

Townshend Planning Commission
Minutes
Minutes December 13, 2023

- Present:** John Evans, Bob DeSiervo, and Andrew Snelling.
Member of the public: Laura Richardson
- 1. Call to Order:** Chairman Evans called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.
 - 2. Additions and Deletions:** Snelling suggested rearranging the order of the agenda to move the Town Hall item to be first under Old Business. There were no objections.
 - 3. Members of the Public:** Laura Richardson stated that she wanted to speak about Town Hall.
 - 4. Approval of Minutes:** Evans moved, and Snelling seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of November 8th as submitted and the motion passed with DeSiervo abstaining.
Evans moved, and Snelling seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of the special meeting on November 9th as submitted and the motion passed with DeSiervo abstaining.
 - 5. Correspondence:** none
 - 6. Old Business:**

Town Hall:
Laura Richardson said that she had spoken with the Select Board regarding the future of the Townshend Town Hall and had been directed to talk with the Planning Commission. She reported hearing about the repairs needed to the building but had also heard comments about building a new building. Snelling voiced the opinion that Town Hall is a significant historical building with many unique features not found in modern buildings but that it also has some maintenance and code issues. Snelling summarized the recent history of the Planning Commission's work including the updated Wesner report. He explained that due to the \$1.2 million estimated (8/31/21) cost that the Select Board had asked the Planning Commission to look at breaking the project into phases. Recently the Planning Commission has been exploring improving the front ramp, adding electric door operators and making one of the bathrooms ADA compliant. Laura expressed that the citizens should be given an opportunity to weigh in on the future use of the Town Hall. There was a discussion on how to obtain additional public input and financing options. It was agreed that a town meeting article might be better than a survey. Snelling agreed to assist Laura with drafting an article.

Town Plan: Snelling said that Connie Holt had contacted him to setup a meeting with the Select Board Budget Committee to

discuss questions they have regarding the \$26,000 budget request for updating the Town Plan. Snelling and Evans are scheduled to meet with them on December 18th at 2:00 p.m.

There has been no indication yet as to whether Townshend had received the Municipal Planning grant.

Town Garage Emergency Power: DeSiervo mentioned that he had contacted several companies and was having difficulty getting a response. One company is available to meet on January 29th to evaluate the needs and would like to review the last 6 months of power bills. Evans said the electrical contractor he has spoken with says that he is working on it. Evans and DeSiervo will continue to pursue establishing the needs and rough costs of obtaining a generator for emergency power.

7. **New Business:** none
8. **Meeting Schedule:** Snelling inquired about the Commissioners' availability on December 27th. A discussion followed regarding availability and possible agenda items. Snelling made a motion to cancel the meeting of December 27th with the understanding a special meeting could be called if needed. The motion was seconded by Evans and the motion passed.
9. **Adjournment:** Chairman, Evans seeing no further business to come before the Commission, adjourned the meeting at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Snelling