

East Providence Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2024

City Hall - Room 308

6:30 P.M.

Members present: Wayne Barnes (Chair), James Boyd (Secretary), John Carney, Keith Gonsalves, Jeremy Spurr and Kelsey Queenan

Members absent: Ernie Germani (Vice Chair) and Patrick Hanner,

Public Attendees: Meg Robinson (Tree Commission liaison to the Conservation Commission)

A. Call to Order: Chair Wayne Barnes called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

B. Review and Adoption of Meeting Minutes: The March 26, 2024 meeting minutes were approved unanimously on a motion by J. Carney and seconded by K. Gonsalves.

C. Public Comment: See Tree Commission report below in E.

D. Planning Department Update:

1. P. Hanner emailed Commission members that the Planning Department will be meeting with the Law Department to discuss the encroachments onto City property along Central Pond and the next steps to be taken to have the encroachments removed. More details will follow at a subsequent meeting.

E. Tree Commission Report: Meg Robinson reported that the Tree Commission will be meeting the following evening and will review and discuss the East Providence Strategic Tree Canopy report (March 2024). See: <https://gicinc.org/books/east-providence-strategic-tree-canopy-plan/>.

F. Correspondence:

1. P. Hanner emailed to Commission members the March 21, 2024 Army Corps of Engineers letter and drawings concerning the Ten Mile River Restoration Project, including installation of the Hunt's Mills fish passage weirs. See: <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-Topics/Ten-Mile-River/>.

G. New Business

1. National Trails Day projects. Commission members discussed conducting a Hunt's Mill trails cleanup for Saturday, June 1st as a project.

H. Old Business

1. Newman Avenue crossing trailhead. The Planning department staff will be meeting with the City Law department to send cease and desist letters to Seekonk property owners who are presently encroaching on City property along Central Pond with structures and landscaping activities.

2. Trail head Kiosks. Commissioners discussed the need for laminating and installing trail maps at each of the four recently installed trail head kiosks for Boyden Heights, Hunts Mill, Turner Reservoir, and Willet Pond. P. Hanner will check as to whether there are any remaining funds from the kiosk project that could pay for map lamination and to encase and protect the trail maps on the kiosks.
2. Water Chestnut abatement for Central Pond and Turner Reservoir. P. Hanner informed the Commission that remaining grant funding (originally \$37,000) from RIDEM combined with a match funding contribution from the City will allow for continued treatment of invasive water chestnut within Central Pond and Turner Reservoir through the Spring and Fall of 2025. It is reported that additional areas of water chestnut have been observed in Turner Reservoir, and it is expected that eventually the invasive plant will be observed downstream in Omega Pond.

I. Other Business:

1. ACOE Hunt's Mill fish ladder modification. The Commission received correspondence from ACOE concerning the Ten Mile River Restoration Project. See F.1, above.
2. Earth Day. Commission members will meet Saturday morning, April 20 (09:00) at Boyden Heights Conservation Area to conduct a coastal shoreline cleanup.

J. Commission Member Items:

- J. Carney reported the Squantum Woods parking area has been repaired.
- K. Queenan reported that the Gammino Pond trails were flooded recently with all the rain in March and April.
- M. Robinson reported that a large Silver maple was recently saved through the Tree Commission appeal process.
- K. Gonsalves reported that river herring have been observed at Hunt's Mill.
- J. Boyd reported that he observed river herring earlier in the day at Hunt's Mill prior to the meeting. Also, the native plum trees (*Prunus americana*) are in bloom along Turner Reservoir at Bridgham Farm.

K. Adjournment: The Commission adjourned the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

The next Conservation Commission meeting will be held on **Tuesday, May 21, 2024**.

Respectfully submitted,
James Boyd, Secretary