

East Providence Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

March 15, 2016

East Providence City Hall

7:30 PM

Members present: Keith Gonsalves (Chair), Ernie Germani (Vice Chair), Wayne Barnes (City Liaison), James Boyd (Secretary), John Burridge, Marie Esten, and Cheryl Vieira

Members absent: None

Call to Order - Chair K. Gonsalves called the meeting to order at 7:33 PM.

Review of Minutes - The February 1, 2016 meeting minutes were approved with corrections on a motion by E. Germani and seconded by M. Esten.

Public present: Sandra Wyatt (Barrington)

Public Comment: Ms. Wyatt of the Barrington Land Conservation Trust (BLCT) wanted to inform the Commission of a water quality improvement project for Annawamscutt Creek, which flows along the East Providence and Barrington boundary. The BLCT has engaged the students and teachers at St. Luke's School in Barrington in the study of the creek ecology. Ms. Wyatt would like to partner with East Providence schools (e.g., Riverside Middle School and Waddington Elementary). Ms. Wyatt wanted the Commission to be aware of these efforts and to support the creek improvement project and be involved with any cleanup activities when scheduled.

Planning Department Update

- Wayne reported that the second iteration of the City Hazard Mitigation Plan will be filed soon with RIEMA for review and approval.

Correspondence

- City Legal Department - Reminder of filing agendas and minutes: notice to all City Boards and Commissions of proper and timely posting of meeting agendas and minutes.
- City Legal Department - Open Meetings Act requirements regarding content of meeting agendas: advisory that agendas must specify all meeting items and any proposed actions of a public body (a legal case precedent was provided).
- Weston Solutions - Remedial investigation at former rifle range: request for environmental information. Weston Solutions on behalf of the U.S. Army Corps and the Army National Guard will conduct a preliminary investigation of the former rifle range behind the Kimberly Rock playground and along the Ten Mile Bike Path. Commissioners recommended that the consulting firm contact the RI Natural History Survey concerning rare, threatened or endangered species in the area, and requested that the City and the Town of Seekonk be notified before conducting any surveying and site work activities.

Old Business

- Narragansett Bay Commission Earth Day grant - Wayne reported that he was awaiting confirmation from NBC on the City grant application.
- Memorial tree selection - Wayne had sent an email to Commissioners on February 10 that described the Thornless Cockspur Hawthorne tree as suitable for planting along the East Bay Bike Path at Boyden Heights Conservation Area. It will be planted during the Earth Day cleanup scheduled for April 23.
- Earth Day activities: finalize work plan - Commissioners decided to complete the work plan for the April 23 Boyden Heights Conservation Area shoreline cleanup at the April 19 meeting.

New Business

- Boyden Heights fence removal - Wayne reported that the City Engineer inquired about removal of the existing chain link fence. Commissioners deliberated and voted to recommend that the fence only be removed along Boyden Boulevard, including the parking area, to the pump station. It was also recommended that some type of parking barrier be placed along the perimeter for public safety.
- National Trails Day activities - Activities will be planned for June 4th with more details at a later meeting.
- Trail maps and brochure development - Ernie discussed development of the trail maps and would report back to the Commission following the map making workshop to be held at the Land & Water Summit.
- 1424 Wampanoag Trail: conservation interest - Commissioners discussed potential acquisition of a 25,000 square foot property that abuts Conservation Commission and City-owned parcels located along the Runnins River at the north end of Hundred Acre Cove. Commissioners would schedule a site visit by email to further investigate the site and its condition.

Commission Member Items

- Marie indicated that she and her family were contemplating a move to Massachusetts to be located closer to work and ease the long commute.
- Keith noted that RI Monthly magazine had an article about efforts to designate Sabin Point as a public beach due to improved water quality in the Upper Narragansett Bay.

Adjournment - The Commission adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:17 PM on a motion by J. Boyd and seconded by E. Germani.

The next regularly scheduled Conservation Commission meeting will be held on **Tuesday, April 19, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. in Conference Room A at the East Providence City Hall.**

Respectfully submitted, James Boyd, Secretary