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## **Celebrating Warwick's many villages and historic areas**

October 07, 2010 - Rhode Island

Earlier this month, Tourism, Culture and Development officials, as well as representatives from the Department of Public Works, joined me as I crisscrossed the city to unveil a village sign program, meant to celebrate Warwick's rich heritage and to promote the many villages and historic areas that have played such a vital role in the development of our community.

Last fall, we wrote to the presidents of our neighborhood associations, inviting them to participate in the initiative by providing 100-word descriptions of their villages. They responded enthusiastically to the idea, working cooperatively with their groups' members to develop a narrative that was most reflective of their area. They also showed a great deal of patience; the project was to have been completed this Spring, but work was delayed in the aftermath of the March flood.

Each of the white, rectangular, metallic signs, measuring 2 feet by 4 feet, bears a standard masthead of the city seal with the logo, "Celebrating Warwick's History/Preserving Its Heritage" and has been installed in spots that each association felt would be most appropriate and visible for their areas.

The labor-intensive project was completed in-house by Department of Public Works' crews, with materials paid for through the city's Department of Tourism, Culture and Development - whose budget is funded with hotel tax money, not taxpayer dollars.

We envision that the signs - numbering over two dozen - will be included in future tourism promotions, with brochures detailing sign locations and inviting visitors and locals alike to tour the city and learn more about the people and events that shaped our community - and continue to do so today.

Scott Avedisian is the mayor of Warwick.

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