

Plainfield Select Board Meeting
July 25, 2016
Draft Minutes

PRESENT: Ross Sneyd (Select Board Member), Bram Towbin (Select Board Chair), Betsy Ziegler (Select Board Member), Linda Wells (Town Clerk/Treasurer), Keith Swann (Videographer), Cindy Wyckoff (Minutes Recorder), Eric Blaisdell (Times Argus), Bob Rosenfeld (Cutler Library), David Strong (Town Hall Opera House), Mike Nolan (Road Foreman), Loona Brogan (Cutler Library), and Sarah Albert (Conservation Commission).

Bram Towbin called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

AGENDA

- Announcements/Public Comment
- Town Clerk's Report
- Road Report – including Discussion of Right-of-Way Permit for Work Crossing Road
- Town Hall Opera House Update – Formation of Committee, etc.
- Gallison House Update - Proposed Sale of Town Land off Route 2
- Library Request
- Paperwork for Cameron Road Property Buy-Out
- Trash Pick Up in the Village
- Old Home Days
- Cost of Archeological Review for Bridge Study
- Minutes

Towbin requested that the discussion regarding Trash Pickup in the Village be moved up to earlier in the meeting and Betsy Ziegler added discussion of the Resiliency Survey to Announcements/Public Comment. **Ross Sneyd made a motion to accept the agenda as amended. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

- Ziegler announced that the Resiliency Survey is ready to be printed and will be sent out on 7/29/16 to all Plainfield registered voters. Extra surveys will be available at the Town Clerk's office and the Cutler Library and plans are to post it to social media.
- Sneyd noted that the Blinking Light Gallery will have a grand re-opening on 7/28/16 with a 10%-off sale.
- Towbin thanked the Green Mountain Transit Authority for the new, larger bus shelter at the Park and Ride, which was recently installed. The glass on the sides of the new shelter and the new lighting will be installed in approximately 4-6 weeks. The old bus shelter will be relocated to in front of the Post Office. Towbin asked for volunteers who might be able to help construct a cement pad for the Post Office bus shelter.
- Towbin noted recent discussion on social media regarding the proliferation of road signs in Plainfield, specifically on Walker Lane. He reviewed the process that the Town followed with various

authorities regarding the statutory requirements for placement and sizing of signage. David Strong added that proper signage is needed in the enforcement of speed limits. Sneyd stated his appreciation for the new sign on East Hill alerting drivers to the upcoming stop sign at the intersection of Main and Creamery Streets that was recently installed. Towbin reported that over the weekend, two signs had been knocked down and noted the time and tax dollars that go into putting the signs back up again.

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

- Linda Wells announced that the State Primary Elections will be held on 8/9/16 at the Municipal Office building. Voters who cannot get to the polls on that day can request absentee ballots by contacting the Town Clerk's Office.
- Wells noted that Town taxes are due on 8/17/16.
- Wells reported that Kate Harper has stepped down as chair of the Conservation Commission, but will remain as a member. Sarah Albert and Jan Waterman will be co-chairing.
- Wells presented a copy of the draft permit for Use of Right of Way for review.
- Wells presented a financial questionnaire, required annually by the Secretary of State's office, describing the process that Town Treasurers use. She asked that the Select Board review the information she has entered and each sign off that it was received.
- Wells reported that the work to repair flood damage on Cameron Road has been completed and presented the final reimbursement request to the State Emergency Fund. The final reimbursement amount due from the State is \$86,324.32. **Sneyd made a motion to approve the reimbursement request in the amount of \$86,324.32 to the Vermont Agency of Transportation. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- Wells presented the paperwork to proceed with the buyout process for the property on Cameron Road. Other than the management supervisory role that he will play, Towbin clarified that there will be no cost to taxpayers. Towbin noted a match amount of \$56,525, which will be assumed as owner's equity. Additional discussion on the item is scheduled for later in the meeting.

ROAD REPORT – INCLUDING DISCUSSION OF RIGHT-OF WAY PERMIT FOR WORK CROSSING ROAD

- Road Foreman Mike Nolan reported that the Road Crew has been working to restore washed-out roads, clean out culverts, remove roadside berms, and fill wash-out areas with sod. Towbin mentioned a note sent by Ziegler thanking the Road Crew for installing a new culvert and the ditch work on Recreation Field Road.
- Nolan stated that the property owner on Fowler Road no longer wants the Town to do the work that had been previously discussed, and that the property owner will be hiring an engineer. Nolan noted his concern about the culvert.
- Towbin presented draft language for a Right-of-Way permit that includes a requirement for utility lines to be buried at a depth of seven feet. Discussion followed on whether the depth requirement was excessive, with Nolan maintaining that the depth was necessary to avoid the possibility of damaging utility lines during ditch and other road work. It was decided that further discussion was needed before finalizing the permit language. Sneyd recommended using the phrase "utility lines" throughout the permit to encompass all types of lines (telephone, electrical, etc.).

- Towbin noted that research done on a Plainfield property deed revealed a deal made that obligates the Town to maintain rocks near the house and road, which are now falling. Further discussion on the issue was tabled until a later time.

TRASH PICK UP IN THE VILLAGE

- Ziegler noted the trash and recycling bins located at the Mill Street Park, stating that she and others have been emptying the receptacles and removing the discarded materials. Ziegler requested consideration of a paid staff person to pick up materials on a regular basis and discussion ensued on ways in which to make it happen. Ziegler noted that Positive Pie has agreed to remove the trash once a week and Ziegler will continue to remove the recyclables. Discussion also included the need to remove trash resulting from use of the Town Hall Opera House.

COST OF ARCHEOLOGICAL REVIEW FOR BRIDGE STUDY

- Towbin noted an additional cost involved in the Milone and MacBroom bridge study, the responsibility for which Central Vermont Regional Planning is willing to share with the Town. Due to not having the paperwork available to review, discussion of the item was tabled until a later date.

TOWN HALL OPERA HOUSE UPDATE – FORMATION OF COMMITTEE, ETC.

- David Strong provided a brief background on the initial formation and evolution of the Advisory Committee for the Town Hall Opera House, noting that there was a need for a more permanent organization to help the facility to flourish. He noted that in April of this year, Friends of the Plainfield Town Hall Opera House was incorporated as a nonprofit with the mission of helping to raise funds for needed improvements and assisting with the management of events. A five-person board of directors has been established and four officers were elected: Keith Swann (president), Kathy Light (vice president), Tom Blachly (treasurer), David Strong (secretary), and Naomi Flanders. Meetings are held on the third Monday of each month at 6:30pm. Towbin noted that the Select Board had voted to support the endeavor by acting as the fiscal agent in the application of a Vermont Community Foundation grant to fund a classical music series. Discussion followed on whether there was a need to retain the Advisory Committee in light of the establishment of the Friends group, culminating in agreement that each group represents different functions and both should continue.

GALLISON HOUSE UPDATE - PROPOSED SALE OF TOWN LAND OFF ROUTE 2

- Towbin reviewed the issue regarding exploring the purchase of a property across from the Town Hall Opera House for much needed parking for the venue, assuring that a Town-wide vote will precede any purchase. Strong reported that the Town has offered, and the seller has approved, a \$70,000 purchase price. A subsequent inspection of the structure uncovered foundation problems and mold issues, and the building was filled with trash. The seller was advised that in light of these deficiencies, a reduction in price might be in order and that a \$10,000 escrow account should be set up at the closing to pay for any necessary clean up if the seller does not leave it in the broom-clean condition stipulated in the agreement.
- An inspection will take place tomorrow to determine how much asbestos, if any, is in the building. This is important because if demolition is necessary, the presence of asbestos can add up to \$15,000 in disposal costs. The asbestos inspection will cost up to \$800. A brief discussion followed on the

possible presence of lead paint, which would present a problem only if someone wanted to fix up the house.

- An architect working with the Preservation Trust of Vermont will perform a condition assessment of the building, which was built around 1870 and lies in the Historic District.
- Towbin put forth the possibility of selling the 2.2 acres of Town-owned property that is not in use behind the School Street Apartments on Route 2 and putting the proceeds into the Gallison House project. Discussion ensued on the condition of the property and any possible interest the owner of the School Street Apartments may have in purchasing it. It was agreed that Towbin would explore the possibility those involved.

LIBRARY REQUEST

- Loona Brogan from the Cutler Library provided information on the library's history, how its use by the community has evolved, and the need for expanding the physical space. She noted a noncompetitive planning grant for up to \$30,000 available through the Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP). A partnership, however, is needed with the Town because the nature of the funding prescribes that it be dispersed through a municipality and cannot be given directly to an incorporated nonprofit. Brogan explained that the Town would be the actual grant applicant/recipient and that the library would do all the necessary paperwork for the Town to submit the application via VCDP's website. Discussion followed regarding potential liability for the Town in terms of hidden costs, including the outlay of Town resources in fulfilling its partner responsibilities. It was decided that the library would report back on how other non-municipal libraries in Vermont protect their towns from risk in similar arrangements.

PAPERWORK FOR CAMERON ROAD PROPERTY BUY-OUT

- Towbin presented the Community Development Block Grant subgrant agreement for the buy-out of the 280 Cameron Road property and suggested that it be signed with the inclusion of two additional provisions: 1) The match portion of the house purchase shall be funded via pre-sale owner's equity, not municipal dollars; and 2) The signing of this document will not commit the Town to spend any funds on this endeavor that are not fully and promptly reimbursed. **Sneyd made a motion to approve the Community Development Block Grant subgrant agreement for the buy-out of the 280 Cameron Road property with two additional provisions: 1) The match portion of the house purchase shall be funded via pre-sale owner's equity, not municipal dollars; and 2) The signing of this document will not commit the Town to spend any funds on this endeavor that are not fully and promptly reimbursed. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.** Towbin underscored the point that no taxpayer dollars were being used and that the work outlined in the subgrant agreement will protect the Town from hundreds of thousands of dollars in costs and physical harm to first responders and others if the house is allowed to fall into the Great Brook.

TOWN FOREST ARCHEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT CONTRACT

- Sarah Albert from the Conservation Commission presented the contract between the Town and the Northeast Archeology Resource Center to undertake an archeological assessment of the Town Forest trailhead parking areas in the amount of \$1,775. Said bid estimate by the archeological assessment firm had already been accepted by the Select Board at a previous meeting. Towbin signed the contract on behalf of the Select Board.

- Towbin noted follow-up discussion that was needed regarding the concerns of a property owner who lives close to the Town Forest. It was decided that that the property owner should be invited to the next Conservation Commission meeting on 8/17/16.
- Towbin requested that Albert send him contact information on Stone Hammer, the company doing the construction work at the Town Forest trailheads, so Towbin can follow up on a previous project.

OLD HOME DAYS

- Ziegler announced an organizational meeting on 7/28/16 for the Old Home Days event, which will be held on 9/17/16. The theme of the event will be around resiliency and building community. Ziegler mentioned the names of participants who were organizing various aspects of the event. Ziegler noted that a resident had offered to take down the pavilion structure at the Recreation Field in exchange for the materials and that the demolition should take place before the Old Home Days event. **Sneyd made a motion that pending consultation with the Town Clerk, the Select Board authorize removal of the structure at the Recreation Field and that the person doing the demolition may recycle the materials. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.** Towbin noted that electrical outlets need to be disconnected prior to the demolition. Discussion followed regarding adding other food vendors, including the possibility of a student group from Twinfield selling food as fundraising effort.

COST OF ARCHEOLOGICAL REVIEW FOR BRIDGE STUDY

- Towbin noted the expense of approximately \$1,600 for an archeological survey that was required as part of the Milone and MacBroom Bridge Study. The figure is half of the total \$3,100 cost of the archeological survey; the other half will be paid by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission. The Select Board will follow up on the issue at the next meeting.

MINUTES

- **Ziegler made a motion to accept the minutes from the 7/11//16 Select Board meeting as drafted. Towbin seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00pm on a motion by Ziegler. Towbin seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Wyckoff