

Jefferson Conservation Commission  
Minutes  
15 October 2024

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM, and Jamie Savage, Charles Muller, and Nancy Decourcey were present. David Passios of Jefferson was also present for the meeting.
2. The September Minutes were approved.
3. Solar Array Open House: We had a successful open house on Sunday, 13 October, during the Fireman's Pancake Breakfast. Melissa Elander of Clean Energy NH and Celesta Vaillant of Smart Energy of New England were on hand to answer questions. Kevin Meehan represented the Select Board, and Nancy Decourcey and David Govatski represented the Conservation Commission. Some paperwork needs to be filed for grants and renewable energy credits. The Town anticipates a return on investment in five years once we get the estimated \$40,000 in grants. The Town could also earn \$1,200 or more per year from selling renewable energy credits.
4. Dry Hydrant Update: The Fire Department repaired the Winterset Pond dry hydrant by the Israel River Campground. The Conservation Commission assisted in the permitting process. In the end, we determined we did not need a permit for maintenance.
5. Street Lights LED Upgrade: David Govatski will check the status with Affinity.
6. Rail Trail: The trail has become increasingly popular with residents and visitors. The only problems noted were blowdowns from recent storms, but volunteers have cleared those quickly.
7. Volunteers are replacing planks on the Slide Brook Trail that have aged out. The work will continue this winter, weather permitting.
8. The 18<sup>th</sup> annual Big Sit Birding event was held at Cherry Pond on October 12<sup>th</sup>. A dozen birders spent the day counting birds and species as part of a hemisphere-wide effort to study bird migration over a long term.
9. Israel River – Carter Cut Bridge issue. We discussed the problem of the Carter Cut Bridge and Israel River flooding at this location with David Passios. The river channel is moving and threatens the Portland Pipe Line, Valley Road, and a private residence owned by Skip Tilton. Members of the commission met on the ground to look at the problem. The Israel River is a fourth-order stream under the Shoreland Protection Act. The landowners are working with NH DES. The commission advises that a study be made by a qualified fluvial geomorphologist or hydrologist for this stretch of river as far down as NH 115. This complicated problem must be addressed before a significant storm overruns the bank or washes out the derelict Carter Cut Road Bridge. We also suggested visiting the NRCS staff in Lancaster for their advice.
10. There was no other new business.
11. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 19 November 2024.

David Govatski on 16 October 2024