

IV. Our Aquidneck Island Team

A. Our Energy Conservation Programs

Our Solarize Aquidneck Team brings together the three communities on Aquidneck Island, combining each municipality's unique experience with energy conservation, sustainability and cooperative programs. Solarize Aquidneck builds on the experience of the communities in addressing energy consumption.

These projects and programs include:

B. The Town of Middletown

Middletown is a member of the Rhode Island Public Energy Partnership. As a matter of policy the Middletown Public Works Department and School Departments have incorporated energy conservation as an integral part of their work planning and facilities maintenance. Electricity, natural gas and fuel use is continually monitored and energy saving measures identified and implemented.

Over the last decade, a variety of energy saving tasks have been completed to reduce Town energy consumption. Buildings have been equipped with motion sensing lighting, solar powered lighting installed at beaches and recreational areas, incandescent lighting replaced with CFL and/or LED fixtures, and sky lights installed in work spaces and classrooms without adequate natural lighting. Heating and air conditioning have been balanced in to ensure efficient operation and "Dashboard" monitoring is in use for selected buildings and facilities. Fuel economy is a major consideration for replacement vehicles, and wherever possible lower octane fuel specified for Town vehicles.

Middletown has conducted energy audits of Town facilities. Identified energy saving opportunities are estimated and when appropriate, incorporated in the Town's 10 year Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The CIP projects are reviewed by the Middletown Planning Board and approved by the Town Council.

Of special significance, the recently constructed Police station was constructed to meet high standards of heating, cooling and lighting efficiency. The Middletown Fire Department and Public Works complex now under construction will include selected dashboard energy monitoring systems as well as natural lighting whenever feasible.

Simply put, Middletown has made energy conservation the way business is done.

C. The City of Newport

Newport has implemented a variety of energy conservation programs in addition to incorporating energy conservation into its facility and school maintenance programs. These programs include:

Rhode Island Public Energy Partnership (RIPEP). The City of Newport's participation in RIPEP involves participation in the Municipal Working Group, working to identify barriers to energy conservation, and recommended solutions to achieving greater energy efficiency in municipally owned buildings.

The City is currently working with the RIPEP team to energy benchmark all municipally owned buildings and is working with National Grid on a potential energy efficiency retrofit project on Rogers High School. The Newport School Committee is working closely with its Building Sub-committee on a complete evaluation of all energy saving and renewable energy generation opportunities for all the school buildings. The City is also currently considering a streetlight management program involving the conversion to higher efficiency streetlights.

RI Energy Challenge, "Find Your Four Competition" The City of Newport was one of the early adopters of the "Find Your Four" campaign that was part of the RI Energy Challenge. The City successfully registered residents who pledged to find four ways in which they reduce electricity consumption in their homes.

Community Outreach. The Newport Energy and Environment Commission has been active over the years in energy efficiency education at community and school events. NEEC attended the Norman Bird Sanctuary's Harvest Festival and the Pell Elementary STEM Night events bringing energy efficiency education to the community.

D. The Town of Portsmouth

The Town of Portsmouth is a member of the Rhode Island Public Energy Partnership and has through the years conducted inventories of public facilities and buildings to identify energy savings. This work created a list of facilities as a basis for prioritizing opportunities for energy savings. Work on identified energy saving projects is an on-going process as capital investment funds and resources permit.

Portsmouth has demonstrated its commitment to energy efficiency by completing comprehensive energy audits and implementing improvements for municipal buildings, including Town Hall and its public school buildings.

E. Aquidneck Island Planning Commission

In 1985 the towns of Middletown and Portsmouth and the City of Newport each passed a resolution of commitment that formed the structure and purpose of AIPC. The Aquidneck Island Planning Commission serves as a regional planning agency fostering communication, coordination, and consensus building among the municipalities of Middletown, Newport and Portsmouth as well as Naval Station Newport, and other civic, state and federal organizations. Specific regional planning activities, projects and program since 1985 include:

- West Side Master Plan - Land Use Planning;
- Aquidneck Island Transportation Study - Multi-modal Transportation Planning;
- Partnership For a Shared Island Vision;
- Aquidneck Island Bikeway;
- Open Space Mapping - GIS and Mapping;
- Energy Conservation Projects;
- Planning for Surplus Navy Land - Land Use Planning, and;
- Traffic Management Program – Transportation Incident Planning.

In 2009 AIPC sponsored a series of meeting and conferences to explore the concept of an Island Energy Alliance. AIPC brought together over 200 individuals to discuss building greater energy efficiency at the personal, municipal and regional level.

Discussions resulted in a series of ideas and a draft plan for an Aquidneck Island Energy Alliance that would sponsor and/or coordinate energy saving, alternative energy and sustainability projects in the four Island communities resulting in a lasting and positive change on Aquidneck Island.

The Aquidneck Island Energy Alliance's purpose was to mobilize, educate, inform and empower Aquidneck Island communities to better understand the dynamics of Island energy use and production and to support the development of sustainable energy practices. The action plan suggested forging close partnerships among municipalities, the Navy, utilities, businesses, schools, individuals and community organizations. The goal of the Energy Alliance was to develop and implement plans and initiatives which achieve energy savings, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and encourage a wide variety of renewable resources. Although the alliance participants benefited from planning and exchange of ideas, the alliance was not implemented due lack of funding.

To support the Solarize Aquidneck Island program AIPC will:

- Schedule, advertise and promote Island-Wide information sessions;
- Schedule, advertise and promote municipality-specific information sessions;
- Act as the single point-of-contact for coordinating the program activities for the three Island communities, and;

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- Provide office space (if needed) and administrative support on the Island.

Middletown, Portsmouth and Newport will provide support for the Island Solarize program as needed to include information session notifications and announcements, use of Council Chambers and/or other venues for meetings and administrative support and community-specific direction and guidance.

F. Points of Contact

The municipal and AIPC points of contact for the program are as listed in Attachment A and below.

Aquidneck Island Planning Commission:

Tom Ardito, Executive Director, Aquidneck Island Planning Commission, tardito@aquidneckplanning.org, Phone (401) 845-9299

Allison McNally, AIPC Office Manager and Planner, amcnally@aquidneckplanning.org, Phone (401) 845-9299

Middletown: Ronald Wolanski, Director of Planning & Economic Development, rwolanski@middletownri.com, Phone (401) 849-4027

Newport: Brigid Ryan, Member, Newport Energy & Environment Commission, Local Director, Emerald Cities Providence, brigid_ryan@hotmail.com, Phone (401) 486-2727

Portsmouth: Gary Crosby, Town Planner, gcrosby@portsmouthri.com, Phone: 401-643-0332

V. Our Island Community

Aquidneck Island has a total of approximately 13,500 owner-occupied residences. Adjusting for the high proportion of Newport residences included in the Newport Historic District. AIPC estimates that approximately 11,200 residences could be eligible for solar installations.

Assuming that the rate of installations approximates the experience of North Smithfield, Tiverton and Little Compton in which 320 solar arrays, or about 3.7% of owner occupied residences, are installed or under contract, Aquidneck Island offer the opportunity to install about 420 arrays, or approximately 2.3 Megawatts of renewable solar energy.

A. Middletown

As of 2010, the Town had 4,060 single family housing units (excluding mobile homes); 300 condominium units; approximately 850 duplex units; as well as 150 triplex units.

There were 6,993 households out of which 32.9% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 53.9% were married couples living together, 9.8% had a female householder with no husband present, and 33.6% were non-families. Of all households 28.7% were made up of individuals and 10.9% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.43 and the average family size was 3.01.

The median income for a household in the town was \$51,075, and the median income for a family was \$57,322. Males had a median income of \$41,778 versus \$27,229 for females. The per capita income for the town was \$25,857. About 3.7% of families and 5.0% of the population were below the poverty line, including 6.2% of those under age 18 and 4.7% of those age 65 or over.

As of 2010 Middletown has 3,932 owner occupied residences.

B. Portsmouth

In 2010 there were 17,349 people residing in the town. There were about 6,758 households, and 4,865 families. The population density was 739.0 people per square mile (285.3/km²). There were 7,386 housing units at an average density of 318.3 per square mile (122.9/km²).

Portsmouth's population has 25.2% under the age of 18, 5.0% from 18 to 24, 29.5% from 25 to 44, 26.9% from 45 to 64, and 13.5% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 40 years.

The median income for a household was \$58,835, and the median income for a family was \$68,577. The per capita income for the town was \$28,161. About 2.0% of families and 3.4% of the population were below the poverty line, including 2.8% of those under age 18 and 6.4% of those age 65 or over.

Portsmouth has approximately 4,995 owner occupied housing units.

C. Newport

As of 2013, there were 24,027 people, 10,616 households, and 4,933 families residing in the city.

Newport has one of the highest concentrations of colonial homes in the nation, in the downtown Newport Historic District, one of three National Historic Landmark Districts in the city. Many of these homes were restored in the late 20th century through grants made by Newport resident Doris Duke, as well as other local efforts such as Operation Clapboard. As a result, Newport's colonial heritage is well preserved and documented at the Newport Historical Society. In addition to the colonial architecture, the city is known for its Gilded Age mansions, which have also received extensive restoration from both private owners and non-profits such as the Preservation Society of Newport County.

As of the 2010 census Newport has 4,632 owner-occupied housing units. A significant number of these units are within the Newport Historic District. All solar installations in the Historic District will be subject to approval by the Historic District Commission. Approximately one-half of land parcels in Newport are within the Historic Districts.

VI. Marketing and Outreach

AIPC will coordinate and conduct marketing an outreach program consisting of the elements described below. AIPC has 25 years of experience conducting programs which require promotional activities to inform and involve Island residents, organizations and municipalities. We will build upon that experience to ensure that our promotional campaign is focused, effective and ensures that all eligible residences and businesses are offered the opportunity to participate.

A. Submission of Solarize Program Support Resolutions to Councils

Immediately following award of the Solarize Aquidneck Island Program, AIPC will submit to the three Municipal Councils a resolution of support for their consideration and approval.

The resolutions will be submitted via our established AIPC Council representatives (ex officio members of the AIPC Board) and/or Municipal Administrators. AIPC Council Representatives are:

Rick Lombardi, Member Middleton Town Council

Keith Hamilton, President, Portsmouth Town Council

Marco Camacho, Member Newport City Council, 1st Ward

The resolutions will provide an opportunity for AIPC and the RI Renewable Energy Fund to present and describe the Solarize Aquidneck Island Project and will ask the municipalities for a formal commitment to Solarize Aquidneck.

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The resolutions will also articulate program elements, advantages and what is to be gained by increasing renewable energy sources on the Island.

Because Council actions are reported in the local media, the resolutions will provide an initial announcement and promotion of the program and an opportunity to describe the follow-on information sessions.

B. Island-Wide Public Information and Promotion Session

Immediately after Council approvals of Solarize Aquidneck support resolutions, an Island-wide Solarize Aquidneck Island information session will be scheduled at a central venue such as CCRI's Newport campus auditorium.

Patterned after the information and sign-up sessions conducted in Tiverton and Little Compton, the session will provide an opportunity for program description, site-survey signup and an extensive question and answer period.

C. Municipal Public Information and Promotion Sessions

Following the Island-Wide public information session, similar programs will be scheduled Middletown, Portsmouth and Newport. These sessions will be similar to the Island-Wide informational and promotional meetings but with a focus on the specific needs of the municipality. The Town and City Halls of each municipality, and/or other public spaces will be used to ensure that the entire Island community is aware of, and offered the opportunity to participate in Solarize Aquidneck.

As noted, Newport's high percentage of homes and businesses located within the Newport Historic District will require special provisions and considerations to avoid disturbing the historic character of Newport homes and businesses. All proposed solar array installations proposed within the Historic District will require full compliance with District building modification rules and procedures.

D. Organizational and Institutional Outreach

AIPC has throughout its history established and maintained working relationships and project-specific partnerships with a wide array of non-profit, governmental, educational, corporate and private institutions. These include:

City of Newport	US Environmental Protection Agency, New England
Town of Middletown	US Office of Economic Adjustment
Town of Portsmouth	Norman Bird Sanctuary
Alliance for a Livable Newport	People's Credit Union
Aquidneck Island Faith Communities	People's Power & Light
Aquidneck Land Trust	Portsmouth Conservation Commission
Bike Newport	Portsmouth Redevelopment Agency
Boys and Girls Club	Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
Church Community Housing Corporation	Rhode Island Dept. of Environmental Management
Coastal Resources Management Council	Rhode Island Department of Transportation
CommerceRI	Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources
Community College of Rhode Island	Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
Greenways Alliance of RI	Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation
GrowSmart RI	Rhode Island Sea Grant
Interfaith Power & Light	Rhode Island Statewide Planning
Middletown Economic Development Advisory Comm.	Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority
Narragansett Wheelmen	Rhode Island Canoe & Kayak Association
National Grid	Salve Regina University
Naval Station Newport	Save the Bay
Newport County Chamber of Commerce	South Eastern New England Defense Industry Alliance
Newport County YMCA	The Nature Conservancy
Newport Hospital, Wellness Program	University of Rhode Island, Coastal Resources Center

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As appropriate, AIPC will work with these organizations to make use of their ability to contact Island residents and businesses to ensure that their members are aware of the Solarize Aquidneck program.

E. Advertising and Promoting the Solarize Aquidneck Island Program

In addition to Island-Wide and community-specific information and sign up sessions, AIPC will use conventional media, AIPC websites, email lists, of supporting organization's websites, email lists and newsletters, and social media to publicize the Solarize program. Elements of the advertising and promotional program will include as appropriate:

- Print Media – OpEd articles, Letters to the Editor, news articles, Community Event Calendars, in Newport Daily News, Portsmouth Times, Sakonnet Times, Newport This Week, Island “Patch” on-line publications, etc.
- Email blasts, newsletters and notices in supporting community organization, and;
- Visits and presentations to civic organizations such as Rotary Clubs, Lion's Clubs, Middletown and Portsmouth Senior Centers and Newport's Edward King House Senior Center and church or other organizational announcements, as available.

F. Direct Mail

If necessary and appropriate, a targeted list of residences and business may be developed for direct mail postcard(s) or other promotional material. Working with a local direct mail specialist such as Direct Mail Management, Inc. the list may be developed using publicly available municipal data such as tax rolls, edited to eliminate unlikely residences and businesses.

The use of a direct mail campaign can be an effective way to reach Island residents who cannot otherwise be informed of the Solarize program. The decision to use direct mail will be dependent on available funding and schedule constraints. The estimated cost per mailed postcard is approximately \$0.75 each. Total cost per mailing is estimated at \$6,000-\$8,000.

G. Advertising, Outreach and Promotional Funding

If required, AIPC will submit grant requests to appropriate charitable foundations to fund these activities.

VII. Marketing and Outreach Schedule

Immediately after Award of the Solarize Aquidneck Island program, a meeting of AIPC staff and municipal points of contact will be convened to develop a detailed schedule of events. The schedule will be flexible and respond to opportunities, but in general will include:

- Submission of Solarize Program Support Resolutions to Councils within two weeks at the next available Council docket availability;
- An Island-Wide Public Information and Promotion Session will be scheduled immediately after approval by the Municipal Councils of the Solarize Program support resolutions.
- Municipal Public Information and Promotion Sessions will be conducted approximately two weeks after the Island-Wide Session.
- Advertising and Promoting the Solarize Aquidneck Island Program including the elements described above will be conducted as AIPC staff and municipal resources permit.

VIII. Additional Municipal In-Kind Support

A. In Kind Municipal Support

AIPC will work with our municipal partners and points of contact to determine needed in-kind support and the availability of support available from town staff.

The focus of in-kind municipal support will be providing of information session venues and assisting with promotional activities. Municipal in-kind support will include coordinating Solarize Aquidneck Island activities with the Municipal Manager and Administration and insuring that Municipal Administrations are aware of all Solarize activities.

Municipal resources will be requested for specific tasks as necessary.

B. Fees, Permits and Taxes - AIPC Coordination

Community Proposal Checklists for Solarize Aquidneck municipalities are shown in Attachment B. The data provided in Attachment B assumes a generic 5.5 kilowatt, approximately \$19,000 residential roof-top installation, with no building modifications required.

Building permit fees for solar arrays, associated electrical work and other associated tasks will be on a case-by-case basis due to the variability of installation requirements. All Island municipalities indicated that their permitting offices had the capacity to process and approve building permits in few days. The Aquidneck Island Building Officials did not expect an increased volume of solar array permit requests to cause significant approval delays.

In general, yard signs may be approved by the Zoning Officer for placement on public property, such as along street right-of-ways. Yard signs may generally be placed on private property for the duration of solar array installation work without city or town approval.

Immediately after Solarize program award, AIPC will work with Middletown, Portsmouth and Newport to determine appropriate approvals required, permitting requirements and property tax changes, if any, for Solarize installations. AIPC will also work with Island Municipal Administrations to establish consistent permit fee and property tax increase waiver policies.

Estimated Building Permit fees as follows:

C. Middletown

Building permit fees are \$50 per 1st \$1,000, \$15 per \$1,000 thereafter, including RI state fees and taxes. A typical \$19,000 solar array would incur a total fee of about \$350.

Permit approval times are usually less than 3 days, depending on site inspection requirements, if any. An installation site sketch or plan is required. The Middletown Building Inspector may inspect array installation progress at any time.

Any property tax increase will be based on the increase in assessed value of the property. As indicated above, AIPC will work with municipal Administrations and Councils to waive any resulting property tax increase.

There are no historical or conservation commissions.

A. Newport

Newport will represent a special challenge for the Solarize Aquidneck program. Approximately 50% of all land parcels in Newport are contained within the Newport Historic District. To reflect this constraint in our estimate of

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available owner-occupied residences, 50% of owner-occupied residences were considered to be unavailable for solar array installations.

<http://cityofnewport.com/departments/zoning-inspections/historic-district-commission> provides a complete description of Historic District restrictions and the application process for exterior alterations. Structures within Newport Historic Districts may apply for administrative approval, depending upon the solar installation. If approved, precedent exists for waiver of process fees.

For a typical \$19,000 solar array installation in a non-historic district including approximately \$3,000 in electrical work, the fee would be about \$489.

Permit approval times are usually 1- 3 days, depending on site inspection requirements. An installation site sketch or plan is required. The Newport Building Inspector may inspect array installation progress at any time.

B. Portsmouth

Building permit fees for roof and ground mounted solar arrays are dependent of installation costs. For a \$19,000 roof array, building permit fees are approximately \$150. Electrical permit fees are about \$25.

Permit approval times are expected to be 1-3 days, depending on the complexity of the installation and site-specific requirements.

There are no historical or conservation commissions.