

# East Providence Conservation Commission

## Meeting Minutes

June 20, 2023

City Hall - Room 308

6:30 P.M.

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

**Members absent:** Keith Gonsalves (on vacation)

**Public Attendees:** Carol Auer, Jennifer Tiereny and Meg Robinson (Tree Commission Chair, Vice Chair and member, respectively)

**A. Call to Order** - Vice Chair Ernie Germani called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M.

**B. Review and Adoption of Meeting Minutes** - The May 16, 2023 meeting minutes were approved on a motion by J. Carney and seconded by K. Queenan.

**C. Public Comment:** Carol Auer provided an overview of the City Tree Commission accomplishments. The Tree Commission works with the City Tree Warden for tree protection and as to whether trees need to be removed due to disease or storm damage. She indicated that property owners may appeal Tree Warden decisions, but the process overall is working very well. The Commission accomplished implementation of a City native plant ordinance last year, which requires 70% native plant coverage for any City property plantings. The Commission also assisted in development of the City Trees webpage (See: <https://eastprovidenceri.gov/departments/parks/city-trees>), and assisted in the recently submitted City grant proposal request under the USDA Urban & Community Forest Program (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/urban-forests/ucf>) for \$1.53M over 5 years to plant 1200 trees within the City. The Tree Commission is also working with the City to promote green space and green infrastructure for the Red Bridge development proposal. (The Conservation Commission and Tree Commission agreed to continue to meet together and collaborate on issues and projects of City interest.)

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

1. P. Hanner advised the Commission that the City in collaboration with Save The Bay had submitted a \$300,000 grant request to EPA to fund two stormwater infrastructure systems on Boyd Ave. and Risho St./Catamore Blvd. to treat stormwater runoff before discharge into the Runnins River.
2. P. Hanner noted that the Planning Department was reviewing a 12-lot subdivision proposed on Hospital Rd. in the Riverside section of the City.

**E. Correspondence:** None

## **F. New Business**

1. Land Trust Days. E. Germani reported that three walks are planned for Land Trust Days (<https://www.rilandtrusts.org/landtrustdays/>) within the City as follows: Coastal Cove, Sept. 1; Hunt's Mill, Sept. 10; and Turner Reservoir, Sept. 24. All walks start at 2:00pm.

## **G. Old Business**

1. Eagle Scout Project/Squantum Woods. E. Germani noted that the Squantum Woods trail rehabilitation project was completed on June 17 by Eagle Scout Ian Motte. The historic trail was re-established along with other trail improvements and trail markers to improve public accessibility and visibility of the trail.
2. Weaver Library Copper Beech Tree. The Commission further discussed the 5/11/23 email from City Planner Johanna Walczak regarding the aging Copper Beech.
3. Discussion of pedestrian link from the terminus of Redland Avenue at parcel 502-05-068.00, owned by the EP Water Department, to the Ten Mile River Bike Path. Further site inspection and investigation is needed to assess the viability of a proposed link, and it appears based on a previous site visit that there is encroachment by the abutting property owner onto City owned land that will need to be addressed by the City.
4. Status of Army National Guard remediation of former Rumford Rifle Range (Ten Mile River Greenway). Site remediation work continues by contractor Weston Solutions. 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). P. Hanner forwarded a June 14 email from the contractor to Commission members regarding project status. (The Commissions received a proposed planting plan on July 17 for review and comment.)
5. Runnins River stormwater management plan update. See D.1 above.
6. Newman Avenue crossing trailhead. J. Boyd and E. Germani met with the Seekonk Land Trust on June 26 to discuss the conceptual plan and seek their advice and support for the project.

## **H. Other Business - None**

## **I. Commission Member Items:**

- J. Carney noted that an event to pull the invasive aquatic plant Water Chestnut (*Trapa natans*) is planned for June 13 on Turner Reservoir.
- K. Queenan advised the Commission of ad hoc discussions on engaging young local school students on environmental cleanup projects and education.

**J. Adjournment** - The Commission adjourned the meeting at 7:55 P.M.

The next Conservation Commission meeting will be held on **Tuesday, August 15, 2023** at 6:30 p.m City Hall - Room 308.

Respectfully submitted,  
James Boyd, Secretary