

JOHNSON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 13, 2025

Present: Lois Frey, Sue Lovering, Justin Hennard, Noel Dodge, Adrian Schmidt

Absent: Peter Hammond, Dean Locke

Guest: Denise Greene, Mike Greene, Pat Persico, Linda Benezra, Diana Osborne

Introductions: Diana Osborne reports that her recreation economy group wishes to consider their projects from the perspective of land use and JCC collaboration.

Pat Persico has an interest in joining the CC.

Denise Greene is the chair of Hyde Park's newly formed Energy and Conservation Commission and she heads up Pollinator Pathways.

Linda Benezra is a visitor from Maine who is active at oversight.

Mike Greene is a forester who is working on our Gomo management plan.

The October minutes were approved.

TWENTY YEARS OF THE CC

Lois reviewed our history, mentioning the management plans, natural resource inventory, the reserve fund, educational programs and March Gladness, and the lands we steward. Being one of the CC's founders and the 20-year chair, she has been there and driven all of it.

GOMO TOWN FOREST

Mike presented his report, which made these basic points:

- The road into the lot will not accommodate log trucks without major improvements.
- The timber is good but not terrific. It's mostly sugar maple, yellow birch, red maple, and ash.
- It may happen that all logging profit may be spent on road improvement.
- Old trees should be left.
- 20% of the land should be patch cuts in order to create varied regeneration and therefore species diversity.

Mike will try to find an interested logger.

Noel wondered if we might get a grant for the road work and/or whether the town might create a parking lot that would double as a log landing.

There has been no word on the much-needed survey. It looks as if heavy machinery is parked on Gomo land and that a large cabin is being built on land that is possibly Gomo's. We need this survey.

The recreation task force wants to use the plan done by the LANDS students that would enable a new trail linking the existing Gomo trail to the Long Trail. Diana asked how to go about putting new trails on town land.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The JCC budget proposal is due by Friday, November 14th. There is to be no more than a 2.8% increase. Lois has asked for the same amount we've had in recent years, with the same addition to the reserve fund. She feels we're in good shape, budget-wise.

POLLINATOR GARDENS

A small group turned out to plant and spread hay over the two rototilled spaces on Wescom Rd. Sue, Lois, and Adrian dug perennial plants in Sue's gardens the day before; those were planted as well. Buzz Osgood mowed the paths and carried water buckets. Three educational signs were designed by Sue and have been ordered; they'll be installed in the spring on 4x4 posts.

Funding for this project was an AVCC grant, whose final report is due in June, 2026.

JOURNEY'S END UPDATE

With no warning, the Vermont River Conservancy has put a second kiosk on the trail near the first one. It has their new sign, which none of us has seen yet.

The anchors are still not installed on the benches. Adrian will follow up with Dean to get them.

NEW MEMBER RECRUITMENT

Pat Persico is interested in moving forward to join us.

NEW MEETING DATES

In order not to overlap the Planning Commission's meetings, we've changed our meeting date to the third Thursday of the month, starting in January, 2026, at 6:30 at the library. The Christmas potluck will be changed to a New Year's potluck on that night.

The next meeting will take place on December 11, at 6:30, at the library.

MISC

- There was a ground fire at Prospect Rock during the drought this past summer.
- Lois and Sue have joined a large group of engineers, experts and citizens who are involved in the LCPC's visioning project regarding re-sculpting the Wescom riverbanks and Gihon/Lamoille confluence to restore floodplain.

Adjourned at 8:45.

Submitted by Sue Lovering, Secretary.

Next meeting is an Thursday, December 11, at 6:30 at the library.