

East Providence Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2021

City Hall - Room 306

6:30 P.M.

Members present: Waynes Barnes, James Boyd (Secretary), John Carney, Ernie Germani, Keith Gonsalves (Chair) and Patrick Hanner (City Liaison)

Members absent: Kelsey Queenan

Public Attendees: None

A. Call to Order: Chairman Keith Gonsalves called the meeting to order at 6:37 P.M.

B. Review and Action of Meeting Minutes: The October 19, 2021 meeting minutes were approved by the Commission following a motion to approve by E. Germani and seconded by K. Gonsalves.

C. Public Comment: None

D. Planning Department Update

1. City Planning staff, RIDEM, The Nature Conservancy, and Save The Bay recently toured the Mobil Oil Co. property in East Providence to assess site restoration potential in the vicinity of the dam on the Runnins River. Discussion are ongoing and Planning staff will keep the Commission appraised of any new developments.
2. Comprehensive Plan - Elements are being drafted and the Natural Resources, Open Space and Climate Change elements of the Plan may be available for Commission review in February 2022.

E. Correspondence: None

F. New Business

1. Comprehensive Plan update (follow up from community meetings on open space and natural resources). See D.2 above
2. New development project updates. P. Hanner provided brief updates on the following projects under development within the City: Ivy Place, Residences at Bold Point, Newport center, and Leonardo Farms.
3. LED street light conversion project status/update. City continues to upgrade City streetlights as funding is available.
4. City tree inventory project status/update. Now completed with GIS-based online map viewer. Next step is to use ESRI (GIS software) products to evaluate tree locations, condition, areas in need of further green canopy coverage, etc.

5. Initial discussion of "How can we reduce light pollution in our City?" Charlestown, RI "Dark Sky" ordinance. J. Boyd introduced topic and Commission briefly discussed possibility of further pursuing matter.
6. A Comprehensive Plan to Restore Water Quality in Hundred Acre Cove, a report prepared by Save the Bay. P. Hanner distributed copy of plan and indicated that it will aid the City in further opportunities to obtain water quality improvement grants for the Runnins River watershed.
7. Fall improvement projects. Commission members discussed possible projects and identified need to replace walkway/stair post adjacent to the Hunt House at Hunt's Mill.
8. Other business. None

G. Old Business

1. Newman Crossing trailhead: J. Boyd is working to organize a meeting between the East Providence and Seekonk conservation groups to further explore collaboration and possible development of the trailhead on East Providence parcel to connect with existing trails along Central Pond and the Gamino Pond Conservation Area in Seekonk.

H. Commission Member Items

- J. Carney indicated that trees are down at Boyden Heights and Willet Pond trails and need to be removed.
- W. Barnes suggested that members check the status of their appointments to the Commission. The Commission Annual report will be due in January 2022. The City's Hazard Mitigation Plan is being drafted and is due to be filed with RIEMA in February 2022.
- Chair K. Gonsalves noted that the Greater Seekonk Greenway project is gaining some momentum and involvement of many individuals and groups. He also indicated that there was a Valley Breeze newspaper article featuring the proposed dam removal at the Pawtucket Country Club at Armistice Boulevard, adjacent to Slater Park and the Ten Mile Greenway Bike Path.

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

The Conservation Commission will hold a regularly scheduled meeting on **Tuesday, January 19, 2022 at 6:30 p.m via Zoom online meeting**.

Respectfully submitted,
James Boyd, Secretary