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## **Quonset and North Kingstown merge regulatory process**

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Every developer has a story about a dream project they walked away from because of red tape. The layers of regulation they faced just made it unworkable. There were town permits, county permits, state permits and environmental permits. Each required inspections and it all had to be done in a certain order. And, of course, the governing bodies were never going to talk to each other.

Virtually every town wants development and the jobs that come with it, but many don't understand the developer's perspective. It's not that developers don't respect the need for permits and regulations. It's just that the redundancies and inefficiencies can cost them a great deal of time and money. Well, I'm happy to say that North Kingstown, where the Quonset Business Park is based, is a town that gets it.

North Kingstown has long been a helpful partner for developers at Quonset, but now they have taken their streamlining efforts a step further. Now the town and Quonset Development Corp. (QDC) share a single process, and a memorandum of agreement for uniform development regulations was signed last month and is in effect as of January 1st.

The unified process means that all development and re-development projects in the park will be reviewed with a simplified predictable process. First, the Quonset Business Park will now be a single zoning district - the "Quonset Zone" of North Kingstown - and town ordinances and the comprehensive plan are being amended to adopt the uniform regulations. Second, we at the QDC have amended our master plan to adopt the uniform regulations. Finally, the QDC will administer the uniform regulations through a technical review committee which includes representation from both QDC and the town.

From now on, developers interested in the park who visit us at the QDC will know that we have been authorized by the town to administer the regulatory process. We will not only be able to share with them our intimate knowledge of every site, but we will also be able to walk them through a process of conforming to regulations that we will oversee, and offer reliable estimates for how long we expect it to take.

The completion of the memorandum of agreement for uniform development regulations is just the latest step of many by the town and the QDC to optimize the relationship for the sake of Quonset tenants. Last summer, the two entities inked a ten-year agreement that laid out responsibilities for delivering services to the park. We also agreed on a Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) plan determining the compensation to the town that tenants on tax-exempt QDC property will pay. A wastewater services agreement was also finalized, giving the town access to capacity from the Quonset wastewater treatment facility for the Post Rd. corridor redevelopment.

Quonset Business Park now is home to one out of every 50 R.I. jobs. 8,800 employees work at 164 businesses here doing everything from processing fish to producing credit cards to insuring cargo to finishing automobiles. It's a busy place that has created over 2,700 jobs in just the last six years. But

there is more potential here and we are determined to live up to it.

That means continuously improving the park for our tenants and continuously increasing the attractiveness of Quonset for those interested in doing business with us.

Steven King, PE, is the managing director of the Quonset Development Corp., North Kingstown.

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