource for older citizens. The commission may sponsor informational and educational programs, may coordinate the Meals on Wheels program in Richmond, and may undertake public service projects.”

If you are interested please submit an application. Currently, the commission is in need of at least one more member to make a quorum and can accommodate up to three more members. More information can be found at: <https://www.richmondri.com/154/Elder-Affairs-Commission>

### ***Verbal Sparring During School Committee Public Forum...***

During the public comments section of the Chariho School Committee Meeting on Tuesday, Ms. Lousie Dinsmore proceeded to equate the attempted assassination of former President Donald Trump with a “verbal shot” fired by Mr. Chris Kona at the Mom’s for Liberty organization. According to her, at the previous school committee meeting, Mr. Kona described the organization as espousing fear, bullying people, and attempting to undermine the effectiveness of public schools. Ms. Dinsmore stated she signed the Mom’s for Liberty Pledge for Public Officials, read the pledge out loud, then described an incident where a member of the public (claimed to be a board member of the Friends of Chariho organization) berated her in public. The comments were concluded with a call to end character assassination.

Mr. Kona responded during the public comment session that the statements made were validated by the comments from Mr. Chiaradio at the last school committee meeting as they pertain to students who are transgender or gender non-conforming. In his opinion, the school is doing an excellent job educating students on this sensitive subject and that Ms. Dinsmore should bring her educational concerns for her own children to the administration of that school implying that Ms. Dinsmore has no children that attend Chariho.

This exchange is simply the beginning of the upcoming campaign season. It does demonstrate that character is very much at issue when it comes to voting for public officials. How one behaves in public, their actions with their neighbors, their attitude towards each other, and the ideas they represent are all important qualities that should be considered when voting for leadership positions within the community.

### ***Chariho Outside Management Study Discussed... and Dismissed.***

The Chariho School Committee discussed at length the idea of an Outside Management Study to be conducted by an accredited professional organization to review the budget. The agenda item was introduced by committee member Craig Louzon. Hopkinton Town Council Member Sharon Davis gave a presentation to the committee and fielded questions regarding the details of such a proposal. Another Hopkinton Town Council Member, Mr. Scott Bill Hirst, also made a statement regarding the proposal.

Mr. Hirst has been a proponent of this idea for years. Not an event or online chat goes by where he does not mention the need for an “outside management study.” While his statement to the committee was disjointed, it became obvious that his angst rested with the tax rate rather than the school district. Mr. Hirst believes that the school budget is bloated and can be reduced. Committee member Tyler Champlin stated that any belief that a study will reveal that Chariho “is bloated at the top” is likely incorrect. It has also been noted previously that the school budget increases year over year are consistently below inflation and the previous financial audit found no actionable items.

The discussion of savings by the school committee that followed was mostly focused around the closing of Hope Valley Elementary. Discussions about the study regarding efficiency funneled into two areas. One was that administration was more over tasked than under tasked so that any study conducted could possibly be skewed if employees simply stuck to specific duties. The other area was that teacher retirement attrition would lead to appropriate teacher staffing levels outside of administration. This would occur after Hope Valley Elementary closes.

Another issue discussed is that with previous studies of this nature recommendations were made but not acted upon, so the studies that were conducted wasted money. Also, the administration highlighted that current law provides for appropriate audits where none existed when the previous studies were performed.

At the end of the discussion the committee took no action on the matter since most committee members felt the largest cost savings were obvious and simply needed to be implemented.

### **Opinion Corner**

## ***Zero Tolerance for Political Violence***

*By Jim Palmisciano*

The attempted assassination this past week of Donald Trump, a former U.S. president and 2024 Republican nominee for president, was a despicable act that should be denounced universally.

Today – as Americans, we should speak loudly in one united voice that political violence is against the very fabric of our democracy, and such acts of cowardice are frankly un-American. I ask you to put aside what your political leaning may be, or what you may think of the former president's policies. Political radicalization that brings one to the point of violence will rip our country apart, and we need to put a stop to it.

Tomorrow – we all need to take action to reign in this radicalization in our respective parties. I fear that the events of this week are the proverbial “canary in the coal mine.” It is not fair to say that this is just a right-wing problem. Based on current information, the shooter did not show warning signs on social media or participate in political activities that would hint at the extreme action that was undertaken. The shooter was a 20-year-old registered Republican who had donated to a progressive PAC. Atypical. There are thousands of other disillusioned young people who would both fit this profile and share the same views. We have forgotten that ultimately, we should all be on the side of the United States.

As a former elected official myself, I know first-hand how strongly people can feel about their political views. People should always be allowed to verbalize those views but advancing them to acts of violence to stifle political opposition is outrageous and abhorrent. Our democratic system only works when citizens step forward to participate in the political process to represent their constituents. I know many people who have viewed these events and feel compelled to step back from politics. This assassination attempt on the former president is not only treasonous, but it is an act of terror against democracy, and we should all stamp out these embers before they erupt.

I implore you to all speak out in support of common sense, civility, and respect for rule of law to repair the rifts forming across our country. Democracy is not tied to a political party, figure, or movement, and we can all play a part in reminding each other that the United States was founded on political freedom and tolerance, escaping the cycle of tyranny, persecution and political violence.

We can still have differences, but we must mend these divisions.

## ***Candidates Running for Local Political Office***

*Disclaimer: ALL EMAILS LISTED WERE OBTAINED THROUGH PUBLICLY AVAILABLE SOURCES THAT INCLUDE CAMPAIGN WEBSITES, RESPECTIVE TOWN COMMITTEE WEBSITES, CAMPAIGN FACEBOOK PAGES, OR BOARD OF ELECTION FILINGS.*

***Rhode Island State Senate (District 34)...***

Elaine Morgan (Incumbent)(R) <a href="mailto:Elaineforsenate@AOL.com">Elaineforsenate@AOL.com</a>	Steve Moffitt (D) <a href="mailto:Steveforri@gmail.com">Steveforri@gmail.com</a>
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***Rhode Island State Representative (District 39)...***

Megan Cotter (Incumbent)(D) <a href="mailto:megancotterri@gmail.com">megancotterri@gmail.com</a>	Justin Price (R) <a href="mailto:jprice2424@cox.net">jprice2424@cox.net</a>
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***Richmond Town Council...***

Samantha Wilcox(Incumbent)(D) <a href="mailto:Samantha.Wilcox25@yahoo.com">Samantha.Wilcox25@yahoo.com</a> Daniel Madnick (D) <a href="mailto:Madnick4RTC@gmail.com">Madnick4RTC@gmail.com</a> Jim Palmisciano (D) <a href="mailto:JimP4RichmondRI@gmail.com">JimP4RichmondRI@gmail.com</a> Mark Reynolds (D) <a href="mailto:Mark.Reynolds4Richmond@gmail.com">Mark.Reynolds4Richmond@gmail.com</a>	Mark Trimmer (Incumbent)(I) <a href="mailto:marktrimmer60@gmail.com">marktrimmer60@gmail.com</a>	Michael Colasante (Incumbent)(R) <a href="mailto:mikec2635@gmail.com">mikec2635@gmail.com</a> Nell Carpenter (R) <a href="mailto:pondstreetfloral@yahoo.com">pondstreetfloral@yahoo.com</a> Jeffrey Dinsmore (R) <a href="mailto:JeffDinsmore548@yahoo.com">JeffDinsmore548@yahoo.com</a> Roger St. Onge (R) <a href="mailto:stonge-roger@yahoo.com">stonge-roger@yahoo.com</a> Thomas Marron (R) <a href="mailto:tmarron@verizon.net">tmarron@verizon.net</a>
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***Chariho School Committee...***

Jessica Purcell (D) (Incumbent) <a href="mailto:HelloJessPurcell@gmail.com">HelloJessPurcell@gmail.com</a> Karen Reynolds (D) (Incumbent) <a href="mailto:KarenReynolds4Chariho@gmail.com">KarenReynolds4Chariho@gmail.com</a>	Louise Dinsmore (R) <a href="mailto:Louiseforchariho@gmail.com">Louiseforchariho@gmail.com</a> Clay Johnson (R) <a href="mailto:ifkidshadaunion@gmail.com">ifkidshadaunion@gmail.com</a>
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The RCA will be sending a questionnaire to all candidates. The responses will be limited in length to make them brief and digestible. The responses will be considered in connection with RCA's endorsements and will be reported to our readers.

**Upcoming Meetings**

July 23 – Planning Board Meeting – 6:30 pm at Town Hall

August 6 – Town Council Meeting – 6 pm at Town Hall

August 20 – School Committee – 7 pm at Chariho High School Library

Town Council and Planning Board agendas: <https://clerkshq.com/richmond-ri>

School Committee agendas: [https://www.chariho.k12.ri.us/school\\_committee/meeting\\_schedule](https://www.chariho.k12.ri.us/school_committee/meeting_schedule)

## **Future Ideas**

We would like to spotlight local businesses, people, and points of interest in our area in future newsletters. If you have an idea for a person/place to feature, or an event to include on the community calendar, feel free to email us at [rca4richmond@gmail.com](mailto:rca4richmond@gmail.com). We also welcome any tips or items of concern that you wish to bring to our attention.