



EAST PROVIDENCE CONSERVATION COMMISSION



2010 Annual Report

Lorraine Nik, Chair

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The East Providence Conservation Commission remained very active in 2010 in fulfilling its mission to preserve and promote our City's natural resources.

The central Commission project for this year was the continuation of a multi-year enhancement project at the Boyden Heights Conservation Area, a 10-plus acre City conservation property located along the East Bay Bike Path and extending to Bradley Hospital and Boyden Boulevard.



The Commission specifically invited neighbors of the Conservation area and the City Engineer to the March meeting to discuss potential plans for a sewer line connection through a portion of the property. Also in March, a group of Commission members dismantled the decaying decking on the wetlands boardwalk (see picture left) on the property for safety purposes, and closed off the boardwalk. City Public Buildings staff performed initial re-construction in May, with materials purchased through a 2009 grant received by the Commission in the amount of \$2,375 from the

National Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. Additional material was purchased to strengthen the support structure and provide a vastly improved railing system through a \$1,500 RIDEM Small Trails Grant, also secured by the Commission. The boardwalk was completed (see picture right) with great assistance from a City-based Boy Scout Troop in October. Improved access to the Boardwalk via a short stairway will be added in the spring of 2011. The Commission thanks the City Public Buildings Division for their work and construction advice, and thanks members of Narragansett Council, Boy Scouts of America for their assistance with this project. The Commission is also grateful for grant management assistance provided by the City Planning Department.



Other Commission activity in 2010 included continued City representation on the Seaconke Trails Committee, a cooperative effort between the City, the Town of Seekonk, and the Newman YMCA. This committee, which has been receiving technical assistance from the National Park Service, is working on trail connections in East Providence and Seekonk in the vicinity of the Turner Reservoir and Seekonk High School. Wayne Barnes, City staff to the Conservation Commission, and Commission Member Keith Gonsalves are both active members of this Committee. The advocacy of the Seaconke Trails Committee contributed to the successful acquisition of a parcel land by the Town of Seekonk, which will enable development of a lengthy continuous trail system spanning the two communities.

Mr. Barnes also met with a group of trail advocates from throughout the Northeast at a regional gathering of the National Rails-to-Trails Conservancy in August. This group is available to us for technical assistance on any potential future projects along the East Bay Bike Path.

Other projects reviewed this year by the Commission, in addition to the Boyden Heights Sewer Connection noted above, included

- Waterfront residential modifications in Riverside needing CRMC approval;
- The potential donation to the City of land near the Wampanoag Trail;
- The FEMA-required 5-year update of the City's Hazard Mitigation Plan; and
- The Mass. DEP Draft Pathogen Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Report for the Runnins River Segment of the Narragansett/Mt Hope Bay Watershed.

The Commission supported a grant application by the Northern Rhode Island Conservation District that would fund an innovative environmental education program in the East Providence Public Schools, and also backed the effort of the Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission to establish a new unit of the National Park System along the Blackstone River in Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

The Conservation Commission looks forward to serving the City of East Providence in 2011 and welcomes interested members of the community and other conservation interests to our meetings, which are scheduled for the third Tuesday of each month. Meeting agendas are posted in the lobby of City Hall, with agendas and minutes of past meetings available on the City's Conservation Commission webpage and on the RI Secretary of State's webpage.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lorraine Nik
Commission Chair

