



# EAST PROVIDENCE CONSERVATION COMMISSION



## 2015 Annual Report

Keith Gonsalves, Chair

Contact: Wayne Barnes, East Providence Planning Department  
(401) 435-7531, Ext. 11151  
[wbarnes@cityofeastprov.com](mailto:wbarnes@cityofeastprov.com)

The East Providence Conservation Commission is an active volunteer group of City residents whose duties are “to promote and develop the City’s natural resources, to protect its watershed resources and to preserve natural esthetic areas, open spaces, woodlands, fields and streams, and recreational areas within the City”, per the Revised Ordinances of the City of East Providence.

Commission business started slowly as winter meetings were affected by heavy snowstorms, but much was accomplished once the group got together. The Commission elected Keith Gonsalves as its new chair, John Rose as Vice Chair, and Jim Boyd as Secretary. Long-time Chair Lorraine Nik was thanked for her service to the Commission; she agreed to remain with the group for 2015. Ernie Germani, a surveyor and outdoor enthusiast and author of the award-winning “Trails and Walks in RI” blog, was welcomed as a new Commission member in March.

In October, the commission was saddened by the passing of Vice-Chair Rose, who was an active member for over 25 years and attended Commission meetings well into 2015. The Commission will consider an appropriate memorial to Mr. Rose within a City conservation area as a priority item in 2016.

The Commission once again participated in the annual statewide Earth Day clean-up on April 18, coordinated locally by East Providence Department of Public Works Recycling Division. Members of the Ten Mile River Watershed Council, the Providence County Hiking Club, and students from East Providence High School joined us for a clean-up at the Boyden Heights Conservation Area including the beach, loop trail and boardwalk areas. Fourteen large bags of trash and several tires were collected and removed.



*Conservation Commission, Ten Mile River Watershed Council and Prov. County Hiking Club Earth Day clean-up at Boyden Heights, April 18, 2015.*

The Conservation Commission also worked with the Watershed Council and the Hiking Club on projects at the Hunts Mills Historic Site during the year. On National Trails Day, June 6, numerous projects were completed including the installation of stone steps at the gazebo trailhead, placement of trail sign posts and trail markers, removal of invasive plants, and installation of six new mountain laurels.

The completed trail is now just about one mile in length and is becoming well established as area residents take advantage of this very scenic historic and natural area within our City.

For the first time, the Commission scheduled hikes within the City's conservation properties. Ernie Germani led hikes at Boyden Heights, the Turner Reservoir Loop Trail, and the Hunts Mills Trail in August and September. These proved quite popular, and the latter of the three attracted 30 people from East Providence and other parts of the area. The Commission will provide scheduled hikes again during the coming year.



*Commission members completing the mile-long loop trail at the Hunts Mills Historic Site on October 31, 2015.*

Another new initiative for 2015 was the increased use of the City's Conservation Commission webpage and the simplification of its web address (see below). The commission also established a social media presence for the first time on Facebook ("epconservation") to announce activities and share photos of conservation properties.

In other business, Commission member Jim Boyd kept the group up-to-date on conservation-related activity at the RI State House and Wayne Barnes provided updates on City projects of interest to the group. All members participated in our planning and work activities.

The Conservation Commission looks forward to a very busy and productive 2016 serving the City of East Providence and welcomes interested members of the community and other conservation interests to our meetings, which are scheduled on the third Tuesday of each month (unless otherwise noticed) at 7:30 pm at East Providence City Hall. The Commission also invites interested residents to join our group as Commission members as openings become available; contact City Liaison Wayne Barnes using the contact information above. Meeting agendas are posted in the lobby of City Hall, with agendas and minutes of past meetings available on the RI Secretary of State's webpage and on the Conservation Commission webpage found on the City's website, [www.eastprovidence.com/conservation](http://www.eastprovidence.com/conservation).

Respectfully Submitted,

**East Providence Conservation Commission**

Keith Gonsalves, Chair

James Boyd, Secretary

Lorraine Nik, Past Chair

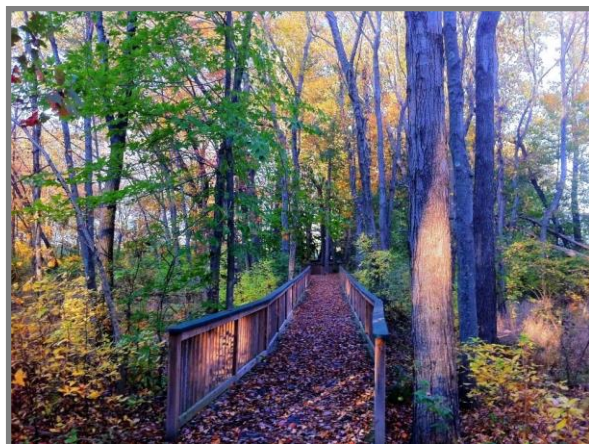
John Burrige

Marie Esten

Ernie Germani

Wayne Barnes, City Liaison

John Rose, in Memoriam (1929-2015)



*Turner Reservoir Raised Walkway*