

# East Providence Conservation Commission

## Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2022

City Hall - Room 308

6:30 P.M.

**Members present:** Waynes Barnes, James Boyd (Secretary), John Carney, Ernie Germani (Vice Chair), Keith Gonsalves, Patrick Hanner, Kelsey Queenan and Jeremy Spurr

**Members absent:** None

**Public Attendees:** Ian Motes, Willie Motes and Mike Teipel

**A. Call to Order:** Chair Keith Gonsalves called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M. and welcomed new Commission member Jeremy Spurr who was appointed by Mayor DaSilva as noted on the City Council agenda docket of August 16, 2022. See: <https://eastprovidenceri.gov/files-docs/22-08-16/august-16-2022-city-council-agenda>.

**B. Review and Adoption of Meeting Minutes:** The Commission postponed adoption of the June 21 meeting minutes until the October 18 meeting.

**C. Public Comment:** Ian Motes of Boy Scout Troop 28 Providence introduced himself to the Commission and discussed his proposed project to restore an historic trail at Squantum Woods. He has been coordinating with Vice Chair Ernie Germani who is supervising the project on behalf of the Commission.

Mike Teipel indicated he was interested in the ongoing site remediation work along the Ten Mile River bike path that is being conducted under the auspices of the Rhode Island Army National Guard and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. See agenda item F.1 below.

### **D. Planning Department Update:**

1. P. Hanner advised the Commission that all updates are listed under agenda item F. New Business.

**E. Correspondence:** None

### **F. New Business**

1. Status of Army National Guard remediation of former Rumford Rifle Range (Ten Mile River Greenway). P. Hanner had received an email dated 9/20/22 from the contractor (Weston Solutions) that provided an update on the remediation project. Essentially, site clearing has been conducted on approximately 12 acres on the western side of the bike path and that lead-contaminated soil excavation and removal will begin at the end of September or early October. The Commission is concerned about site restoration and re-planting plans following remediation. In particular, the Commission is concerned about how replanted areas will be protected from dirt bike activity and the potential for

re-establishing pitch pine trees removed as part of remediation work. See:

[https://eastprovidenceri.gov/sites/default/files/field/files-docs/calendar/rumford\\_ra\\_phase\\_1\\_fact\\_sheet\\_final.pdf](https://eastprovidenceri.gov/sites/default/files/field/files-docs/calendar/rumford_ra_phase_1_fact_sheet_final.pdf).

2. South Quay offshore wind site. P. Hanner reported that a ground breaking ceremony was held on September 12th for the former P&W railroad property along the Providence River to develop a marine terminal that will support the offshore wind industry. See:

<https://eastprovidenceri.gov/news-announcements/planning-economic-development/governor-mckee-congressional-delegation-local-and>.

3. Trailhead Kiosk project update. The City Planning Department is the recipient of a \$13,750 grant from RIDEM to purchase and install 4 trailhead kiosks for the Turner Reservoir Loop, Willett Pond, Boyden Heights and Hunt's Mills trails. And, a contract has been awarded to TimberHomes Vermont to construct and deliver the kiosks. See:

<https://timberhomesllc.com/our-work/structures-for-parks/trailhead-kiosks/classic-trailhead-kiosk/>

4. New City development projects. P. Hanner noted that several significant development projects are just being started, notable the South Quay offshore wind marine terminal (see F.2 above) the IGUS manufacturing facility \$200M expansion Master Plan approval

(<https://eastprovidenceri.gov/news-announcements/planning-economic-development/east-providence-planning-board-approves-igus%E2%80%99>) and the new mixed-use affordable housing development (Ivy Place) across the street from City Hall at the corner of Ivy Street and Taunton Avenue

(<https://eastprovidenceri.gov/news-announcements/planning-economic-development/city-breaks-ground-new-mixed-use-affordable-housing>).

5. Stormwater management. New Commission member J. Spurr raised the issue of stormwater management zoning and what requirements the City may impose for expansive new impervious surfaces, especially parking areas abutting waterways. He noted that environmental restoration kick-starts economic development. Discussion followed on whether the City could develop more stringent stormwater controls on new development and significant redevelopment of existing sites.

6. Runnins River stormwater management plan update. P. Hanner reported that consultant group TRC (<https://www.trccompanies.com/>) is investigating the Runnins River along the Catamore Boulevard area to develop a stormwater management plan that is being funded through a \$45K grant via the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program.

7. Comprehensive Plan update. P. Hanner reported that the draft Comprehensive Plan will be presented to the Planning Board in early 2023. He will distribute latest drafts of the Natural resources chapter and maps for review and comment.

**G. Other Business.** P. Hanner presented four potential wetland mitigation projects, which are required as a condition of a CRMC Assent for the South Quay offshore wind marine terminal project, for Commission review and comment. The Permittee has requested City input on selection of the preferred wetland mitigation alternatives. Commissioners suggested that the Boyden Heights and Carousel sites would likely be most successful.

## **H. Old Business**

1. Newman Crossing trailhead: J. Boyd had no new reports on the project planning.

## **H. Commission Member Items**

- Vice Chair E. Germani indicated that the Land trust days events have been a success.
- J. Boyd reported on East Providence Land Conservation Trust activities.
- W. Barnes reported that the City's Hazard Mitigation Plan was approved by RIEMA on August 29, 2022 and is valid for a 5-year period.
- K. Queenan reported on the upcoming International Coastal Cleanup Program events being organized by Save the Bay for East Providence sites during September and October.
- Chair K. Gonsalves reported on a study to remove the dam at the Pawtucket Country Club to promote fish passage farther up the Ten Mile River.

**I. Adjournment** - The Commission adjourned the meeting at 8:00 P.M.

The Conservation Commission will meet next on **Tuesday, October 18, 2022 at 6:30 p.m** City Hall - Room 308

Respectfully submitted,  
James Boyd, Secretary