

THE CITY OF NEWPORT

RESOLUTION

OF THE

COUNCIL

No. 2025-129

WHEREAS, Art & Newport, in collaboration with the UK-based nonprofit, Elephant Family, were instrumental in bringing the "Great Elephant Migration" to Newport in which 100 life-sized elephant sculptures, that were handcrafted by indigenous artists from India, were on display at various locations in Newport from July thru September of 2024; AND

WHEREAS, Dodie Kazanjian and Edith McBean of Art & Newport, in October, 2024, offered the City one of the Great Elephant Migration elephants to be returned to Newport for permanent display to memorialize the 2024 event; AND

WHEREAS, Resolution 2024-111 was read and passed by Newport's City Council on October 23, 2024 to accept the gift of Leela the elephant from Art & Newport, that includes Art & Newport's pledge of biannual varnishing of the statue in perpetuity; AND

WHEREAS, said resolution approved the storing of the elephant for the winter of 2024-25 pending discussions with Art & Newport and the City's applicable boards and commissions to determine a permanent location for display; AND

WHEREAS, a second elephant was donated to the city by Art & Newport, in 2025, to accompany Leela the elephant, at a location to be determined by the city; AND

WHEREAS, the Tree and Open Space Commission were tasked, in January 2025, by city administration to identify and recommend a location for the display; AND

WHEREAS, the Commission held public meetings in January, March, April, and May, that included the item of the location of the elephants on its agendas, and members of the public participated and voiced recommendations and suggestions for the location of the elephants; AND

WHEREAS, the best location that was identified was Aquidneck Park, where on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Commission held a public walk around of the park to determine the initial and secondary locations of the elephants; AND

WHEREAS, the donors selected the location on the Bowery Street side of the park, where the mother elephant will be placed and followed by the baby elephant (Leela), walking in the open areas straight up the hill from Spring Street towards the Edward King House; AND

WHEREAS, the reasons for this location per communications submitted by the Tree and Open Space Commission on July 9, 2025, to the Newport City Council, is to "...spark imagination, foster civic pride, and enhance the beauty and vibrancy of our parks. Aquidneck Park is an ideal location for these sculptures. It is a well-used and well-loved community space. The park provides high visibility and an inviting setting where children, families, and visitors of all ages can engage with the artwork. The elephants' presence will encourage play, conversation, and a sense of wonder, while also reinforcing the city's commitment to art and culture in public spaces."; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Newport City Council hereby accepts the location presented by the Tree and Open Space Commission for the placement of this generous gift.

STEPHANIE SMYTH  
LYNN UNDERWOOD CEGLIE  
ELLEN PINNOCK

IN COUNCIL  
READ AND PASSED  
**JULY 23, 2025**



LAURA C SWISTAK, CMC  
CITY CLERK