

East Providence Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

March 15, 2022

City Hall - Room 308

6:30 P.M.

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

Members absent: Waynes Barnes

Public Attendees: Sandra Wyatt and Jack Young

A. Call to Order: Chairman Keith Gonsalves called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M.

B. Review and Action of Meeting Minutes: The February 15, 2021 meeting minutes were approved by the Commission following a motion to approve by E. Germani and seconded by J. Carney.

C. Public Comment: Sandra Wyatt and Jack Young (Friends of Annawamscutt Creek) wanted to share news and updates on activities with the creek, and the desire to partner with the East Providence Conservation Commission to improve the visibility of the creek as a community resource. Sandra noted the ongoing macroinvertebrate and water quality monitoring work by the 8th grade students at St. Lukes School in Barrington (<https://www.stlukesri.org/Page/714>) and actions to increase vegetated buffers along the creek to improve water quality and wildlife habitat. Sandra also noted that the Waddington Elementary School (East Providence) had recently started an "After school at Annawamscutt" program to educate 18 students about the importance of the creek. Jack indicated that he started the Friends of Annawamscutt Creek Facebook page as a resource to increase the visibility of the creek and reduce pollution and trash dumping abuse of the creek. Both Sandra and Jack indicated that they would like to collaborate and partner with the Commission on: (1) cleanup activities; and (2) increasing the visibility of the creek to reduce pollution improve water quality and habitat protection. They have scheduled a clean up at the Shaw's grocery store property on April 23 from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.

D. Planning Department Update:

1. P. Hanner noted that the City had secured a \$48K grant from the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program to develop a stormwater management plan for the Runnins River watershed to include the potential placement of stormwater BMPs to improve water quality in the river.
2. The Natural Resource and Land Use elements of the City's Comprehensive Plan are nearing final draft stage and will be distributed to the Commission for review and comment in preparation for finalizing the Comp Plan in 2022.

3. The City received a \$13,750 grant from the RI Department of Environmental Management to purchase and install 4 trailhead kiosks for the Turner Loop, Willett Pond, Boyden Heights and Hunt's Mills trails. The City and RIDEM are in the process of executing a trail grant agreement and the City is seeking quotes for installation of the informational trailhead kiosks.

E. Correspondence: None

F. New Business

1. Update on ACOE remediation project along the Ten Mile River Bike path. It is anticipated that the Corps will be in the site remediation project in April or May.
2. Update on any planned repairs to Turner Reservoir boardwalk (broken boards). The City Parks department was notified of the need for boardwalk repairs.
3. Update on proposed installation of pedestrian Pleasant Street crosswalk at Hunt's Mill to facilitate safe crossing between Turner Reservoir trails and Hunt's Mill. RIDOT is receptive of the idea of installing a pedestrian crossing, and will most likely be integrated into the planned bicycle path to connect Kimberly Ann Rock Memorial Athletic Complex (beginning of Ten Mile River Bike Path) and Hunt's Mill.
4. Update on Pleasant Street bridge replacement at Ten Mile River. It was reported that the bridge replacement work will commence in June.
5. Earth Day events. Commission members will meet at Boyden Heights on Saturday, April 23 at 09:00 for a trail and coastal shoreline cleanup. Details will be discussed at the next Commission meeting on April 19.

G. Old Business

1. Newman Crossing trailhead: J. Boyd emailed the Seekonk Conservation Agent again and copied the Commission Senior Secretary requesting a meeting with the Seekonk Conservation Commission to explore potential collaboration and conceptual development of the trailhead on the East Providence parcel on West Street in Seekonk to connect with existing trails along Central Pond and the Gammino Pond Conservation Area (Seekonk). No response. It was suggested to contact the Seekonk Town Planner.

H. Commission Member Items

- Vice Chair E. Germani indicated that he has started the 2nd Sunday hikes at Hunt's Mill meeting at the Hunt House for 1:00pm.
- Chair K. Gonsalves indicated that he had been in discussions with folks concerning establishment of the new trails at Grassy Plains in Riverside.

I. Adjournment - The Commission adjourned the meeting at 8:13 P.M.

The Conservation Commission will hold a regularly scheduled meeting on **Tuesday, April 19, 2022 at 6:30 p.m** Room 308, City Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
James Boyd, Secretary