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Steven King: Companies discovering Quonset Business Park's streamlined regulatory process

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"Quonset Zone," is a single zoning district designation assigned to the Quonset Business Park as part of a memorandum of agreement for uniform development regulations between the town of North Kingstown and the Quonset Development Corp. (QDC) finalized last December. It is proving to be a shining example of the true possibilities of public and private entities working together.

Developers - so accustomed to red tape and regulatory hurdles - are finding the Quonset Business Park a very business-friendly place to do business. The new unified process means that all development and re-development projects in the park can proceed at a much faster pace than ever before. In conjunction with the zoning district designation, officials at the QDC have amended its Master Plan to adopt uniform regulations. Also, the QDC is administering the regulations through a technical review committee.

For developers, it means a highly efficient permitting process - one that will save them time, and as a result, money. For the state and the Town of North Kingstown, it means more economic development initiatives at the Quonset Business Park, a facility fast becoming the region's engine for job creation.

Developers interested in the Quonset Business Park now find a one "stop shop" for the regulatory review of projects. We are not only be able to share with them our intimate knowledge of every site, but we have the ability 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 agreement for uniform development regulations came on the heels of other initiatives aimed at optimizing the experience for existing and future tenants of the Quonset Business Park. Examples include a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) agreement determining the compensation to the town that tenants on tax-exempt QDC property pay. Also, a wastewater services agreement giving the town access to additional capacity from the Quonset wastewater facility.

The Quonset Business Park is home to 168 companies, employing roughly 8,800 workers who are busy doing everything from processing fish to producing credit cards to insuring cargo to finishing automobiles. It has been a busy place since 2005, with 2,700 new jobs having been created there.

That being said, we are certainly not resting on any laurels. These latest initiatives are just one more way that we are continuing to improve the park for our current and future tenants. The potential for Quonset Business Park and the Port of Davisville is endless, and we continue to look for new ways to make it better for the state and New England.

The Quonset Business Park is home to some 168 companies, employing approximately 8,800 people. Over the past five years, 2,700 new jobs have been created there.

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