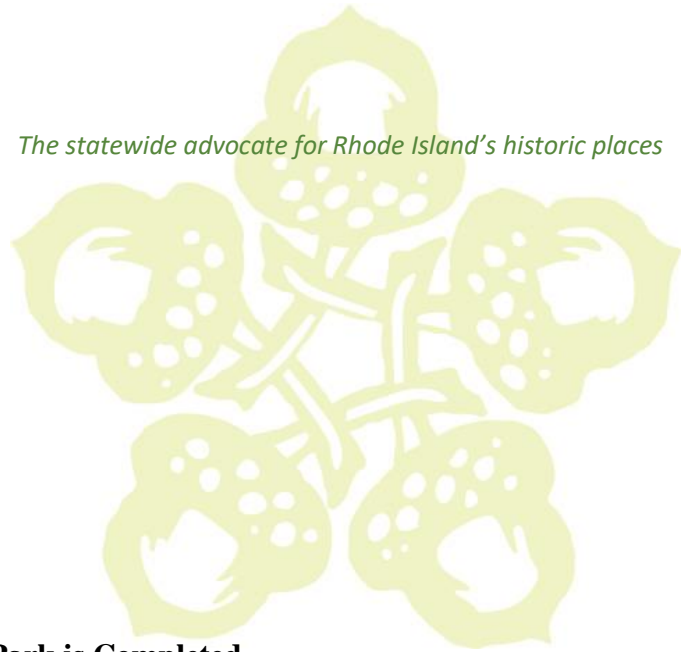


The statewide advocate for Rhode Island's historic places



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 22, 2024 – Providence, RI

Restoration of Stone Walls at Miantonomi Park is Completed

The City of Newport and Preserve Rhode Island (Preserve RI) announced today that the restoration of Miantonomi Park's stone walls has been completed. The project began last September, when a 250-foot stretch of wall was repaired. The second phase, begun in June, finalizes the north entry point to the park and repairs approximately 336 feet of wall along Girard Avenue. Preserve RI, acting as project lead for the Scenic Aquidneck Coalition, has been working with the City of Newport on the repairs.

Located in Newport's densely populated North End, Miantonomi Park serves as an important green space for the community. The park is owned by the City of Newport with a conservation easement held by the Aquidneck Land Trust. A key resource in understanding the priorities of the North End neighborhood was The North End Equitable Development Strategy (NEEDS), created by Smart Growth America and the North End Local Advocacy Group. This plan specifically highlights high-quality and publicly accessible open, green, and civic spaces as a key tool for equitable development. One of the challenges cited in NEEDS was that Miantonomi Park—the primary public park in the North End—is not easy for all residents to access. In conjunction with other efforts by the Aquidneck Land Trust and the City of Newport, this wall reconstruction directly addresses this concern by restoring visible markers of this green space.

Land for Miantonomi Park was acquired by the City of Newport in 1921 and the park was dedicated as a memorial to World War I in 1929. From its inception, a perimeter stone wall was commissioned, designed to echo the iconic stone walls of Aquidneck Island. The construction method of the Miantonomi Park wall is unusual – whereas earlier 18th and 19th century stone walls are dry laid, the Miantonomi wall was built to look as if it is dry laid, but actually has a cement core. The stone restoration project used this same early 20th century building technique for the recent repair work.

“Stone walls on Aquidneck Island help create its special character and unique sense of place,” said Valerie Talmage, Executive Director, Preserve RI. “Now the wall along Girard Avenue at

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Miantonomi Park stands again to mark this special place, adding to the scenic beauty and historical setting of the North End. On behalf of the Scenic Aquidneck Coalition, we're all delighted to take this step to enhance an historic site, make a spot more scenic, and contribute to the vitality of the area."

Funding for this project was generously provided by the van Beuren Charitable Foundation and the Scenic Aquidneck Coalition, a collaboration between Preserve RI, The Preservation Society of Newport County, and Aquidneck Land Trust. The City of Newport contributed time and materials. The stone wall work was completed by Ramos Masonry LLC.

About the Scenic Aquidneck Coalition

The Scenic Aquidneck Coalition is focused on enhancing and preserving the visual quality of Aquidneck Island's natural and cultural resources. A collaboration of three nonprofit partners – Preserve Rhode Island, The Preservation Society of Newport County and the Aquidneck Land Trust – the Coalition brings together resources to execute projects for the benefit of the island's communities. Learn more about their work at ScenicAquidneck.org

About Preserve Rhode Island

Preserve Rhode Island is Rhode Island's statewide advocate for historic places. The 67-year-old nonprofit provides guidance for local preservation groups, finds productive and adaptive reuses for threatened buildings, advocates for the revitalization of historic places to stimulate local economies and engages the community through public programs at Lippitt House Museum. Visit www.preserveri.org to learn more.

[Select images of the completed wall at Miantonomi Park can be found here.](#)

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