

Townshend Planning Commission

Minutes

July 23, 2025

Present: Bob DeSiervo, Doug Ballantine, Rick Matschke, Liza Martin, and Andrew Snelling.

1. **Call to Order:** Chair DeSiervo called the meeting to order at 5:42 p.m.
2. **Additions and Deletions:** DeSiervo asked to add a discussion of WRC recent invoicing for work on Town Plan under Old Business Town Plan. There were no objections.
3. **Members of the Public:** none
4. **Approval of Minutes:** Ballantine moved and Matschke seconded a motion to approve the minutes for the regular meeting of July 9, 2025 as submitted. The motion passed.
5. **Correspondence:** none
6. **Old Business:**

Town Hall Door Operators: Matschke summarized his meeting with an electrician and the subsequent estimate. The electrician will do the work on time and materials basis and estimated that the cost with Vt State permit but excluding electric hinges would be less than \$1,000. Matsche also reported that DCI had let him know that adding a new color matched Simplex mechanical hardware set to the quote with Von Duprin hardware would increase the cost by \$1,143.

DeSiervo stated that for aesthetic, operational simplicity and security reasons we should not use a mechanical key pad but should get an access control system with a key card reader similar and not unlike modern hotel doors. He contacted one possible source and received a ballpark estimate of ~\$2,500 for door hardware plus installation for one door and ~\$6,000 for hardware for a four-door system. There would be a small annual charge plus a cost for key cards.

Snelling observed that the Commission had to narrow down the choices and make some decisions. He suggested some straw polls to get an informal sense of the Commission.

- 1) Internal Fire Doors: The consensus was that it would be nice to have the internal doors on electric operators but that the added cost of \$6,542 wasn't justified given that it is not an ADA requirement. DeServio pointed out that it would be possible to automate just one leaf which would likely have a lower cost. It was agreed to get the cost for a single leaf, but the view was to not include the internal fire doors in the proposal at this time.
- 2) Electric latching Panic Hardware: The Commission discussed the options of using existing hardware and "dogging" the door latches open when the ADA operators

were to be in use. There were questions about who would do it and when would it be necessary to have the ADA openers active. The general view was that the electric panic hardware should be included in the proposal. The vote was 4-0-1.

- 3) Access Control with key card or mechanical key pad: DeSiervo voiced his opinion that the existing mechanical keypad does not comport with historic building aesthetics, adds complexity and doesn't provide adequate security for a public building because it is too easy to distribute the code. He went on to say that a minor consideration was the access control software with key cards can provide tracking of who enters and might be able to eliminate the need for the 3-way switch on the Horton operators to turn off the ADA buttons when the building is locked. It was the consensus that the cost and capabilities of an access control system with key cards should be explored.
- 4) Incorporate cost of Access Control in proposal or include as a option: There was a spirited debate on the merits of key cards and access control software versus the existing mechanical key pad. The central point was whether the added cost provided sufficient additional benefit. DeSiervo expressed his viewpoint that modern access control software with key cards were an essential part of the installation because of the historic building aesthetic, operational simplicity and in order to provide adequate security. The prevailing viewpoint was that the access control software and key cards should be part of any proposal as an option. The vote was 4-1-0.

DeSiervo agreed to contact some providers of access control systems and determine the cost of various systems, their respective features and how they would integrate with the Horton operators and the electric panic hardware.

Matschke said he would contact DCI to clarify A) the use of electric hinges in place of the armored door loops; B) if the Simplex mechanical keypad will work with the Falcon panic hardware and C) whether a card reader could eliminate the need for the 3-way switch on the Horton door operators.

Town Plan: DeSiervo informed the Commission that the required notice for the Town Plan Hearing on August 7th was published in the Commons on Wednesday, July 16th. He also mentioned that the WRC had submitted an invoice for \$1,650 which he approved. This last invoice brings the total billed up to the not to exceed quote for the work of \$15,030.

7. New Business:

Rt 30 Harmonyville to Townshend Village: Martin stated that she had observed a pedestrian warning sign going South on RT 30 and wasn't sure how long it had been there, but the Planning

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Commission should contact VTrans about getting a sign for the North bound traffic. She observed that even small changes could improve the safety on this stretch of the road. Snelling noted that getting an additional sign was a good idea but that the request would need to come from the Selectboard.

Meeting Schedule:

Town Plan Hearing & Special Meeting: August 7, 2025 @ 5:30 p.m.
Regular Meeting August 13, 2025 @ 5:30 p.m.

Adjournment:

Chair DeSiervo seeing no further business to come before the Commission adjourned the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Snelling