



State of Rhode Island  
Coastal Resources Management Council  
Oliver H. Stedman Government Center  
4808 Tower Hill Road, Suite 3  
Wakefield, RI 02879-1900  
(401) 783-3370 Fax (401) 783-2069

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING  
(\*Amended October 19, 2022)

CRMC File No.: 2021-07-005     Date: October 18, 2022

In accordance with and pursuant to the provisions of the “Administrative Procedures Act”, (Chapter 42-35 et. seq. of the General Laws of Rhode Island), and the Rules and Regulations of the Coastal Resources Management Council, a hearing will be held on the petition of:

Revolution Wind, LLC  
Attn: Mark Roll, Permit Manager  
56 Exchange Terrace; Suite 300  
Providence, RI 02903

relative to Title 46, Chapter 23, of Section 6 A, B, C, D, E, Title 46 Chapter 23 Section 18(b), Title 46, Chapter 6, Section 1, Title 46, Chapter 6, Section 2 of the Rhode Island General Laws of 1956, as amended, for a State of Rhode Island Assent for:

Two submarine export transmission cables (275 kilovolt high voltage alternating current (AC)) have been proposed for the project. Each cable measures approximately 23 miles in length and has been proposed to be installed in CRMC Type 4 and 6 Waters in Rhode Island Sound and the West Passage of Narragansett Bay, making landfall at the Quonset Business Park, North Kingstown. The export cable will cross an Area of Particular Concern as identified by Ocean Special Area Management Plan § 11.10.2 and will require a Special Exception under Coastal Resources Management Program Section 1.1.8.

The cables will be installed at a target burial depth of 4–6 feet below the seabed, which will create a total estimated disturbance of approximately 730 acres within state waters. Secondary cable protection in the form of rock bags, concrete mattresses, and/or rock berms may be used where the target burial depth cannot be achieved.

The export cables will make landfall at the Quonset Business Park, the heavily Industrial waterfront via horizontal directional drilling, which will require the construction of two offshore exit pits.

\*After joining with the export cables, the Onshore Transmission Cable will follow Circuit Drive northwest to 135 Circuit Drive, where it will cross this property north of the existing driveway and cross the property in a north-northwest direction until reaching the property owned by Quonset Development Corporation. Here the cable will continue north until reaching 101 Circuit Drive. The cable will then continue north across 101 Circuit Drive and 75 Circuit Drive within the existing paved access road to the existing Davisville Substation. At the Davisville Substation, the cable continues west, parallel to the northern property boundary before reaching The Narragansett Electric Company’s parcel. After crossing, the cable enters the Onshore Substation tying into the proposed access road. The total cable length is approximately one mile.\*

The application will be heard over the course of two hearings — both hearings to begin at 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room A of the Administration Building, One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI on:

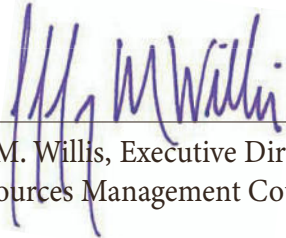
- Tuesday, November 1, 2022
- Tuesday, November 22, 2022

Parties interested in/or concerned with the above mentioned matter are invited to be present and/or represented by counsel at the above mentioned time and place. This meeting place is accessible to individuals with disabilities. The meeting location is accessible to handicapped persons. Any individual requiring a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in this meeting should contact CRMC offices at 401-783-3370 at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Plans of the proposed work may be seen in the office of the Coastal Resources Management Council, Oliver H. Stedman Government Center, 4808 Tower Hill Road, Wakefield, Rhode Island, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Oral statements will be heard and recorded and statements may be submitted to the hearing officers at the time of hearing.

Signed this 18th day of October, 2022.

  
Jeffrey M. Willis, Executive Director  
Coastal Resources Management Council

# Wickford Junction: Weak track record at 10-year mark



The Hummel Report  
Jim Hummel

NORTH KINGSTOWN — Ten years after it opened with fanfare and optimism, the Wickford Junction train station continues to fall far short of the rosy ridership numbers planners envisioned more than a decade ago.

But there are signs that commuter rail in South County may gradually be making a comeback, as the price of gas increases and the state pivots to a post-pandemic transit world.

When the \$44-million station and four-story 1,100-vehicle garage opened in May 2012, the state’s congressional delegation was on hand to cut the ribbon with then-U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. He trumpeted the new Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority commuter rail service as a model for the rest of the nation to follow.

It was a festive event, featuring the North Kingstown High School band playing “Anchors Aweigh.” Officials didn’t know at the time that the hundreds who showed up for the dedication in the parking garage would be the largest number of visitors on any given day for years. For the first five years, it cost taxpayers \$56,000 a month just to maintain the mammoth — and largely empty — facility.

The state’s contribution was an \$8-million bond (plus interest costs) toward the total price tag; It had to kick in another \$315,000 for “art” mandated by state law for construction at all public buildings. The art: stained glass embedded on the front side of the station and a replica of an old train signal adjacent to Route 102.

It was a tough sell for commuters, when gas was \$2 a gallon and the train trip to Boston took nearly an hour and 40 minutes. The quarterly numbers culled by the Department of Transportation and MBTA reflected the low ridership.

But with millions of state and federal dollars invested, the project was too big to fail.

## Ridership at Wickford Junction was rising before the pandemic

Peter Alviti Jr. inherited the white elephant when Gov. Gina Raimondo appointed him director of the DOT in early 2015. He eventually had the DOT take over maintenance of the station, having to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to break an existing long-term contract. That alone saved more than \$400,000 a year. The state stopped charging for parking, launched a six-month fare-free pilot program to introduce riders to the train, and moved a RIPTA bus hub to the station.

Alviti also forged a partnership with the University of Rhode Island: RIPTA now offers bus service for students and faculty to commute 12 miles to the flagship Kingston campus, where parking is always a challenge. Their cars fill up the first floor of the Wickford parking garage on most days, at no charge. One day last week, two of the five electric charging stations on the lower level of the parking garage were being used.

“[Train] ridership has been slowly climbing up over the last year and a half or so,” Alviti said during an interview last week with The Hummel Report. “It may be a couple of years before we fully regain the pre-pandemic customer base.”

In the year leading up to the beginning of the pandemic in early 2020, the DOT reported more than 500 daily

one-way trips — 250 round trips — a 200% increase from 2012. Ridership is about half that level now.

Alviti hopes that increasing gas prices, the challenge of driving to Boston and a proposed 152-apartment development with a pedestrian bridge connected to the train station garage will combine to bring ridership back to pre-pandemic levels — and beyond.

## Commuter says ‘no more’ on drive to Boston, now takes the train

Robert Johnson of Exeter is just the type of person Alviti is hoping will help lure others to Wickford Junction. A year ago, Johnson started a job in Boston. For three months he made a white-knuckled drive up Route 95 and back five days a week.

“Driving up there, I cheated death repeatedly, especially in the afternoon coming home,” Johnson said. “Sometimes it would take two hours to get home, and some days I had up to 3½ hours to drive home. Because if you got stuck in traffic, it was over.”

And it was taking a toll on his personal life.

“You were a mess, once you got to work,” he said, “and at night when I came home I was tied in knots for about two hours before I could calm down.”

After three months, and what Johnson said was the last straw, his wife bought him a rail pass.

“I saw an accident right in front of me, a tractor trailer pulling over into a lane, a small car was in his blind spot,” Johnston recounted. “And I saw him take out that car. Luckily, they didn’t get seriously injured, but had I been up a little closer, that would have been me, and I said: no more.”

Now he arrives at the Wickford station at 5:45 a.m. and parks in the same spot on the second floor of the garage in time to catch the 6:05 train. When he arrives at South Station in Boston, he switches to the Green Line and arrives at his office just before 8 o’clock, coffee in hand from a nearby shop. Over the summer he got to watch the sun rise over Greenwich Bay from his seat on the train.

“I can do my text messages, my emails, I can do reports, read and review reports,” he said. (Wi-Fi is available on the trains.) “I can do just about anything that I can do in my office or remotely. I just do it all on the train.”

But Johnson says he is one of only 10 or 15 people on that train, far short of what state officials would like to see.

## Ridership never hit projected numbers

In retrospect, the ridership predictions a decade ago seem comical.

The DOT, relying on estimates from the Rhode Island Division of Statewide Planning, projected that by 2020, 1,500 people a day would take the MBTA from Wickford heading north, some to Providence or Mansfield, others to South Station in Boston. The mammoth four-story parking garage was built to accommodate the 1,100 vehicles that were expected to fill the facility.

If you saw it for sale on a website today, it would likely be described as “gently used.”

Former DOT Director Michael Lewis spoke with The Hummel Report in 2012 about those projections: “We follow a very regimented format that ties in demographics, ties in the economy, and statewide planning gives it a model. It’s actually a computer model that all states are required to have.”

Initially, the state charged \$4 for parking; the parking revenue and a concession stand on the second floor were expected to generate funds to help offset the crushing maintenance costs.

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A MBTA commuter train pulls into Wickford Junction station from Boston. THE HUMMEL REPORT