

East Providence Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

February 16, 2021

Online Zoom meeting

6:30 PM

Members present: James Boyd (Secretary), Greg Burnett, Ernie Germani (Vice Chair), Keith Gonsalves (Chair), Patrick Hanner (City Liaison) and Cheryl Vieira

Members absent: Mary Beth Dwyer

A. Call to Order: Chair Keith Gonsalves called the meeting to order at 6:34 P.M.

B. Review and Action of Meeting Minutes: The January 21, 2021 meeting minutes were approved by the Commission following a motion to approve by E. Germani and seconded by P. Hanner.

Public Attendees: Wayne Barnes and Sally Johnson

C. Public Comment:

1. **Sally Johnson**, East Providence resident. Ms. Johnson stated that she was a member of the RI Wild Plant Society and a state certified invasive manager. She expressed interest in conducting an invasive plant identification and eradication training session at Boyden Heights Conservation Area near the East Bay Bike Path with the East Providence Urban Forest (EPUF) group. Ms. Johnson will coordinate with P. Hanner in the Planning Department to ensure that there would be no liability issues conducting the training session on City property.
2. **Wayne Barnes**, East Providence resident. Mr. Barnes indicated that he had recently observed a significant accumulation of debris along the southeast corner of Turner Reservoir and along the cove immediately south of the Squantum Club. Both locations trap debris due to their geographic setting and prevailing wind direction. Mr. Barnes suggested these are two areas of focus for an organized clean.

D. Planning Department Update:

1. Johanna Walczak presented an overview of the RI Urban Forests for Climate & Health Learning Lab based on her memorandum to the Conservation Commission. She also provided an online review of a mapping tool (Tree Equity Score Analyzer) that overlays existing tree canopy with demographic data to assess tree planting opportunities and prioritize needs to improve economic, health and environmental benefits.
2. P. Hanner informed the Commission that the Department is seeking public comment on the City Comprehensive Plan and encouraged Commission members to participate in the public comment. He also indicated that the Commission will have an opportunity to review, in particular, the natural resources section of the comprehensive plan update.

E. Correspondence:

1. RI Urban Forests for Climate & Health Learning Lab. See D.1, above.

F. New Business: None**G. Old Business**

1. Newman Crossing trailhead: Chair Gonsalves will be sending a letter to the Seekonk Conservation Commission to explore the possibility of a collaboration on potential development of a new trailhead with a small parking area (6-8 spaces) located on a City owned parcel (known as Newman Crossing) at the intersection of Route 152 and West Street in Seekonk, MA.

H. Commission Member Items

- Chair K. Gonsalves noted that Narragansett Bay Commission Earth Day grant requests are due soon and suggested a possible project of a boardwalk section to complete the Hunt House loop trail. He indicated that the Ten Mile River Watershed Council on June 12 will be conducting removal of invasive water chestnut aquatic plants in Central Pond. He also noted that the “supercells” installed at Hunt’s Mill below the fish ladder were removed due to deteriorating condition. Final design for a permanent solution has been completed and will be installed at a later date.
- Vice Chair E. Germani noted that an EPUF member was seeking to determine the age of the Sycamore tree located at Hunt’s Mill on the red trail behind the John Hunt house.

I. Adjournment - The Commission adjourned the meeting at 7:45 P.M.

The Conservation Commission will hold a regularly scheduled meeting online on Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. Notice for online Zoom meeting to follow.

Respectfully submitted,

James Boyd, Secretary