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## WESTERLY ANTI-RACISM COALITION NEWSLETTER FOR 7.17.2022

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### LAST SUNDAY'S PROTEST

At our weekly protest last Sunday, several candidates for local office stopped by to introduce themselves and to gather signatures for their campaigns. An active, well-informed citizenry is the backbone of any true democracy; ARC is happy to provide a positive space for all who want to share their platforms and priorities with us. We are proud our Sunday ARC community has become a focal point of our Westerly community.

We encourage everyone to become familiar with the issues and the positions of all candidates. We will provide opportunities to register to vote, as well as information on how and when to exercise this essential right. Most importantly, we will help the ARC community learn about the candidates.

### THIS SUNDAY'S PROTEST

Please join us this Sunday, July 17, for our weekly peaceful protest for equality and justice for our Black, Brown and Indigenous communities. While ARC originally formed to stand strong for anti-racism, racism casts a shadow over all other human rights and freedoms - women's and LGBTQ+ rights, environmental devastation, even war - all prevent people from realizing their freedom and our country from making progress. Join us and bring signs and banners expressing your concerns. *Please be mindful that our rallies are family friendly and so we ask that your signs and posters be respectful to each other and to the children in attendance.*

Make sure you are registered to vote. If you can, volunteer your time or donate money to candidates who share your goals and values. Join the League of Women Voters of South County to get informed and take an active part in government. See <https://www.lwv.org/local-leagues/lwv-south-county>. Democracy doesn't just happen: it is the direct result of citizen participation. Let your voice be heard, join us on the Westerly Post Office steps every Sunday, rain or shine, from 11:00am-1:00pm. We encourage you to speak at one of our gatherings. The crowd is welcoming and we appreciate all our presenters. Read a poem, share a story, perform a dance or sing a song. The floor is yours!

Some topics we hope to discuss in the coming weeks include: banning books, incarceration, voting and voter information, candidates forum, policing, and a Hiroshima/Nagasaki remembrance on Aug 6. If you or someone you know can speak to any of these issues, please contact us at the Sunday rally or by email at [westerlyarc@gmail.com](mailto:westerlyarc@gmail.com).

EDUCATE, EMBRACE AND EMPOWER - WE NEED YOUR HELP

**We need a large turnout for the July 19 Planning Board Meeting.** On the agenda: The use and development of the St. Pius property, at Elm and School Streets. **A proposal for mixed housing is on the table.** We urge all to attend and speak out about the critical need for affordable housing. Many voices strongly oppose this proposal. It is imperative that our side be seen and heard. The meeting is from 6:00-9:00pm.

As background, St Pius is being developed as potentially a three- phase project. One phase is a renovation of the current school building, one phase potentially adds a single family home and multi family home to the Elm St. side of the property and the most contentious part adds a multifamily apartment building behind the current St. Pious building. The link below shows the current application. (The most useful parts may be the plans and renderings starting on p. 70.)

[http://westerlyri.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9596/F2-2021-LMIH-01\\_StPius\\_AO-Memo\\_Pre-App\\_01182022\\_FINAL\\_LINK](http://westerlyri.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9596/F2-2021-LMIH-01_StPius_AO-Memo_Pre-App_01182022_FINAL_LINK)

This meeting will be heavily attended by neighborhood residents against this project - concerned about traffic, aesthetics, utilities burden, stormwater management, character, and massing (size of the building frontage). There will likely be references to "upstate or out of town interests" and immigrants cramming into the apartments. But Westerly needs this project:

- The town of Westerly is drastically short of its target of 10% affordable housing. This is housing badly needed to attract families and workers.
- This adaptive reuse of the existing St.Pious building will help preserve the neighborhood's character.
- The neighborhood already has extremely large apartments (the Elms, Windsor Condos) and another multifamily project would not be out of scale.
- Some portion of this housing will be affordable housing, for 80% of the area median income. A family of four making under \$75,000 qualifies, for example.
- The current zoning supports this level of density.
- We are building in a place where it is not necessary to clear natural habitat/

We hope to see as many people as possible at the meeting!

Below are upcoming meetings:

<b>Tuesday, 19 July</b>	<b>Planning Board Meeting (6:00-9:00pm)</b>
<b>Monday, 25 July</b>	<b>Town Council Regular Meeting (5:30pm)</b>
<b>Monday, 1 Aug</b>	<b>Town Council Workshop (5:30pm)</b>
<b>Wednesday, 3 Aug</b>	<b>School Committee Meeting (5:30pm)</b>

All meetings are held in Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, Westerly Town Hall, 45 Broad Street. ARC is committed to attending these meetings regularly, and we need more volunteers to attend with us! Here is the link to meeting schedules and agendas: <https://clerkshq.com/westerly-ri>

### COMMUNITY NEWS

Westerly ARC is thrilled to announce that members Leslie Dunn (D) and Kevin “Big Lux” Lowther (D) have officially declared their candidacies for School Committee and Town Council seats, respectively. These two wonderful candidates - smart, articulate, and graduates of Westerly High School - grew up in town and care deeply about our community. Leslie, Kevin and ARC are asking for volunteers in this fight for a bigger and better future for Westerly. Be part of their campaign and sign up for their mailing list @

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdJaSivd3gCyDI0TJEy2ijP0dltBICNeBJ4KYh8X7EFq1nBXg/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdJaSivd3gCyDI0TJEy2ijP0dltBICNeBJ4KYh8X7EFq1nBXg/viewform?usp=sf_link)

Their campaign kick-off event is at Paddy’s Beach Club, Misquamicut on 27 July from 6:30-8:30pm. Please come and give our candidates an enthusiastic start! This is a fundraiser; purchase of tickets in advance is required.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/leslie-dunn-and-kevin-j-lowther-ii-campaign-kickoff-event-tickets-384387482307>

### SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

We encourage our readers and friends to share perspectives, opinions, questions, ideas, etc., with our ARC community. We will publish your letters in our newsletter. Email us at [westerlyarc@gmail.com](mailto:westerlyarc@gmail.com).

### WESTERLY WELCOMES RHODE ISLAND BLACK STORYTELLERS

Join us in Wilcox Park, by the fountain, on Saturday, July 23, from 2:00-3:00pm. The Westerly Public Library will present Rhode Island Black Storytellers (RIBS). Campfire-themed stories by Rachel Briggs of RIBS will be featured. Join us as she tells the story of a boy and his dad as they fly a kite and explore what keeps the kite up and what brings it down. A craft is included.

<https://facebook.com/events/s/rhode-island-black-storyteller/1032695930968565/>

### HELPING OUR COMMUNITY

ARC member Amanda Dunn continues to collect toiletries, personal care items, and non-perishable food to distribute to our community. Please bring your donations to Amanda at our Sunday rallies. Your kindness and generosity are greatly appreciated.

### ARC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<i>DATE</i>	<i>PRESENTER</i>
July 2022	All dates in July are open. Would you like to present a story, a reflection or song? Please contact us at <a href="mailto:westerlyarc@gmail.com">westerlyarc@gmail.com</a>

July 16	<i>Next Up Music Festival</i> , 3:00-9:00pm in Wilcox Park. Big Lux and Tyler Seton will be performing.
July 19	Planning Board discussion on development of St. Pius property, 6:00-9:00. PLEASE ATTEND!
July 19	Tower Street Reuse Community Discussion Breakfast Forum, 8:00-10:00am, Westerly Yacht Club, 1 Watch Hill Road, RSVP required (see flier below).
July 23	<i>Rhode Island Black Storytellers</i> , 2:00-3:00pm by the Fountain in Wilcox Park.
July 25	Town Council Meeting, 5:30pm
August 3	School Committee Meeting, 5:00 pm

PEACE,

WESTERLY ARC

The Ray's Family Fund, working in partnership with the Town of Westerly, Westerly Education Center, Ocean Community YMCA, and others invite you to a community forum to discover the feasible uses of the former Tower Street School.

Our team is in the project's outreach phase and is seeking input from community members on the needs and gaps in services that could possibly be addressed through the re-use or rebuild of the facility. The forum's goal is to hear from a wide range of constituents in the greater Westerly community.

**Please tell us your thoughts during a breakfast forum to be held on Tuesday, July 19, 2022 - 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM at the Westerly Yacht Club 1 Watch Hill Road, Westerly.**

**Tower Street Re-Use**

**If you plan on attending, kindly RSVP, via email, at [TowerStreetReuse@WesterlyRI.gov](mailto:TowerStreetReuse@WesterlyRI.gov) Should you need special assistance or accommodations for the forum, please call (401) 348-2532.**