

East Providence Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2017

East Providence City Hall, Room A

6:30 PM

Members present: Keith Gonsalves (Chair), Ernie Germani (Vice Chair), Wayne Barnes (City Liaison), James Boyd (Secretary), John Burrige, Carissa Lord and Cheryl Vieira

Members absent: None

Call to Order - Chair K. Gonsalves called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and welcomed newly appointed member Carissa Lord.

Review of Minutes - The February 21, 2017 meeting minutes were approved unanimously following a motion by E. Germani and seconded by J. Burrige.

Public Attendees - Sandra Wyatt, Kyle Plouff, and Devon Plouff

Public Comment

- Kyle Plouff discussed his Eagle Scout project proposal to install a message board along the Ten Mile River Bike Path at Kimberly Rock School. Commissioners discussed the matter and agreed that the proposed location was appropriate. However, the Commission did not formerly vote on the proposal given that it does not have jurisdiction or authority over such matters.
- Sandra Wyatt described the Annawamscutt Creek water quality, aquatic habitat and education project being conducted by students of Barrington St. Luke's school. Students are sampling the creek and inventorying macroinvertebrates and have created signs adorned with student artwork to be posted in public areas along the creek. The project goal is to improve water quality in the creek and to improve community appreciation and stewardship of the resource. Sandra indicated that she is trying to elicit project interest with East Providence schools.

Planning Department Update

- Wayne reported that Phase II of the Forbes Street landfill solar project recently received Preliminary Plan approval from the Planning Board. The current 3.7MW array will double to a total of 7.0MW. It is presently the largest solar array in the state.
- Wayne also reported that the FEMA approved City Hazard Mitigation Plan was adopted by the City Council on March 7th.

Correspondence

- "Birds of the Blackstone" presentation at Newman Church will be held on March 27 preceded by a pot luck supper.

Old Business

- Hoppin Avenue Land Donation - Wayne indicated that the status of the property is unchanged from the last meeting. Process continues.
- Utility line tree clearing - Wayne reported that the status of action by National Grid is unchanged from the last meeting, and that he will contact the utility company.

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- Narragansett Bay Commission Earth Day Grant - Wayne reported that the City had obtained a small grant from NBC for the Boyden Heights Conservation Area cleanup scheduled for Saturday, April 22 starting at 9:00am.
- Boyden Heights Stairway rail project Members agreed to meet on Saturday morning April 15 at 9:00am to construct the handrail on the boardwalk.

New Business

- Consideration of Commission meeting time per request of City Clerk's Office - Members discussed the request to change the Commission meeting time to meet earlier than 6:30pm. Following discussion members voted to maintain the current meeting time of 6:30pm as several members are unable to convene earlier than 6:30pm. An earlier meeting time would result in fewer members being able to attend and would likely result in quorum issues.
- Remaining asphalt at Hunt's Mill former fire training site - The Hunt's Mill Master Plan shows that the old asphalt is eventually to be removed and the area restored to an open field. City DPW crews will remove asphalt as construction training project as scheduling permits.

Commission Member Items

- E. Germani reported that the local Montessori School had planned an end of school field day and scavenger hunt at Hunt's Mill on or about June 9th. He also reported that Jen Mill of Seekonk Trail Committee had received approval from Seekonk DPW to install trail blazes on National Grid utility poles to mark the Turner Reservoir trails along Arcade and Ledge Roads subject to national Grid approval.
- Wayne advised members that the RI Flood Mitigation Association annual meeting was scheduled for April 6th, and that NOAA has released the National Water Model that is an online viewer to see predicted precipitation and resulting watershed flooding impacts. See: <http://water.noaa.gov/map>.
- John alerted members that he has just read a fascinating book "The Death and Life of the Great Lakes" by Dan Egan, and encouraged members to read it.

Adjournment - The Commission adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:44 PM.

The next regularly scheduled Conservation Commission meeting will be held on **Tuesday, April 18, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. in Conference Room A at the East Providence City Hall.**

Respectfully submitted, James Boyd, Secretary