

# East Providence Conservation Commission

## Meeting Minutes

October 15, 2013

City Hall, East Providence

7:30 PM

**Members present:** Lorraine Nik (Chair), Wayne Barnes, John Burrridge, Marie Esten, and James Boyd (Secretary)

**Members Absent:** John Rose (Vice Chair) and Keith Gonsalves

**Public present:** None

**Call to Order** - Chair L. Nik called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.

**Review of Minutes** - The Commission reviewed and approved the September 17 meeting minutes on a motion to approve by M. Esten and seconded by W. Barnes.

**Public Comment** - No public present

### **Planning Department Update**

- Omega Pond Fish Ladder - Wayne reported that there was no update, as Keith Gonsalves could not attend the Commission meeting. An update will be provided at the next meeting.
- FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) update - Wayne noted that the U.S. government shutdown delayed the initial review meeting of 4 map panels for the eastern tier of the City. They are expected to be available by early 2014. Map panels for the remainder of the City had been completed earlier this year and were adopted by the City Council on August 20th.

### **Correspondence**

- City Law Department memorandum - Wayne distributed copies of the memorandum regarding recusals for City elected and appointed officials. Commissioners discussed the guidance and took it under advisement. Since the Commission is an advisory body only, it's unlikely that there would be a situation where a Commission member may have a conflict of interest in a matter before the Commission.

### **Old Business**

- Boyden Heights Boardwalk Stairway - The Commission discussed the successful October 5th work day to construct the boardwalk access stairway. Chair Nik thanked Commission members for their planning and work to complete the project.
- City Right-of-Ways (ROWs) - The City has been surveying the 13 CRMC-designated ROWs on the Terrace in preparation for installing posts and signs provided by the CRMC. The new signs will visibly mark the ROWs for public use. There have been no additional duties requested of the Commission at this time.
- Wampanoag Trail land donation - Wayne indicated that the City was to inform the property owner that a Class 1 survey and subdivision approval is required for any land donation. The intended parcel donation would only be 0.89 acres in size. The donation of the parcel to the

City would only reduce the property owner's tax liability by an estimated \$370 per year. As previously discussed by the Commission, it was determined that the parcel provides no value to the City for connectivity to other nearby or abutting open space parcels or conservation areas. Further, the parcel donation would not enhance any new public access. Accordingly, the Commission confirms that it has no interest in the donation and recommends that the City not accept the parcel.

### **New Business**

- Boyden Heights GPX mapping project - The Commission discussed the GPX mapping project on Boyden Heights that Marie Esten had created and entered into an Arc GIS contest (She placed 3rd in a national event- Congratulations!). The Commission will review in detail at a later meeting when Marie brings in a laptop and discuss linking the map to the Commission's City web page.
- Hunt's Mill Terrace Garden project - Wayne indicated that there is no update on the project at this time. A hard frost is needed to kill off annual weeds and to make the trail more visible for inspection of the shrubs planted over the last two seasons.

### **Commission Member Items**

- J. Boyd updated the Commission on the status of the CRMC Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) project for East Providence and other RI coastal communities. The project is evaluating the potential impacts to and responses of coastal wetlands from sea level rise around the state and adaptation and conservation efforts.

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### **Adjournment**

The Commission voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 PM on a motion by J. Burridge and seconded by M. Esten.

The next regularly scheduled Conservation Commission meeting will be held on **Tuesday, November 19, 2013 at 7:30 pm** in Room A (1st floor) East Providence City Hall.

Respectfully submitted, James Boyd, Secretary