JOHNSON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
JULY 19, 2018

Present: Lois Frey, Sue Lovering, Noel Dodge, Denise Krause, Hillary Emick
Absent: Dean Locke, Eric Nuse, Jackie Stanton. On leave: Laura Branca

The June minutes were approved. It was agreed to add a discussion of a nature trail to the agenda.

TREASURER'S REPORT
There were no figures available tonight.

VRC'S REQUESTS
Lois received a letter from the Vermont River Conservancy's Lydia Menendez Parker, who suggested some changes for the trail and the assigning of a steward at Journey's End. She would also like to add signage at JE and Beard's Recreation.

We discussed the issue and feel that there is no need to add another steward to the mix since CC members and other volunteers check out the area regularly and pick up trash as needed (which is seldom). Why fix it if it ain't broke?

BEARD'S RECREATION PARK
The trail is still not mowed, so Lois will follow up. We agreed that only a small portion of the lower part of the field should be mowed along with some widening (the width of the brush hog) of the trail. The wet area should be left alone for pollinators.

TUESDAY NIGHT LIVE
It has been going well. Upcoming topics will include Ash Borer in Vermont and trails and hiking. Hillary may be able to get an Americorps volunteer to supply and run a watershed model; how cool is that! Noel will borrow a fur-bearing animal display (think plastic poop) for a talk about wildlife that Dean can do.

BAT HOUSE PROJECT
The last bat house installation will go onto McCuin's Island next Saturday, the 21st, but there's a question as to how to get poles and equipment traversed across fields and through the channel to it. There's the weight, heat, and deep water issues…To drop and drown or not to drop and drown; that is the question. Sue and Lois will reconnoiter the planned approach and the south side around McLure's cornfield and find the best bat spot.

GOMO
Dave Lamell visited Gomo with Eric to check out mowing and sent an estimate for $400, which we unanimously felt is too low. He can do the two large fields but the area around the homestead is too rough. Eric suggested to Dave that he (Eric) might do it by hand. We decided that we could pay someone to do it, but that it should not be allowed to grow up to trees.

Eric noticed ATV tracks in the “apple field”. We will do apple tree release and trail marking in the fall.

SIGNAGE AND KIOSK PLANS

Since Laraway can’t build kiosks for us, we’ll do it ourselves in the fall. We have the plans and will need 2X4s, nails, and a lotta cookies. The date for construction will be set at the August meeting.

Installing signage can be left to Vermont River Conservancy.

RURAL ROADS RESILIENT RIGHT of WAYS

Sue and Lois are involved in this project and report that the state team are scheduled to be out on Johnson’s roads soon. They’ll be assessing half of the gravel roads in town.

MISC:

- Brian Story has asked Lois to write up short highlights of our activities and accomplishments for the Byway Blog. We accumulated an impressive list of our laurels; Lois will send them along.
- The lineup for March Gladness in 2019 should be complete by February so that we can get it onto the March Byway Blog.
- Question to be answered: are donations to the Conservation Reserve Fund deductible?
- We never did talk about the Journey’s End nature trail, so will pick it up in August.
- We had a swell ice cream party, thanks to a donation from you-know-who. Triple Caramel Chunk has a way of spiffing a meeting right up. Hillary added home-made snickerdoodles to the mix.

Adjourned at 8:50

The next meeting will be on Thursday, August 16, at the Library at 6:30. Please note that meetings revert to Tuesdays in September.

Submitted by Sue Lovering, Secretary