



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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*Interviews with Keynote Speaker Brent Leggs, Haven UMC Basketball Coach/Sexton Jim Hibbert, and RIHPHC Executive Director J. Paul Loether available upon request.
High-res photographs available upon request.*

**STATE PRESERVATION COMMISSION TO HOST
PRESERVATION, RECREATION AND SPORT CONFERENCE
IN EAST PROVIDENCE**

“Preservation, Recreation and Sport,” the 34th Annual Rhode Island Statewide Preservation Conference, will take place in East Providence on Saturday, April 6. The day-long event is organized by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission (RIHPHC) in collaboration with the City of East Providence and the East Providence Historical Society. RIHPHC welcomes the public to learn about new initiatives, discuss issues, and network with experts in the field of historic preservation.

Rhode Islanders and visitors to the Ocean State flock to historic places for play and amusement. The state’s coastal resort towns have hosted generations of summer visitors seeking rest and relaxation. Our cities erected large-scale sports venues for professional teams—and their adoring fans. Every community built its school gyms, little league fields, and public recreation facilities. By balancing historic preservation with the demands of the 21st century, these sites continue to play an active role in our lives.

East Providence is home turf for the event. Tours will stop at sports facilities at Agawam Hunt and the Indoor Tennis Court, visit the Crescent Park Carousel, and sample the historic neighborhoods of Rumford, Riverside, Phillipsdale, and East Providence Center. Boat tours will cruise the coastline to Pomham Rocks Lighthouse, take in commercial and recreational development along the Seekonk River, and visit the steamship graveyard at Green Jacket Shoal. Preservation workshops will focus on sports history and architecture, country clubs and sustainability, recreation planning, Civil Rights, roadside architecture, and more.

At Haven United Methodist Church, Brent Leggs, Executive Director of the National African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund at the National Trust for Historic Preservation, will deliver the keynote speech titled “Preserving the Power of Place: A Stewardship Vision for Sites of Sports History and Activism.” Leggs will talk about creating new models for the

stewardship of sites important to the history of sports and social justice, using examples from his work on historic preservation projects at boxer Joe Frazier's Gym in Philadelphia and Hinchliffe Stadium in Paterson, New Jersey. Recently designated a National Historic Landmark as one of the few surviving stadiums associated with Negro League baseball, Hinchliffe was the home of the New York Black Yankees and New York Cubans baseball teams in the 1930s. The Opening Session will also feature remarks from State Senator William J. Conley, East Providence Mayor Roberto DaSilva, Haven's longtime basketball coach/sextion Jim Hibbert, Jr., RIHPHC Chair Ruth Taylor, and RIHPHC Executive Director J. Paul Loether.

The registration fee is \$50. The deadline for online registration is March 22. To register, visit the conference website at preservationconferenceri.com. To request additional information, call 401-222-2078, or email ripresconf@gmail.com.

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