

Townshend Planning Commission

Minutes

April 28, 2021 via Zoom

Present: Bob DeSiervo, Brandon Canevari, Liza Martin and Andrew Snelling

- 1. Call to Order:** Vice Chairman DeSiervo called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** DeSiervo moved to accept the minutes of April 14th, 2021 with corrections to punctuation and clarification of a statement under the Capital Budgeting discussion. The motion was seconded by Canevari and carried unanimously.
- 3. Additions and Deletions:** Snelling requested adding a discussion about Bike path and Sidewalks under Other Business. There were no objections to the addition.
- 4. Members of the Public:** none
- 5. Correspondence:** no new correspondence
- 6. Old Business:** Capital Budgeting Review of Town Hall: DeSiervo said that he left word with Keefe & Wesner, but had not received a call back. DeSiervo also mentioned that he spoken with Chris Campany at WRC regarding possible grant sources. Campany suggested that Building General Services and Better Places Grants might be possible, but the deadline had passed for some of these. Campany did say that Townshend would be receiving funds from the ARP legislation that might be able to be used for Town Hall improvements. Snelling offered to notify the Select Board to be sure they are aware of the federal funds. Martin expressed that the dollar estimates in the Wesner report were very high and questioned if all the changes were necessary. She mentioned as an example what had been done in Athens where they had implemented some simple practical improvements after receiving a high estimate for redoing their town offices. There was a broad discussion about the key items included in the suggested renovations and why it was thought they were needed. DeSiervo said that the Select Board needs to be included in the discussion of the building improvements once ideas have been refined and affordable funding sources have been identified.

West Townshend VCD: Canevari asked for comments regarding the map with proposed boundaries that he circulated. The Commissioners agreed with the boundaries as a starting point but acknowledged that the Downtown Board may wish to shrink the VCD area. Canevari said that based on the feedback he will send the boundary map to Richard Amore for input and

thoughts about the acceptability of the proposed boundaries.

Act 174 Energy Element: Snelling commented that the three graphs had been revised and the suggested footnotes added in the updated draft. He said that he is going to revise some of the tables in the conservation section to make them clearer. He also reported difficulty with adding the additional maps in the appendix.

Act 171 Forest Blocks: Martin expressed that following the Newfane example of using the stock language from Fish & Wildlife it should be a straight forward process to incorporate the Forest Block requirements when it is time to update the Town Plan. Snelling asked if there were more town specific items that should be included regarding wildlife crossings etc. Martin agreed to look into it further.

7. New Business: none

8. Other Business: Select Board Update: Snelling provided an account of the actions of the recent Select Board meeting. The appointment of the Flood Administrator and appointment of a Board of Adjustment was tabled to provide time for the Select Board members to familiarize themselves with the 2007 Townshend Flood Bylaw. The Select Board voted to join the Deer Valley Communications District and appointed Bob DeSiervo as the Townshend representative and Andy Snelling as the alternate.

Bike Path and Sidewalks: Snelling stated that he had attended the Vtrans' webinar on Bike and Pedestrian path grants. The webinar explained that there are \$3,000,000 in available Federal grants and \$600,000 in State grants for bike paths and sidewalks. The grant process is intimidating but there is significant assistance available. DeSiervo mentioned that Chris Campany had suggested requesting a "Road Safety Audit" from the Vtrans district office from Harmonyville through to Oakwood Cemetery Road and from the village center out to the Town Garage. It was Campany's opinion that the data from the survey would strengthen any subsequent grant request. Snelling made a motion that the Planning Commission request a "Road Survey Audit" along these routes.

Snelling passed on that the Townshend Historical Society is exploring a bike path along State Forest road and through the Army Corp of Engineer's property along the reservoir back to West Townshend that could be used to link the Stone Arch Bridges.

9. **Meeting Schedule:** Regular Meeting: May 12, 2021 @ 7:00 p.m. Zoom
Regular Meeting: May 26, 2021 @ 5:00 p.m.
Weather permitting to be in person at the Gazebo

10. **Adjournment:** There being no further business to come before the Commission,
Vice Chairman, DeServio adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Snelling