

Town of Bethel, Vermont
Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, 7/11/23, 6:30 PM
Town Offices

Meeting brought to order at 6:30pm.

Present: Lisa Campbell, Ferron Griffin, Danny Dover, Mary Floyd, Emily Miller, Chris Fors,

1. Minutes: Minutes from the June meeting were approved with one small amendment (a note that VOREC is still in the process of purchasing the community events trailer).
2. Rain event debrief (added to the agenda)
 - a. Like most of the state, Bethel received a lot of rain on 7/9-7/11/23. This caused some blocked culverts, stressed water and sewer systems, flooding and some road closures. Overall, we fared better than much of the state, but there is damage in some places. We discussed how things had gone generally.
 - b. Carla's Meadow
 - i. The river did cover much of the field.
 - ii. No major damage, but some clean up will be required. Silt remains on the field, the trail near the river is a mess, benches and signs are gone.
 - iii. We had a discussion about whether it makes sense to put in ADA trails in the floodplain. Ultimately we feel like it's a good use of the space, as it requires no permanent structures and allows people access to the river and recreation.
 - iv. The CC plans to have a work day for Carla's Meadow on 7/30 at 8am.
 - c. The White River Partnership has reached out and offered help if we need any.
3. Pollinator Patch
 - a. Andra Bowen and the school are onboard with a patch at the school. There may be an additional location at Carla's Meadow (around the wet spot).
 - b. Mary will get written permission from the school for a 20' x 40' plot.
 - c. The library is looking to purchase:
 - i. seeds from America's Meadows for distribution during Forward Fest. The cost is \$120/200 seed packets. 200 packets seems like a good amount.
 - ii. Pamphlets about the value of pollinators and pollinator plantings through Spaulding Press.
 - iii. Gardening tools up to \$200. Plant a mix of seedlings and seeds.
4. VOREC and Staircase update
 - a. Chris, as project manager, gave an update about what has happened so far with VOREC.
 - b. Staircase
 - i. Bids for the trail component came in a little higher than expected. Chris will check in with the lower bidder to learn more.
5. Planning Commission Update
 - a. The PC will start work on the Town Plan in September.
6. Forward Fest (9/23/23)

- a. We will focus our efforts on the pollinator information.
 - b. We will look for games or something interactive that to incorporate.
7. Any other business
- a. Mary shared a book about the railroad in Bethel. It included pictures of the tunnel connector along the Third Branch that the CC has discussed previously. This tunnel connected lines on two different levels (the “Hummingbird” and the main line).

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8pm. Next meeting will be Tuesday, 8/8/23, 6:30pm at the Town office.