

East Providence Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

August 20, 2024

City Hall - Room 308

6:30 P.M.

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

Members absent: Wayne Barnes (Chair) and Jeremy Spurr

Public Attendees: Chester Levine

A. Call to Order: Vice Chair Ernie Germani called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

B. Review and Adoption of Meeting Minutes: The June 18, 2024 meeting minutes were approved on a motion by P. Hanner and seconded by K. Gonsalves.

C. Public Comment: Chester Levine, a Rumford resident, brought to the Commission's attention the current status of the proposed public access walking trail along the Ten Mile River on the Agawam Hunt Club property along North Broadway. The trail will likely extend from North Broadway to Pawtucket Avenue along the river. Mr. Levine indicated that the trail establishment was a condition of the conservation easement agreement negotiated between the Club and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in April 2018. The TNC paid \$2 million to the Club for the easement to preserve 82 acres of the Club property and to establish a public access path along the adjacent Ten Mile River. Additionally, the Club was to adopt the Audubon International Green Golf Course standards to minimize impacts on the river. To date, the public access trail has yet to be constructed, and when an inquiry was submitted to TNC, the response provided was a lack of funding to construct the trail. Mr. Levine urged the Commission to advocate for establishment of the trail in accordance with the easement agreement so that the public could enjoy new access along the Ten Mile River.

D. Planning Department Update:

1. P. Hanner reported that engineering designs have been completed for the stormwater treatment system infrastructure at Sabin Point to improve water quality. The City is awaiting construction estimates and permit applications have been filed with the RIDEM and CRMC. The City is anticipating future grant monies to help fund construction of the stormwater treatment system.
2. The City's new "Discover East Providence" website that details significant historical sites throughout the City is now live. See: www.discovereastprovidence.com.

E. Tree Commission Report: Meg Robinson (Tree Commission liaison to the Conservation Commission) was unable to attend the meeting.

F. Correspondence: None

G. New Business

1. Status of water chestnut herbicide of Turner Reservoir and Central Pond (enclosure). P. Hanner had previously distributed to Commissioners the consultant's August 14 Field Notes Summary that detailed the most recent observations and treatments applied to the Turner Reservoir. The City is planning to continue future treatments in both Central Pond and Turner reservoir to address the invasive plants, subject to further funding.
2. Update on storm damage tree removal at Bridgham Farm Conservation Area. J. Boyd reported that the Trustees of the Bridgham Farm Conservation Area had hired an arborist to remove several storm-damaged trees as a result of the June 26 tornado/microburst. The walking path from the parking area at Pleasant Street has been cleared and all storm-damaged trees have been removed.
3. Status of trail clearing and tree removal along east and west side of Turner Reservoir. E. Germani reported that the City had cleared storm-damaged trees on the trail located on City owned property along the reservoir in Seekonk, MA. The Town of Seekonk has engaged a contractor to clear the many storm-damaged trees in the White Pine grove adjacent to the Seekonk High School.

H. Old Business

1. Newman Avenue crossing trailhead. No new updates; awaiting resolution of encroachments by abutting Seekonk property owners on City owned property along Central Pond, following the issuance of encroachment letters by the City Law department.

I. Other Business: None

J. Commission Member Items:

- E. Germani noted that he had submitted proposed hikes in September for RI Land Trust Days.
- J. Carney reported on the Weaver Library August 3 event "A Celebration of Nature Through Poetry."

K. Adjournment: The Commission adjourned the meeting at 7:21 p.m.

The next Conservation Commission meeting will be held at City Hall, Room 308 on **Tuesday, September 17, 2024 at 6:00 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,
James Boyd, Secretary