

East Providence Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

April 18, 2023

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: Wayne Barnes and Jeremy Spurr

Public Attendees: Meg Robinson

A. Call to Order - Chair Keith Gonsalves called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

B. Review and Adoption of Meeting Minutes - The March 21, 2023 meeting minutes were approved on a motion by E. Germani and seconded by P. Hanner.

C. Public Comment - Meg Robinson introduced herself as a resident of Rumford interested in the outdoors and conservation, and was curious about the Conservation Commission.

D. Planning Department Update

1. P. Hanner noted that RIDEM was still reviewing the City's trail grant award for the proposed trail kiosks at four City open space areas. He also indicated that the draft Comprehensive Plan update will be reviewed by the Planning Board in June for recommendations to the City Council for their review and adoption.

E. Correspondence - None

F. New Business

1. Status of legislation H5363. Commissioners discussed the status of legislation that would modify R.I. Gen. Laws 32-6 regarding liability limitations for the public use of private lands. The proposed legislation is being held for further study.
2. Update on invasive water chestnut eradication project for Central Pond. P. Hanner noted that the City is partnering with RIDEM and NEIWPCC (<https://neiwpcc.org/>) for a pilot project to manage the invasive water chestnut (*Trapa natans*) from Central Pond. In recent years the invasive has spread widely in the northern end of the pond and there is concern for the plant spreading downstream to Turner Reservoir.

G. Old Business

1. 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. Commissioners met to inspect the site at 4:30 pm on Monday, March 27. Further site inspection and investigation by City Planning staff is needed to assess the viability of a proposed link.

2. 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. P. Hanner is awaiting an email update from the contractor and will forward same to Commissions when available.
3. Earth Day (April 22) activities. The Commission will conduct a cleanup of Boyden Heights Conservation Area on Saturday, April 22 at 09:00, and inspect the boardwalk on the coastal inlet.
4. Runnins River stormwater management plan update. P. Hanner noted that two preferred sites at Catamore Blvd. and Boyd Ave. have been selected for engineering designs for stormwater infrastructure. The City is seeking construction fund grants to install the stormwater management controls to improve water quality at these two sites and the Runnins River.
5. Newman Avenue crossing trailhead. J. Boyd updated Commission members on investigative work completed to date assembling property maps and other review materials. He will be invited to meet with the Seekonk Land Trust in April/May to present the conceptual plan and seek community support for the project.

H. Other Business

1. The Eagle Scout project to revive the Squantum Woods trail loop will begin on May 20. Vice Chair E. Germani will be supervising the trail work.

I. Commission Member Items:

- K. Queenan noted that the Agawam Club has planted a number of new trees on the property.
- J. Boyd noted that he ran into a RIDOT employee on the Pleasant Street bridge and was told the construction project should be completed this year.
- K. Gonsalves advised the Commission that the sunken boat at the Haines Park boat ramp has been removed and the area cleaned up. He also noted that apparently there is a cluster of old growth Pitch pines (*Pinus rigida*) near the IGUS manufacturing facility off Ferris Avenue.

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

The next Conservation Commission meeting will be held on **Tuesday, May 16, 2023** at 6:30 p.m City Hall - Room 308.

Respectfully submitted,

James Boyd, Secretary