

East Providence Conservation Commission

January 19, 2010 Meeting
East Providence City Hall, Room 308
7:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

Members present: Lorraine Nik (Chair), John Rose (Vice Chair), Wayne Barnes, John Burridge, Frank Dias, Keith Gonsalves, and James Boyd (Secretary)

Call to Order

Chair L. Nik called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.

Review of Minutes

The Commission reviewed and approved the December 15 meeting minutes on a motion by J. Rose and seconded by J. Burridge.

Planning Department Update

Wayne notified the Commission that the City has unveiled its new website and asked Commission members to email him with any thoughts or suggestions for the new site design.

Correspondence

Thanks you letters were mailed out to Elliot Gault and the East Providence Boys & Girls Club for their outstanding efforts in the rehabilitation of the Boyden Heights Conservation Area trail system and parking area improvements completed during the summer of 2009.

Wayne advised the Commission that the City Planning Department had sent Citadel Broadcasting a letter in response to its request for test borings for communication tower anchor points. Citadel was seeking approval from regulatory agencies for conducting the test borings in the salt marsh along the Runnins River to determine the appropriate anchoring method to improve structural security of its communication tower. The City's letter indicated recommended steps to protect the salt marsh vegetation and post-test restoration.

Wayne advised the Commission that the Planning Department had received notice of Total Maximum Daily Loading (TMDL) plans for Mount Hope Bay and the Kickemuit River that were prepared by the RIDEM to address fecal bacterial loading and improve water quality. The RIDEM coordinated with the MADEP in preparing the Mount Hope Bay TMDL, as the Kickemuit River empties into Mount Hope Bay. The Plans can be viewed at the RIDEM website here: <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/benviron/water/quality/rest/index.htm>.

Continued Business

DEM Recreational Trail Grant Program - Wayne suggested that a composite rail cap for the Boyden Heights Conservation Area boardwalk maintenance project and new signage with information brochure would be desirable funding elements. The Commission discussed these projects and determined that they would likely meet the funding criteria of the grant program and requested Wayne to apply for the RIDEM grant.

The Commission members thanked Wayne for his preparation of the Commission's Annual Report, which is now posted on the City website.

New Business

Election of Officers for 2010 - J. Burrige motioned to nominate and elect the current slate of officers, which was seconded by K. Gonsalves. After the current officers indicated their willingness to serve, the Commission unanimously voted to elect Lorraine Nik as Chair, John Rose as Vice-Chair and Jim Boyd as Secretary for 2010.

East Providence Hazard Mitigation Plan - Wayne indicated that he would email the draft plan to Commission members for review. Wayne further stated that the updated plan is necessary for the City to be eligible for any FEMA grants.

Cuddigan property - The Cuddigan family owns land in East Providence and Seekonk, MA along the Runnins River and we have been informed that family members are considering a possible donation of land to the City. Wayne indicated that the family has expressed interest in donating about 88 acres to the Town of Seekonk for conservation purposes. The Commission is interested to see further land donations for conservation along this important estuarine corridor for habitat protection.

Chair Nik suggested that the Commission should consider a memorial to George Kent who recently passed away and was a longtime Conservation Commission member. All agreed and discussed several options, but concluded that a memorial bench was most appropriate. The Commission approved to support funding a memorial bench with details to be discussed further at a subsequent meeting on a motioned by J. Boyd and seconded by J. Burrige.

Adjournment

The Commission voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 PM on a motion by J. Burrige and seconded by K. Gonsalves.

The next Conservation Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 16 at 7:30 PM, East Providence City Hall, Room A.

Respectfully submitted,
James Boyd, Secretary