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## JERICHO UNDERHILL PARK DISTRICT REPORT

For over twenty-three years, Mills Riverside Park has offered our community an extraordinary natural area for year round recreation. Whether on snowshoes, cross country skis, horseback or bike, Mills Riverside Park provides the trails and open land for all to enjoy. Scheduled sports such as soccer and lacrosse also keep our youth active and engaged. The Farmers' Market calls the park home during the warmer months and hundreds of visitors explore the farm fresh produce, crafts, and prepared foods every Thursday afternoon from 3:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Summer concerts entertain many, our lush lawns are perfect for picnicking. Many of these traditional events at Mills Riverside Park came to a sudden halt when we were forced to cancel a number of activities because of the Covid 19 virus. The Park District Board of Trustees was extremely pleased to return to a near normal time with a full schedule this year. Beyond managing the park's day to day affairs, the Park District has been challenged by a deteriorating covered bridge and trail erosion. A full assessment of our bridge was conducted by Engineering Ventures and it was determined that the roof and walls were in poor condition and that the abutments might also need to be replaced. As many know, this covered bridge is highly cherished and the only entrance to Mills Riverside Park. How would it be possible to reconstruct the bridge without closing off access? We decided to take a half step measure and tackle the roof and walls first and install safety handrails. This work was accomplished by the end of November and cost over \$36,000. The more extensive reconstruction will have to wait until funding is secured. A temporary bridge will be available to maintain public access as the reconstruction of the bridge will take a few months.

The Park District Board of Trustees is also focusing on our West Fieldstone Loop trail. In 2017, we hired Timber and Stone LLC to improve about a third of this difficult trail at a cost of \$25,000. The funding came from our capital improvements fund. Besides ledge, water seeps from the ground which makes the West Fieldstone Loop very muddy. We have applied for a state grant in an effort to complete the restoration and improvements on this trail.

Mills Riverside Park has proved to be an invaluable natural asset. Managing this land is an honor. Over 360 visitors cross our bridge daily in the summer. Thank you for respecting the park and following park rules. A special thanks to our hardworking and dedicated board members.

Livy Strong Chair  
Dave Williamson Vice-chair  
James Massingham Secretary  
Donna Pratt Treasurer

Bruce Blockland Bridge committee chair  
Chris Tardie Outdoor stewardship