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Fishing pier at Rocky Point celebrates ribbon cutting - by Joseph Solomon

July 10, 2020 - Rhode Island

I am pleased to announce that construction of the long-awaited fishing pier at Rocky Point is complete, the result of a partnership between Warwick and the state Department of Environmental Management, the Nature Conservancy, Rocky Point Foundation, Save the Bay, and the RI Saltwater Anglers. This project is just the latest in a series of improvements that I have championed at our beloved park since we began the effort to preserve Rocky Point from development some 20 years ago.

The multi-million dollar pier, which is handicapped accessible, was built where the old fishing pier once stood and offers sweeping views of our beautiful Narragansett Bay. The new 280-foot long, T-shaped pier includes benches, solar lighting, and a shade structure. Railings of varying heights will allow people of all ages and abilities to fish. Our Department of Public Works crews have installed temporary fencing until new, ornamental fencing is delivered. This pier is a symbol of our continued investment in Warwick's valuable recreational and environmental resources, as well as a reminder of the park's storied history and our rich maritime heritage.

Elsewhere at the park, we have used grant funding to install an open-air shelter in the vicinity of the former saltwater pool, as well as picnic tables and a number of benches throughout the property. Using additional grant funding, we are also planning for the design of entry points, possibly including a gateway and other related elements to improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation, as well as safety, park aesthetics, and the overall functionality of the park.

Increasing handicapped access throughout the property remains a priority of mine so that everyone has an opportunity to visit and enjoy our beautiful, iconic park. We are working to add ADA-compliant parking spaces and are examining the reconfiguration of the existing handicapped parking located near the waterfront, to include adding access aisles and providing van-accessible spaces. Work has already begun to construct a walkway connecting the parking lot to the waterfront walking path to increase access throughout the park.

Based on the activity on the pier since we officially opened it on July 3, I am confident this will be a popular tourist attraction and will draw visitors to Warwick and its 39 miles of coastline. I hope you will have the opportunity to visit Rocky Point, and, in the meantime, I wish you a very memorable and safe summer.

Joseph Solomon is the mayor of the city of Warwick, R.I.

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