

Excerpts from Early Statements of Support for Burying the Waterfront Power Lines

STATE GOVERNMENT

Burying the power lines at India Point is a critical part of our combined efforts to redevelop the Providence and East Providence waterfronts, and to continue the rebirth of our capital city.

--Donald Carcieri, Governor

Common sense and simple economics demand that we eliminate the blight of high-voltage power lines from our parks and public spaces today so that we can preserve and enhance the environment of tomorrow.

--Patrick Lynch, Attorney General

I am pleased to celebrate...the aesthetic importance and economic development opportunities of this beautiful slice of Rhode Island. Burying these wires will help to maintain public safety and preserve property values (as well as) ensure that this urban waterfront park will remain a place of serenity and recreation for future generations.

-- Senator Lincoln Chafee

[India Point Park] is the only part of the Providence shoreline which is accessible to the public, and more than 75,000 people a year enjoy [it] as a natural refuge and recreational area...now is the time to improve Providence's waterfront...I support the proposal to bury the power lines...

--Patrick Kennedy, US Congressman

The proposed project [overhead relocation]...would have a negative impact on the aesthetic value and consequently on the recreational value of India Point Park and Bold Point Park and the Providence and Seekonk Rivers.

--Advisory Opinion, RI Dept. of Environmental Management

CITY GOVERNMENT

I consider India Point Park to be the entering crown jewel of the city.

Burying the power lines will have a tremendous positive impact on economic development along our waterfront. It will also improve the quality of life for all of the residents of our city.

--David Cicilline, Providence Mayor

WHEREAS, The waterfront is the signature landscape of the Capital City of the Ocean State and a cornerstone of its economic future, and

WHEREAS, Other cities, such as Chattanooga, TN, Annapolis, MD, Louisville, KY, and San Antonio, TX, have found that ridding their waterfronts of obtrusive power lines has reaped major economic benefits...

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council strongly supports efforts to bury the India Point Park transmission lines...

--Unanimous Resolution, Providence City Council

India Point Park is one of the most historic cultural sites in Providence....The existing towers and power lines are a 20th century intrusion...and represent an overpowering presence.... The burial of the power lines would remove the psychological perception that the park is merely a Narragansett Electric right-of-way.

--Bob McMahon, Acting, Superintendent, Providence Parks Dept.

UNIVERSITIES

An unsightly relic of the industrial era, the wires significantly detract from the waterfront area that...is one of the city's greatest natural resources...We have joined in support of burying the power lines because we share the belief that this investment is in the best interests of our community, our city, and our state...

--John Bowen, President, Johnson and Wales

--Roger Mandle, President, RISD

-- Ruth Simmons, President, Brown University

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

By burying the power lines, the Park will become more desirable for events such as the Waterfront Festival and concerts, as well as family activities, such as boating and picnicking.

--George Donnelly, Director, Providence Tourism Council

The relocation of Route 195 represents a remarkable opportunity to further improve the City's image, its quality of life and its ability to draw visitors to the area....The one-time cost to relocate utility lines below ground seems a small price to pay for an unobstructed view of the Bay...given the long-term benefits....

--James Hahn, President, South Main St. Improvement Assn.

The marginal increase in cost to bury the lines, compared to the total cost of the highway relocation and storm sewer projects, is a smart payment for the benefit of future generations.

--Michael Hogue, President, Jewelry District Assn.

We are now presented with a unique opportunity to enhance the historic waterfront by burying the lines....it is a very worthwhile investment in our city.

--Martha Werenfels, Past President, RI Chapter, Am. Institute of Architects

It makes no sense, aesthetically or economically, to burden our greatest natural resource with an eyesore from our industrial past, while other cities are sprucing up their waterfronts and reaping the benefits. Overhead power lines would build obsolescence into a cornerstone of our economic future.

-- Letter to the Providence Journal signed by 50 RI artists

MEDIA

It's difficult to think of any other area in the state that could benefit more from the burying of high-voltage lines, or where the burying could do more good for the region....Not to do so would look like a false economy, even in today's fiscal climate. Good aesthetics here mean good long-term economics.

--Editorials, Providence Journal

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS

Let's not let this moment pass. Future generations will wonder why the opportunity to deal with these ugly power lines was allowed to slip by.

--John Roney, President, Fox Point Citizens Assn.

Clearly, burying the power lines,...as a means of enhancing this unique public area, should be considered a first priority....it would seem irrational not to continue to develop our waterfront with an eye toward enhancing its aesthetic values.

--Thomas Goddard, President, College Hill Neighborhood Assn.

Giant power lines...may have been appropriate over the freight yards that once were India Point, but they are no more appropriate today at India Point Park than they would be over Roger Williams Park or the flames of Waterfire. This is the chance that will not come again, perhaps for a century.

--Peggy Sharpe & Robert Schacht, founding India Point Park Comm.

Turning around the image of the capital city has had a profound effect on the physique of the citizens of Rhode Island and affected tourism and our national image....Remember the so-called "China Wall" that existed between downtown and the State House only 15 years ago. Now it is hard to imagine the railroad berms and tracks that blocked the views. We have a similar opportunity now with the power lines in Fox Point.

--Peter Gengler, President, Community Boating Center

Burying these large and obtrusive structures will add to the property values and the attractiveness of the surrounding areaThe rewards for doing so...have been proven across the nation.

--Richard Youngken, Executive Director, The Dunn Foundation

ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS

The Club is interested in burying the power lines...because it would further our goal of reviving our core cities, so necessary to help protect our remaining open space. A better India Point Park, not disfigured by power lines, would make Providence a better and more competitive place to live.

--Barry Schiller, *Sierra Club, RI Chapter*

Preserving and enhancing green space along the water's edge is critical to the city's well being...We have a generational opportunity to make wise decisions...for the benefit of the city for decades to come.

--Fred Stolle, *Chairperson, RI Tree Council*

It would be a travesty for the citizens of Fox Point, fellow Rhode Islanders, and visitors to our beautiful State if the State decided not to take this opportunity to send the message that it cares about protecting and investing in our scenic landscapes....A trip to India Point Park reveals what a community jewel it is.

--Janet Zwolinski, *Director, Preserve Rhode Island*

The proposal to bury the power lines would transform India Point...We value aesthetic improvements to our urban waterfront as vital to enhancing the public's sense of ownership of our natural resources.

--Tophier Hamblett, *Director of Advocacy, Save the Bay*

India Point Park is analogous to New York's Central Park, with the Heritage Harbor Museum representing the Metropolitan Museum. The landscape must exemplify a new inviting setting for people, and not the impersonal and restrictive remnants of the industrial waterfront from the past.

--Bob Votava, *Executive Director, DOT Watch*

The overhead power lines...create an image of Providence as an old industrial city to the thousands of motorists who use Interstate Route 195...It would indeed be unfortunate to present a face that is not in keeping with the elegance that is at the core of our state's capital city.

--Richard Santopietro, *Chair, Greenways Alliance of RI*

Towers carrying high voltage transmission wires have proven to be a dangerous condition existing in a park. It is recommended that an alternative means be explored to carry electricity from the Providence power stations to East Providence.

--William Warner, *India Point Park Master Plan, 1987*

Fundamentals such as underground wiring are essential to the texture of a beautiful city.

--Mary Elizabeth Sharpe, *founder of India Point Park, 1966*

Compiled by Friends of India Point Park

www.friendsofindiapointpark.org

Signers identified by position held at time of statement. For full list of endorsers, see "78 Organizations Support Burial" at www.friendsofindiapointpark.org.