



State of Rhode Island

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH M. McNAMARA, *District 19*
Chairman, Committee on Education

July 11, 2022

Thomas J. Kravitz
Director, Planning Department
City of Warwick
Thomas.J.Kravitz@warwickri.com

Dear Director Kravitz,

I would like to respectfully request that the city of Warwick utilize open space bond funds to develop a passive recreational park on the 175 Post Road property that would provide citizens access to the Pawtuxet River Watershed area. The Pawtuxet River has historically been utilized as a natural resource that has been widely accessible to the public. Dating back to the turn of the century, canoeing, fishing and hiking along the Pawtuxet trails were activities that added a valuable recreational outlet to citizens in the northern neighborhoods of our city. During the past 50 years, access to the Pawtuxet River Watershed has been systemically eliminated. For example, the Dryden Heights playground area that once provided access to the river and its trails has been closed by previous administrations and one parcel has been developed into a housing lot that has blocked access to this property. The former Rhodes School, which provided open space in the Sherwood Platte neighborhood is now being developed for housing. The segment of the Pawtuxet River from Milton Road to Warwick Avenue has been fenced off with industrial fencing topped by barbed wire, prohibiting access to the river. Industrial development has made this once valued natural feature totally inaccessible to the community. While residents of our northern neighborhoods watch the city focus on buying farms and investing in wooded lots in the Cowesett area, we have witnessed the loss of community access to a once highly valued resource.

We have a once in a life time opportunity to address the systemic disparities that have been initiated over the past century. A passive recreational park would be a valuable asset utilizing a natural resource that our community values. Thank you in advance for your kind consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. McNamara
Chairman, House Education Committee
Representative District 19-Cranston/Warwick
(401) 222-2296

JMM/lac

CC: Frank J. Picozzi

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