

East Providence Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes January 17, 2023 City Hall- Room 308 6:30 pm

Members present: Keith Gonsalves (Chair), Ernie Germani (Vice-chair), Patrick Hanner, John Carney, Kelsey Queenan, Wayne Barnes, Jeremy Spurr
Members absent: James Boyd

Public Attendee: Heather Andrade

- A. Call to Order- Chair Keith Gonsalves called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.
- B. Adoption of Minutes - On a motion from E. Gernami, seconded by P. Hanner, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the meeting minutes from December 13, 2022.
- C. Public Comment- Ms. Andrade inquired re: progress on a letter generally supporting proposed Keep Metacomet Green (KMG)'s design guidelines for development along Veterans Memorial Parkway. P. Hanner reported that the letter had been written and signed and would be transmitted the following morning.
- D. Planning Department Update: P. Hanner reported on progress on the Comprehensive Plan. Most sections are now available for review. He will send out appropriate sections to the Commission for review and any comments, and they can be discussed at our next meeting.
- E. Correspondence- There was no correspondence to report on since that last meeting.
- F. New Business
 - 1. Annual Report
Minor revisions were requested but no substantive changes were needed. On a motion from E. Germani, seconded by K. Queenan, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the 2022 Annual Report with minor edits as suggested.
 - 2. RIGL 45-36.1-2- Municipal Public Trust Dedication
J. Carney brought this new statue to the attention of the Commission, noting that it can be a valuable tool in preserving City-owned land. P. Hanner agreed, while describing that much of the City's open vacant land and park properties, including any land acquired through Government programs including the Green Acres program, is deed-restricted. He also noted that there is considerable City land that has not been developed for parks or passive recreation use to date.
 - 3. Tree plantings along Veterans Memorial Parkway- J. Spurr inquired re: planting trees along the wide open portion of the Bike Path alongside Veterans Parkway across from Metacomet. This would enhance the appearance here and provide some needed shade along the Bike Path. P. Hanner noted that road salt likely killed trees that were there

previously, and that there was \$15-20K potentially available to obtain and plant trees that would be resistant to road salt. He will inquire with the DPW Director.

4. Election of Commission officers- On a motion from K. Queenan, seconded by W. Barnes, the Board voted unanimously to elect the slate of K. Gonsalves- Chair, E. Germani, Vice-Chair, and J. Boyd, Secretary.

G. Old Business

1. Pedestrian link from Redland Avenue to the Ten Mile River Greenway via Water Dept. parcel 502-05-068 – This small parcel connects the northern end of Redland Avenue (corner with Wildwood) and the Ten Mile Greenway property. E. Germani noted a likely encroachment from an abutting nearby property. We will visit the location to evaluate this option to connect Redland Ave. to the Greenway, as an alternate to a small path now located a short distance to the west.
2. Status of Army National Guard remediation of former Rumford Rifle Range- a letter was received from the Army Corps. describing progress on the project. This was distributed to the Commission via e-mail.
3. Runnins River stormwater management plan update- P. Hanner reported that the Planning Dept. is awaiting a concept plan for three potential stormwater project sites. One of them will be chosen to proceed to construction drawings. Once that is done, funding can be pursued to move forward with the project.
4. Comprehensive Plan update: See Planning Department Update above.
5. Newman crossing trailhead: J. Boyd will provide any new information at the next meeting. K. Gonsalves expressed concern about erosion along the informal boat ramp at this site from Newman Avenue run-off.
6. Ian Moates Eagle Scout Service Project- Schedule to begin May 20, 2023. E- Germani reported that the Squantum Woods trail that is proposed is already partly established, and there may not be much work to do.

H. Other Business – There was no other business

I. Commission Member Items-

- J. K. Gonsalves visited Hunts Mills looking for evidence of invasive lantern fly nests from a photo posted on social media, and reported that the location and item in question appeared more like lichen. He will continue to monitor the area.

W. Barnes noted the destruction of very large areas of forest in West Greenwich for the development of solar farms, questioning environmental the value of the trade-off.

J. Carney observed that the major storm and storm surge of 12/23/22 washed away boards and mulched placed to bridge the seasonal wet area from Boyden Heights leading to the bike Path, and left much litter behind. The small Boy Scout bridge along the stream on the upland portion of the property also sustained minor damage from a tree.

K. Queenan hiked Hunts Mills and reported that the trail was muddy just past the bridge that the Commission built last year. There is donated lumber available that we can use to extend the structural walkway past the bridge as a Commission work project later this year.

K. Adjournment

On a motion from E. Germani, seconded by P. Hanner, the commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7: 28 pm.