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Capital Improvements Committee
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Capital Improvements Committee Regular Meeting

Meeting Minutes
Jun 11, 2026, 5:30 PM
Mayor's Conference Room

PLYMOUTH, CT
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
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1. Call to Order / Roll Call

Chairman George Castle called the regular meeting of the Capital Improvements Committee to order at 5:30 PM.

Present: Chairman George Castle; Commissioner Mike Maffia; Commissioner Vincent Gaultieri; Commissioner Jim Klaneski; Joe Sopczneski (Public Works Director); Vicky Carey (Board of Finance Liaison) and ; Recording Secretary Pamela Pelletier.

Absent: Mayor Dave Sekorski

2. Fire Exit Notification

Chairman Castle delivered the fire exit notification.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

4. Acceptance of Minutes – Previous Meetings

Commissioner Klaneski raised a correction to the previous minutes, noting that a suggestion to explore retaining a contingency-based grant writer had been attributed to him, when in fact it was made by Melanie Church. Recording Secretary Pelletier confirmed the error and noted the correction would be reflected in the record.

MOTION to accept the minutes as corrected was made by **Commissioner Maffia** and seconded by **Commissioner Klaneski**. The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

5. Capital Improvements Bonded Roads – Project Discussion

Public Works Director Joseph Sopczneski

Public Works Director Joseph Sopczneski presented an overview of the roads and projects within the capital bond program, noting that work is divided between the current year and 2027.

The Farms (Oakdale, Fountainhead, Tumblebrook): Director Sopczneski described drainage improvements currently underway, including installation of under drains to address significant groundwater throughout the area. Full depth reclamation and paving will follow. Measurements taken during excavation have revealed approximately 4 inches of asphalt over 6 to 18 inches of sandy gravel road base, with a clay layer approximately 2 feet down. Commissioner Maffia noted that a prior engineer had cautioned that previous work on these roads was not completed to full depth, and Director Sopczneski confirmed that full depth reclamation would convert the existing pavement and base into a new road base, with a binder course and topcoat applied on top, with an expected service life of 20 to 25 years.

North Street: Director Sopczneski explained that the original bond presentation contemplated cold-in-place recycling for the entire length of North Street. Following a review of current conditions, the treatment has been revised by section: a mill and overlay from US Route 6 to Plymouth Center School; no work in the section between Plymouth Center School and approximately Berry Road/Blakeman Road, as it was recently repaved with the reservoir project; a mill and overlay from Barry Road to Schroback Road; and full depth reclamation from Schroback Road to North Harrington Road.

Chip Seal Phase 1 (Crossroads area): The highway crew completed crack sealing, catch basin repairs, shimming, and pothole patching in preparation for chip sealing. The chip seal contractor was pushed back one week and is now scheduled to begin the week of June 22nd, followed by a three-week curing period. Public notice will be posted on the town website.

Todd Road Bridge and South Main Street Bridge: Todd Road Bridge work is scheduled for the current year. Engineering for South Main Street is underway. Director Sopczneski stated the intent is to hold a public hearing in 2026 and complete the bid process over the winter for a spring construction start. He also noted that a Local Bridge Program grant from the state has been secured to cover approximately half the cost of the South Main Street Bridge, which was previously included at full cost in the \$5.9 million bond. The resulting savings create capacity to address additional roads within the bond program.

Director Sopczneski described the tracking structure for bond expenditures, with individual purchase orders broken down by project segment and work type (e.g., underdrain work, reclamation, catch basin repairs, paving) to allow for detailed cost monitoring. He noted that data from the prior year's work on The Farms Phase 1 is being used to inform cost projections for the current program. He also outlined a developing three-year plan that addresses all roads identified in the bond package, with a commitment to extend this to a five-year plan.

The committee and Director Sopczneski discussed the relationship between the bond work and other funding streams, including Town Aid Road (TAR) funds, LOTCIP (Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program), and capital funds, confirming that a coordinated multi-year road plan is being developed. Director Sopczneski noted that on April 1st, NVCOG accepted a project cost increase of up to \$3.6 million for a LOTCIP grant to reconstruct the East Plymouth/Route 72

intersection, a project that has been active since 2016, with engineering and a state application currently underway.

Commissioner Gualtieri confirmed that the road study conducted by **Director Sopczneski's** predecessor served as the basis for prioritizing the bonded roads program. **Director Sopczneski** noted that while the roads included in the bond have not changed, some treatment types have been escalated based on current conditions—for example, sections of South Eagle Street, Preston Road, and North Harrington that were originally slated for chip seal are too deteriorated for that treatment and will instead receive a mill and overlay.

Coordination with Connecticut Water was also raised; **Director Sopczneski** confirmed that sections of South Eagle Street were removed from the chip seal schedule because Connecticut Water is planning to install a water main from the bottom of South Eagle Street up to North Higgins Road.

The committee acknowledged that the committee does not meet in July or August. It was agreed that **Director Sopczneski** would provide progress updates following Public Works Board meetings, with copies forwarded to Recording Secretary Pelletier for distribution to committee members. A special meeting would be called only if a significant issue arose.

Transfer Station Compactor: **Director Sopczneski** updated the committee on the status of the transfer station compactor replacement. A capital appropriation of \$180,000 has been approved. Verbal quotes had come in around that figure, but written bids came in at approximately \$220,000, \$270,000, and \$182,000. The town is proceeding with the lowest bidder at \$182,000 and a site visit is being scheduled. **Director Sopczneski** noted the town is currently hauling more frequently due to the inoperative compactor, though cost is on a per-weight basis rather than per-haul. The possibility of slightly widening the compactor footprint during the new installation is being explored but cannot be guaranteed.

Staffing: **Director Sopczneski** noted that the highway crew now has five members following a new hire on June 1st. The committee acknowledged that this is approximately half the staffing the department had 30 years ago, and commended the crew for managing an extensive workload. **Director Sopczneski** also noted that, as of May 19th, he is a state-licensed landscape architect, enabling the town to perform grading plans, stormwater plans, and road design in-house, which the committee recognized as a significant cost-saving development.

Sidewalk on Route 6 / Holt Street Area: **Chairman Castle** raised the issue of pedestrian safety near a restaurant on Route 6, where patrons are crossing the street between a parking lot and the establishment with no sidewalk. He noted the property owner, Randy Olmstead, had indicated at a recent meeting that he would be willing to bid on and construct the sidewalk at a competitive price. **Chairman Castle** asked **Director Sopczneski** to raise this issue with the state DOT at an upcoming meeting. **Director Sopczneski** confirmed the Tuesday meeting is with the DOT traffic control unit, and he will explore what the process and design would look like. The

committee discussed the Route 6 downtown corridor more broadly in relation to the Downtown Transformation Plan, and the potential for the state's involvement in longer-term corridor improvements.

Traffic Safety – Town Hill Road / Route 6 Intersection: Chairman Castle raised visibility and safety concerns at the intersection of Town Hill Road and Route 6, where sight lines are severely limited. He requested that Director Sopczneski look into the possibility of installing a flashing yellow caution light at that location. Director Sopczneski agreed to raise it with the DOT at the Tuesday meeting.

Carter Road Guardrail: A brief discussion addressed the long-standing issue of a guardrail on Carter Road off Route 6. Commissioner Maffia emphasized that this is legally the state's responsibility, and that the town should not accept liability for installing or maintaining guardrails on state roads, as doing so could obligate the town to fulfill similar requests townwide.

Five-Year Capital Plan Status: Commissioner Gaultieri moved to request a status update on the development of the five-year capital improvements plan from the Finance Office prior to the next regular meeting.

Recording Secretary Pelletier reported that following the last meeting, she had provided Finance Director Vijay Dora with a copy of the relevant minutes and the template sheets forwarded from Winchester. The Finance Director indicated he would discuss the matter with the Mayor and determine how to proceed, noting the plan would require ongoing monthly maintenance. She acknowledged that the Finance Office is currently occupied with fiscal year-end closing and audit preparation, but committed to conveying the committee's request for an update.

Commissioner Gaultieri articulated the committee's goal: to have a working plan document in place before the September meeting, so that when department heads present requests, the committee has an existing framework against which to evaluate and prioritize them. The plan should reflect multi-year appropriations, identify obligated versus planned funds (with suggested color-coding), include project justifications beyond single-line items, and ultimately be made available on the town website alongside the committee's policies and procedures.

Board of Finance Liaison Carey reminded the committee that capital appropriations are typically authorized for up to three years for expenditure, and that this structure should be reflected in the five-year plan document.

MOTION to request a status update on the five-year capital plan from the Finance Office as soon as possible, and no later than the next regular meeting, was made by Commissioner Gaultieri and seconded by Commissioner Maffia. The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

6. Public Comment

Randy Jones, 24 South Street, was present and observed the meeting. **Chairman Castle** invited public comment. Mr. Jones did not offer formal comment but was introduced for the record.

7. Homework – Next Meeting 09/10/2026 (unless a Special Meeting is called)

8. Chairman / Committee Member Comments

Commissioner Maffia requested that sight lines be improved at the intersection of NAPCO Road and Bemis Road, noting that brush should be cut back to improve visibility for drivers turning from NAPCO onto Bemis. **Director Sopczneski** noted the roadside mower had been active and agreed to have the location checked.

Commissioner Maffia also raised the condition of Beach Avenue, asking whether it was included in any upcoming plans. **Director Sopczneski** confirmed that engineering for the low-lying intersection of Ames Street and Beach Avenue, which is prone to flooding—is substantially complete, pending final surveying. A community funding grant for that intersection has been written into legislation by Congresswoman Jahana Hayes and submitted to Congress, with potential funding possible in the following year.

Chairman Castle noted an upcoming moratorium on properties with topography challenges for (hillside, steep grades, etc.) solar installations, citing drainage and fire safety concerns, and indicated that Planning and Zoning is actively reviewing related regulations.

Chairman Castle also noted that the Preston Road matter before the Wetlands Commission is not expected to be decided until after August.

9. Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn was made by **Commissioner Maffia** and seconded by **Commissioner Klanski**. The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:29 PM. Total meeting duration: 59 minutes and 30 seconds.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Pelletier
Recording Secretary