



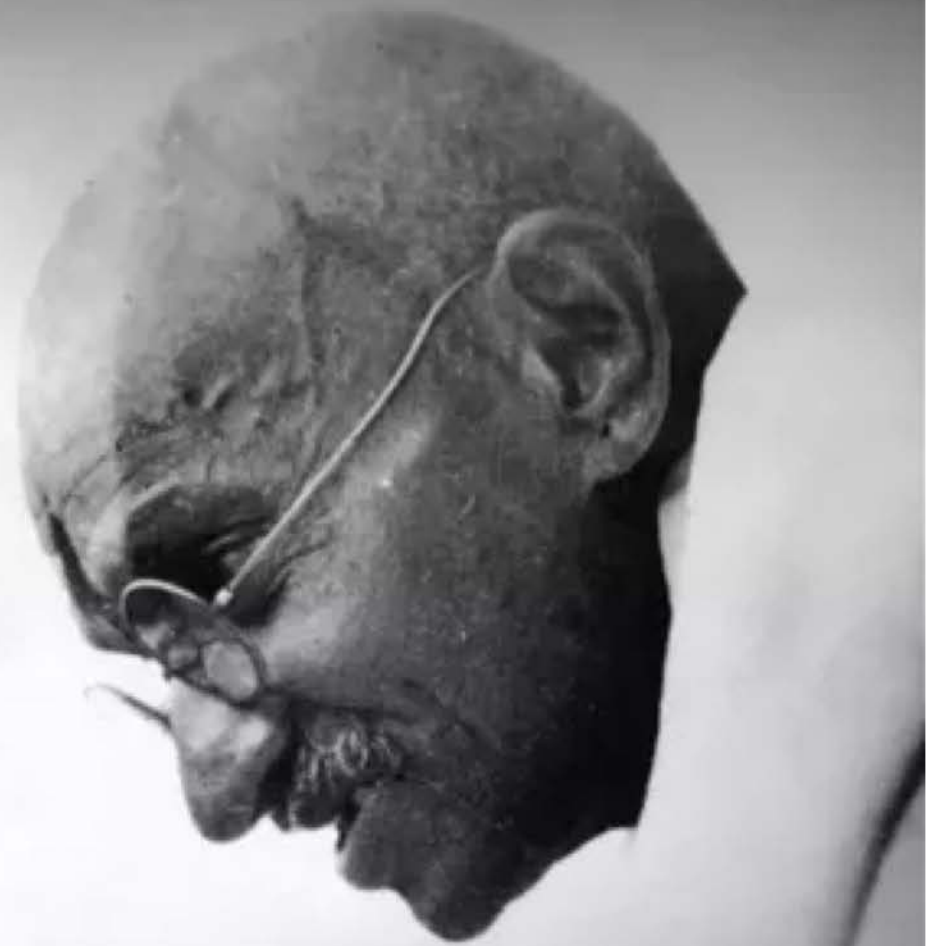
*Scenic*America

Ronald Lee Fleming, FAICP

Scenic America Chairman Emeritus

**“BE THE CHANGE
YOU WANT TO SEE
IN THE WORLD”**

MOHANDAS GANDHI



★★ NUGGETS OF ★★
INSPIRATION





The Issue: Gateway roads leading to many of America's iconic parks, monuments and communities are under increasing threat from visual blight which diminishes the overall traveler experience.

Some examples!

First – the bad.



The former
Gettysburg National Tower













Pigeon Forge,
Tennessee





But now the good!

GUEST VIEW

Time is right for beautifying Newport

By Ronald Lee Fleming

The city of Newport is awash with commissions, planning task forces, even some landscape projects to increase the amount of green in this island land. Both the impact of climate change and evidence of barren, impervious parking lots support this need for change.

This year, the Newport Tree Society celebrates its 25-year legacy as an official "Tree City USA," urging our citizenry and the city to be mindful of our magnificent arboretum that early visitors to Newport remarked upon. The society seeks to identify and protect the variety and the magnificence of individual tree specimens on both public and private lands.

The valiant "Daffodillion" volunteers, residents and businesses, in partnership with the city's Tree and Forestry Division, who in the past seven years have planted a half a million daffodils in strategic vistas throughout our cityscape, now join in. This "necklace of gold" around our city creates a significant shoulder-season attraction for thousands of tourists.

These actions are timely as the most dominant component of our landscape, the massive beeches, are facing a rapid decline. Enormous stumps and fresh holes in the foliage along Bellevue Avenue and around the Newport Public Library attest to this



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sad state. But new planning initiatives promise dramatic change, particularly if carefully orchestrated to create the drama of a new monumentality along our boulevards and entryways.

The quality of our future landscape can unify the city both physically and economically, uniting citizens of all economic backgrounds and strata of society. Everyone enjoys the budding-out of a great tree or takes joy in a new planting of daffodils. Although landscaping is a modest cost when compared to reconstructing a highway overpass or realigning a road, it can have a powerful effect on the well-being of the average citizen. Gestures toward enhancing the landscape are life-enhancing, literally filtering the air that we breathe, recycling water so as to avoid larger infrastructure costs, and ensuring a sense of delight.

Such expenditures are ultimately good for our mental health and well-being, as

well as for our pocketbooks.

The new open-space plan for the city, the first since the Olmsted brothers worked on this in 1913, and the north-end strategy for increasing economic vitality and livability, are facing citizen review. To support these exciting new plans, a new city landscape ordinance could offer some vision as well as specifications. If orchestrated carefully, it can provide drama and monumentality at some entryways, continuity along the main corridors, delight at key vistas, and historical resonance in old streetscapes.

Such an ordinance can be quickly implemented, and modified where necessary, to reflect and accommodate long-term infrastructure and climate changes. With some boldness, those barren parking lots can be transformed into groves of trees and rain gardens; ugly overhead wires can be buried out of sight. With Newport's extraordinary setting, landscape design can unify and celebrate its unique beauty and character.

As a community, we can do this if we coordinate our planning process, follow a clearly defined landscape ordinance and kick-start the implementation with projects such as tree planting at the Pell Bridge entryway into Newport, the new Centennial Reading Garden at the public library and continued daffodil planting throughout the city.

GUEST VIEW

Every place deserves beauty

Newport recently celebrated the planting of its one millionth daffodil — a “daffodillion,” as it were.

The simple act of planting daffodils throughout Newport is reaffirmation of the idea that every place, every neighborhood, deserves to have beauty. Not beauty behind high walls for the most affluent, but beauty accessible to the entire population; beauty which can be experienced in the lives of all our citizens.

In troubled times, beauty in the lives of everyone becomes even more important. We must look deeper to find it and be with, as Lincoln said, “the better angels of our nature.” Certainly, the celebration each spring of that sturdy and enduring flower gives us that opportunity to reflect on how the massive introduction of a simple amenity can strengthen and affirm our sense

of pride in our place and enrich our claim to it; a little tonic for us all in an age of polarization.

As 2018 draws to a close, it is also time to look into ourselves to find a deeper perspective and a broader meaning for future actions. We can turn to literature and read where Dostoevsky has one of his characters, a Russian prince, tell us that, “Beauty will save the world.” For we all need to have an intimate experience with beauty, whether it is in tasting fresh, locally-grown food at a farmer’s market, gazing up at colorful baskets of flowers on our streets or experiencing the expert craftsmanship of artisan objects.

We deserve a community that gives us all a sense of connection, a “sense of belonging,” as the president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation put it recently. Consequently, we must refine our definition of

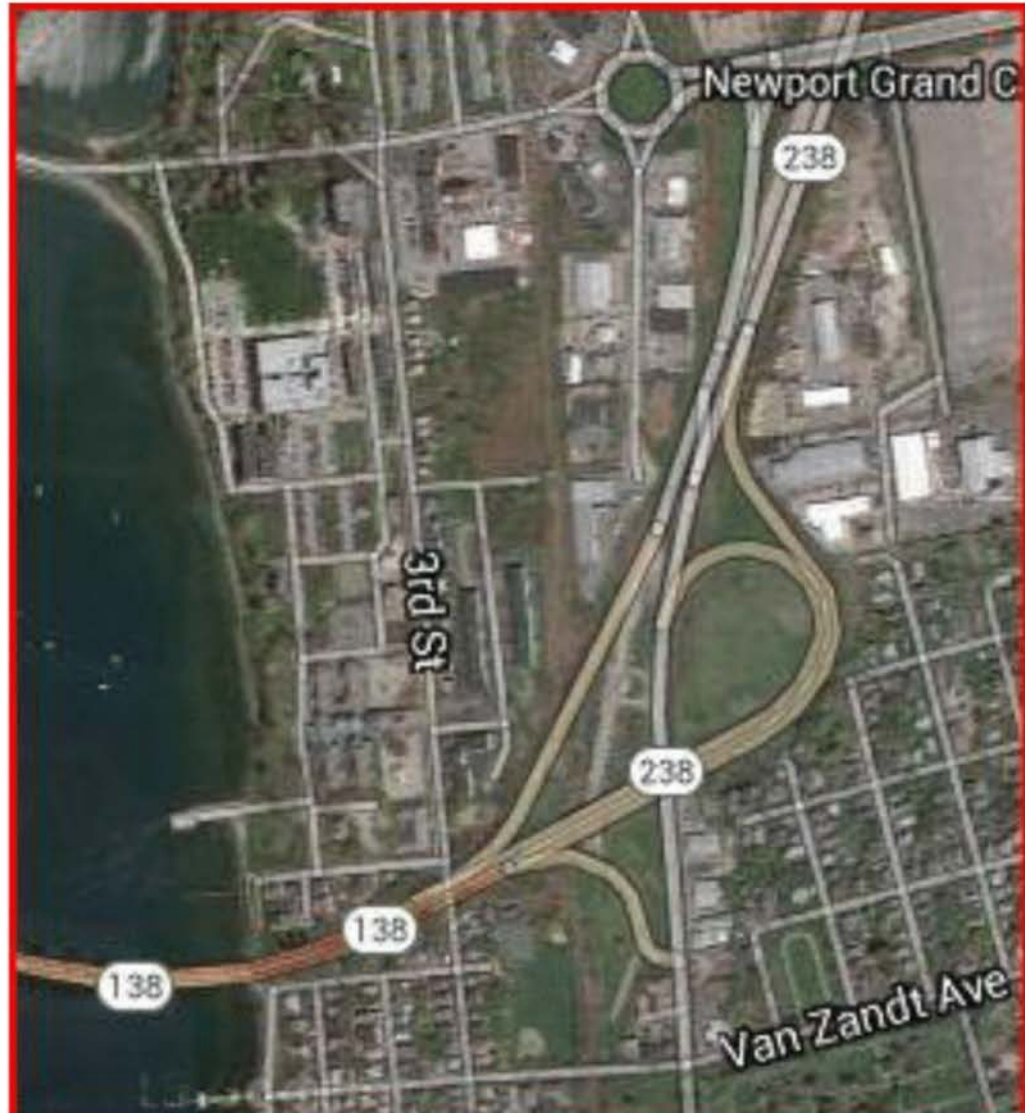
preservation to include street fairs, public art, a storytellers conference, a scenic roadways policy, an open space plan, a percentage for public art and beautification embedded in city and state ordinances. All these help authenticate our sense of place, offering other methods of sharing beauty while enriching our collective story.

Next April, when we see our children plunging into a field of daffodils, experiencing feelings of utter delight and wonderment, let us ask what other steps we can take to protect and enrich Newport’s unique story of place? To further our own sense of connection? This is the gift we must pursue to authenticate ourselves, preserve meaning in our lives and to pass on to future generations.

*Ronald Lee Fleming, F.A.I.C.P.
is the chairman Emeritus
at Scenic America.*

Dostoevsky has one of his characters, a Russian prince, tell us that, **“Beauty will save the world.”**







Herrenhäuser Allee — Hannover, Germany

Allée of Trees



Wisner bike path — New Orleans

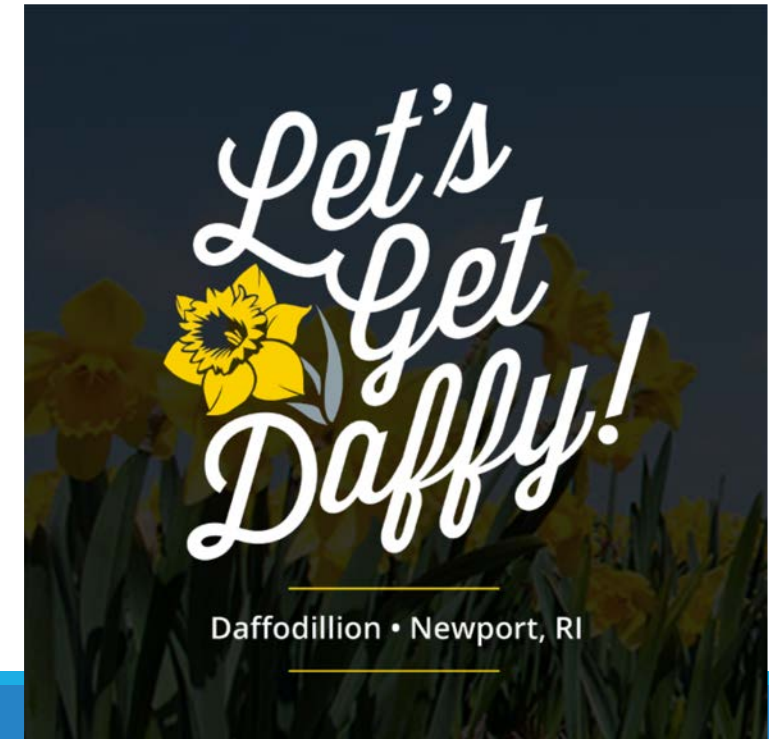


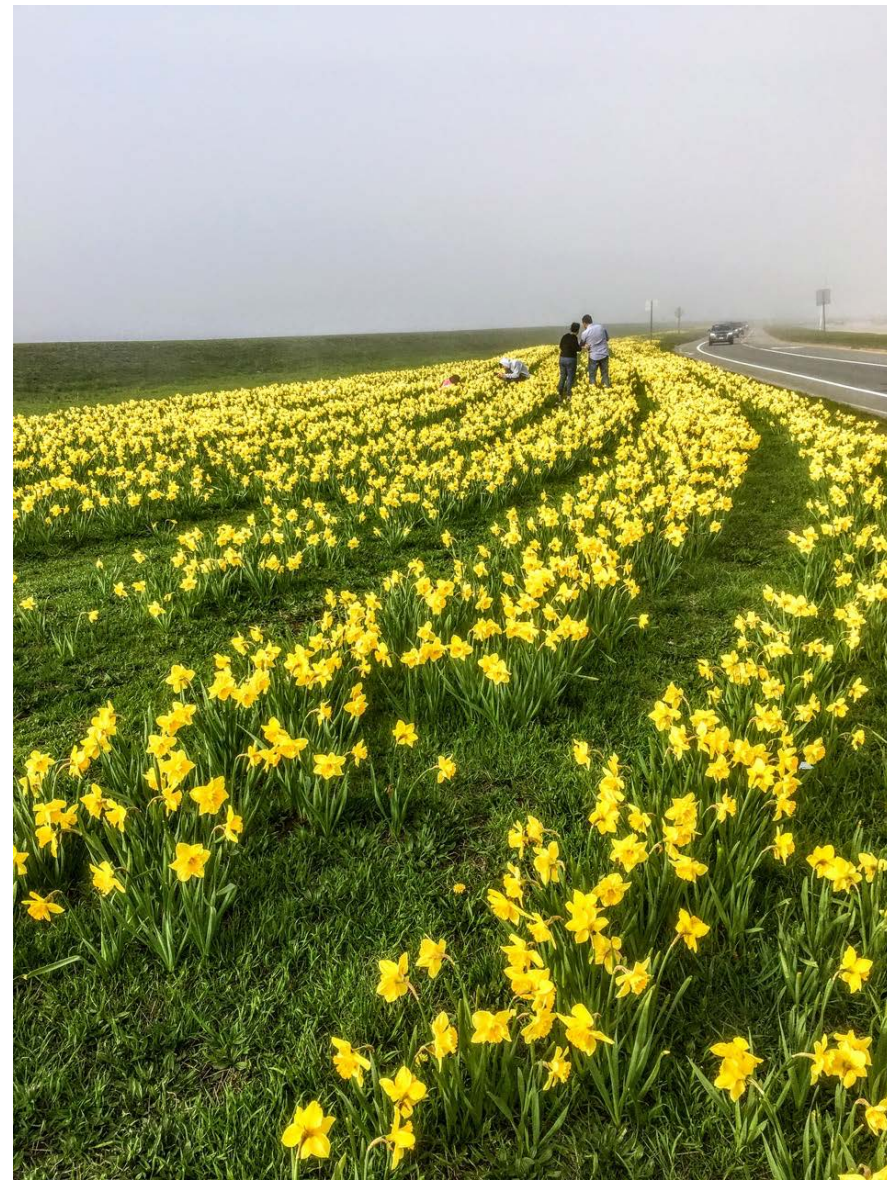
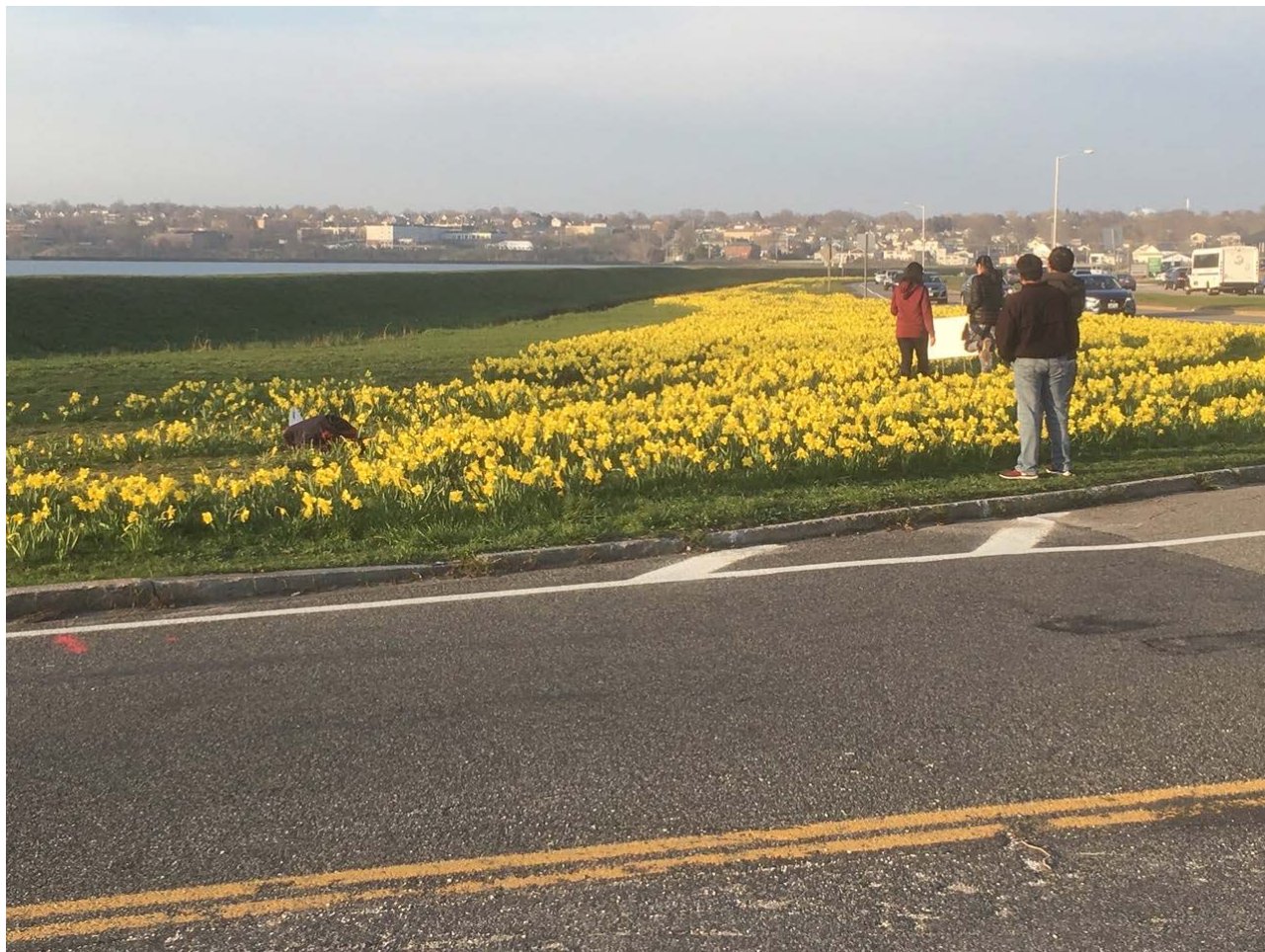




The city has gone “daffy!”

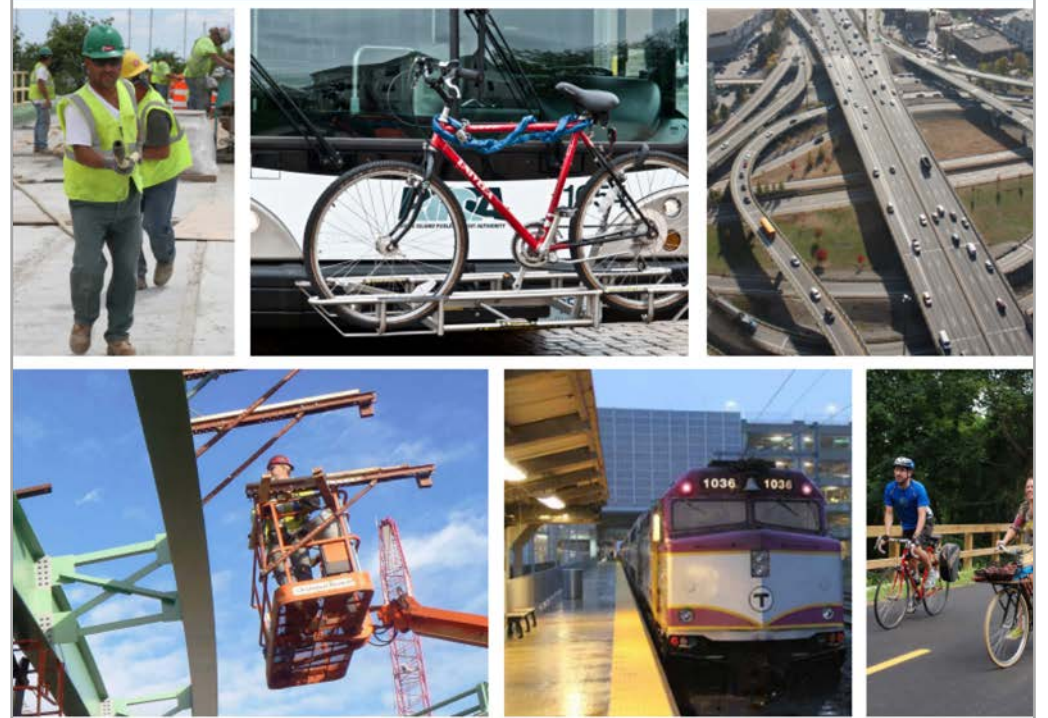
1 millionth daffodil bulb
just planted!








Rhode Island state legislature recently reauthorized a program to allow municipalities to fund roadway and infrastructure improvements through the State of Rhode Island transportation improvement program (STIP)



State of Rhode Island Transportation Improvement Program FFY 2017-2025

Adopted September 8, 2016
Amended July 21, 2017

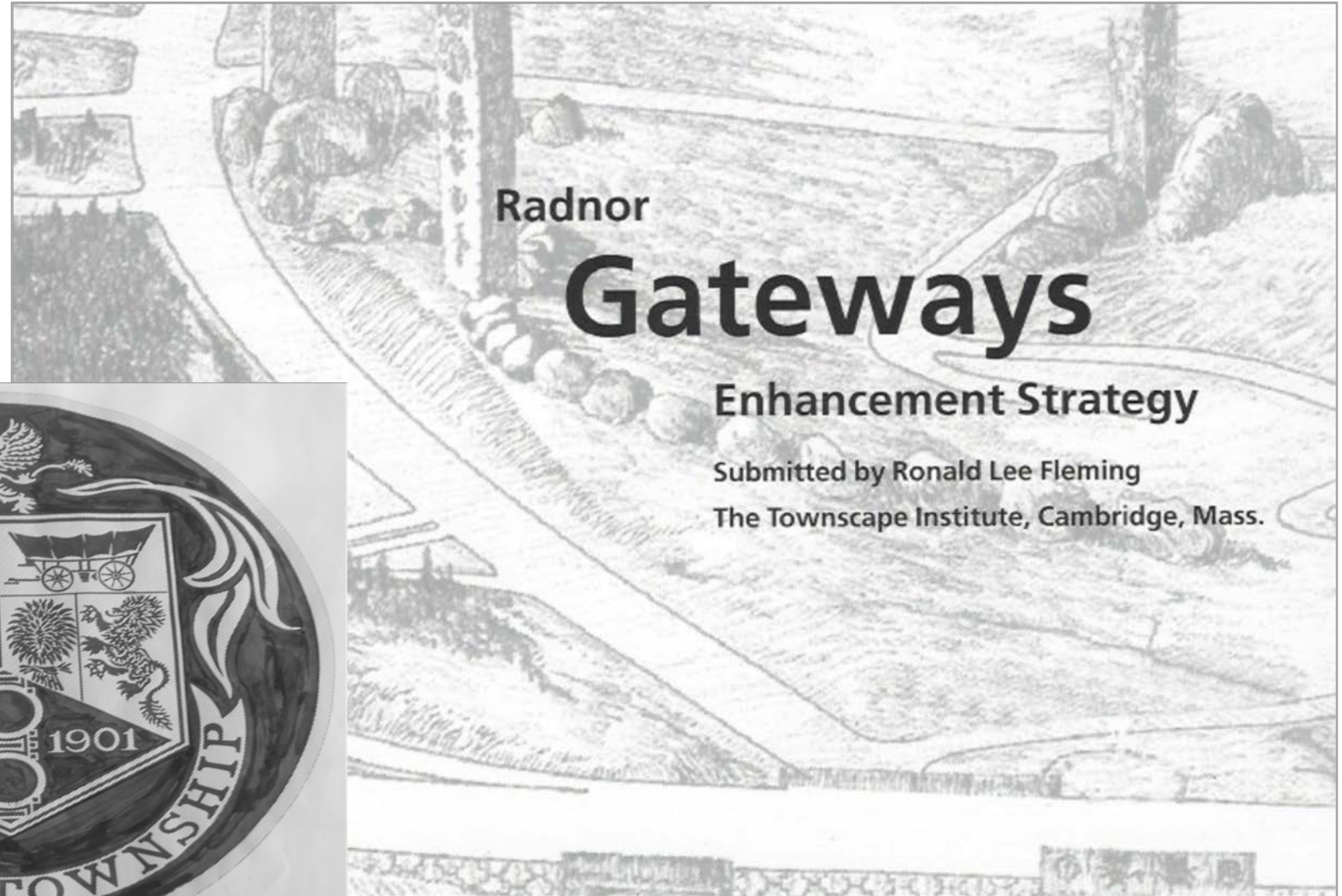
RHODE ISLAND
STATEWIDE
PLANNING
PROGRAM
 Rhode Island Department of Administration
Division of Planning
Statewide Planning Program
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908
www.planning.ri.gov

Middletown, Rhode Island: the Atlantic Beach Tax Increment Financing District, "TIF District", will fund the undergrounding of overhead utility wires and removal of poles in key gateway district.

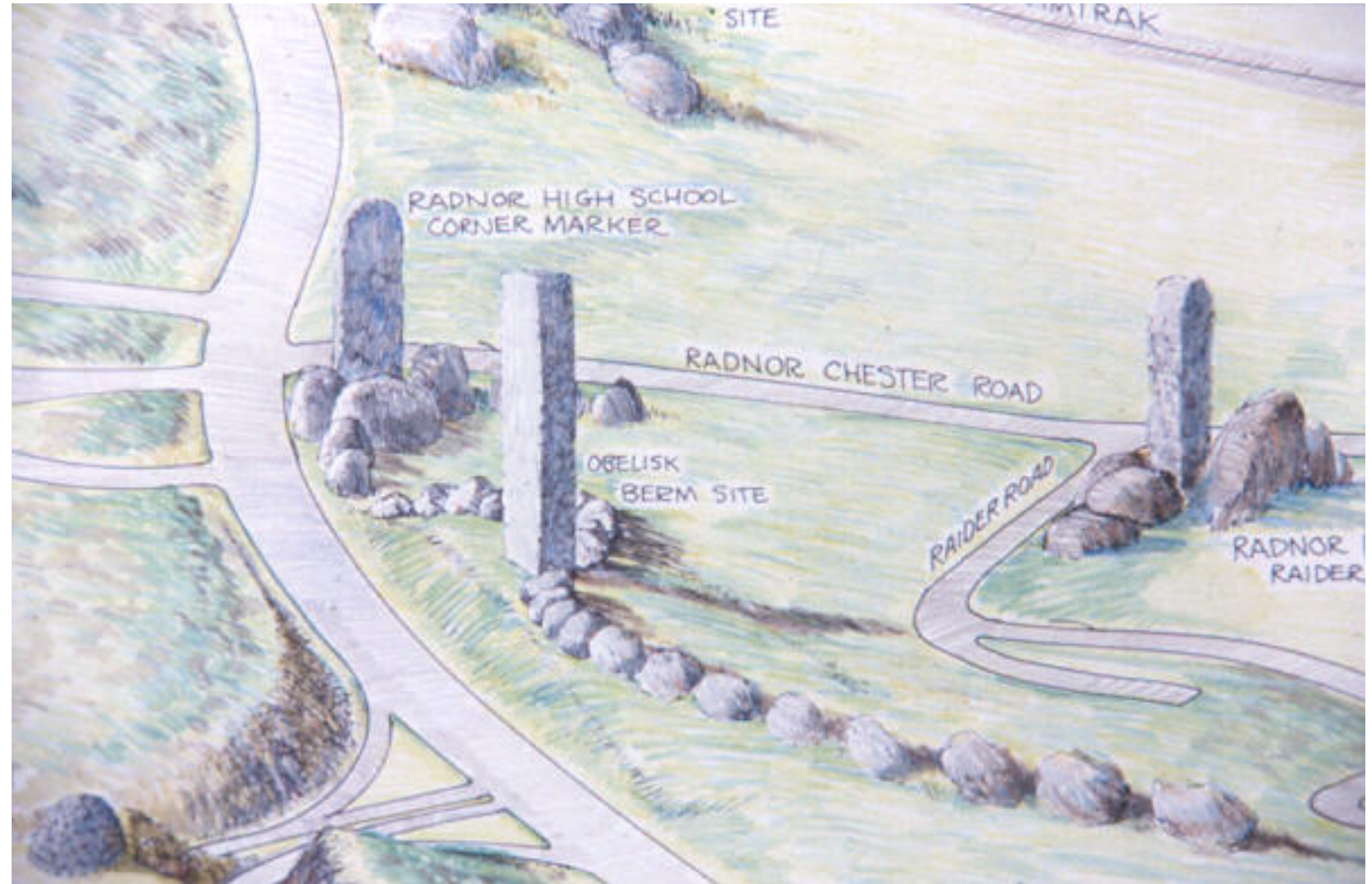


Gateway to Radnor, Pennsylvania

A case study in
bringing meaning
to an overlooked
place...



Project
transformed a
five mile
corridor along
the historic
Lancaster Pike











**Antigone, child of a
blind old man, to
what place have we
come and city of
what men?**





Thank you!