

## A Welcome Center - For A Museum

**On December 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Pell School, the Newport Zoning Board will hear the final review of the proposed welcome center at The Breakers.**

The Newport Superior Court recently affirmed the authority of the Zoning Board to allow the limited retail sale of prepackaged refreshments as part of the museum operations at the proposed welcome center.

The facts are:

- The Newport Zoning Ordinance specifically allows museums by special use permit in the vicinity of The Breakers. Museum activities include display, information and sales areas for personal items, all as part of "museum operations." This, along with restrooms, is precisely what is proposed for the welcome center.
- The existing special use permit for The Breakers already allows the limited retail sale of refreshments in a small outbuilding. It is now proposed to be consolidated with other normal, customary, existing museum operations in the welcome center.
- Ticket sales, exhibit space, guest services, restrooms, and the limited retail sale of prepackaged refreshments to ticketed guests - only during museum hours and not to the general public - are currently scattered across the facility and are all outdoors, inappropriate for a National Historic Landmark open 363 days a year.
- The welcome center has already received a wide range of approvals. The RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission and the State Historic Preservation Officer have approved the design and location. The Certificate of Appropriateness has been issued. The Planning Board has agreed the proposal conforms to the Newport Comprehensive Plan.
- The Newport Zoning Ordinance does not recognize The Breakers or the welcome center as a "restaurant" because the "principal business" is not "the sale of food." Rather, the principal business is - a museum.

We invite you to join us December 1<sup>st</sup> and show your support for cultural tourism in Newport.



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