

Townshend Planning Commission

May 22, 2013

Present: Art Monette; John Evans; Susan LeCours; Stan Holt; Bob DeSiervo

In Attendance: Craig Hunt, recorder

1. Call to Order: Monette called the meeting to Order at 7:18 P.M.

2. Approval of Minutes: Holt made a motion: **To approve the Planning Commission Minutes of May 8, 2013**, seconded by DiSiervo and carried by those present.

3. Correspondence: Monette referenced Meeting Minutes from the Select Board dated May 6, 2013; a newsletter from Valley Cares summarizing new construction work at the Independent Living facility; and an invitation from the Windham Regional Commission to a Public Hearing on June 10, 2013 in Jamaica to review and consider approval and confirmation of the new Jamaica Town Plan.

4. Reports: Fire Station Study Committee: Evans briefed the Commission on his attendance at the May 15, 2013 Fire Station Study Committee as the Planning Commission's representative, and though a fifth member to the Committee has yet to be appointed by the Select Board, Evans reported that the meeting was productive. Of concern to him was how rapidly the Committee might be recommending the construction of a new fire station, if, after deliberations, it was decided that that was in the best interest of the Town. Evans reported that he felt relief to hear that plans were not being rushed and that new construction, if it were to be proposed, was probably years in the future.

DeSiervo emphasized that assessment of the ability for the TFD to effectively respond to a major institutional fire would be a big factor in the timescale for facility upgrades.

Monette cited the incredible improvements in material asset delivery and response time from adjacent towns through the mutual aide system that dramatically enhance Townshend's proficiencies.

Town Hall Renovation Committee: Monette relayed the context of a phone conversation with Tiz Garfield about the charge that the Renovations Committee

has received from the Planning Commission and the Select Board to prioritize the small and large, short-term and long-term needs of the Town Hall. Commission members concurred that immediate and general maintenance needs should be managed by the Select Board, but that plans developed by Mark Wesner a few years ought to be reviewed, again.

DeSiervo noted that a maintenance list had been drafted by the Renovations Committee, but wasn't yet finalized. He then, with regret, informed Commissioners that due to increasing other commitments he would no longer be serving on the Renovations Committee. Monette thanked DeSiervo for his years of dedication. Everyone was then asked to help find potential members to join the Committee which should have three to five members that report to the Planning Commission at least once a month.

DeSiervo reported that the Ingram Construction fire door contract proposal was in progress.

Discussion ensued about an invasive plant species - knotweed - which is known to be in Townshend, grows in flood plain sands deposited by Tropical Storm Irene and is difficult to eradicate. DeSiervo spoke of how the plant may increase stream bank erosion and damage the health of adjacent woodlands.

5. Members of the Public: None at this time.

6. Old Business: Flood Plain: Commission members again discussed the need for identifying the major property parcels which are in the FEMA flood hazard that would be governed by building restrictions.

7. New Business: The present and future financial needs of the Townshend Congregational Church, as relayed to the public in an appeal from the church elders at a meeting on April 30th, were presented by Monette and Evans. The potential ramifications to the village center, if the Church proved not to be sustainable, were briefly discussed. The Commission pledged to assist in any way that it can and asked Hunt to arrange for a meeting with Mike Finegan.

8. Meeting Schedule: June 12, 2013 at 7:15 P.M.

9. Adjournment: Holt made a motion: **To adjourn at 8:25 P.M.**, carried by those present.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig K. Hunt