

# Select Board Sidelines

## January 13, 2021

### **Submitted by John Shepard, Chair**

I'm writing this select board sideline the day following the "rally" and break-in at our nation's capitol building. It's difficult to understand and process this event which truly is unique in our history. Certainly, this is an historic moment for us all, and it's impossible to predict how this will change our contemporary political situation and our country's future. This is a pivotal time, for sure, and it seems that anything may be possible from now on.

We can all hope that this will prove to be the time when we collectively realize we can no longer remain entrenched in partisan strife and ideological conflicts which lead to government deadlock, social unrest, and violence. The stakes are high, and we've now seen what can happen.

As usual, I think it's important to "think globally, but act locally" as true change begins within ourselves and close to home. At this moment, I'm earnestly examining my own precepts to try and be clear about my thoughts and actions... I want to be part of the solution, not part of the problem. I believe we all have some degree of personal influence in our towns and communities and I think our words and actions can affect change. We decide if we prefer the change to be positive or negative with every thought, every word spoken to neighbors and townspeople, every courtesy extended and every interaction.

I'm going to try my best to affect positive change.

### **Submitted by Martha Johnston-Nash**

Selectman John Shepard has written a good piece about civility. I would like to add my two cents worth: Democracy is not about having your way. It is not about getting what you want at all costs. It's not about winners and losers. Our country was built on honest, open debate and discussion of what and how to do those things we need as a nation. When we shut down debate or use every tactic politically possible to shut down voices, we all lose. That is no different on the local level, and that is why it has been so important for me to ensure that there is an open, respectful conversation among our citizens. These days of confinement make it difficult if not impossible to do that; but it is my hope that with the vaccine and (hopefully) immunity, we will be able to have in-person meetings and an open town meeting this year.

As well, it is difficult to get information out to everyone about what is happening in town. If you know neighbors who aren't getting our newsletter, suggest they go online and sign up so they can be informed. Or forward this to them. Right now there are a number of committees looking for members, and it's a good way to participate in and learn more about the various undertakings. E.g.: Food Ordinance Committee, Broadband Committee, Aging in Place, and soon probably a TCC Committee. And don't forget there will still be a (rescheduled) workshop on paving roads, so you have more time to get your input to us.

Also please get out the word that the Planning Board will hold a public hearing on the proposed solar array project this Thursday at 6:30pm on Zoom. Check the Planning Board calendar on the town website for further info.

### **Submitted by Bill Lombardi**

A few items from the Board meeting of January 5:

Road Workshop: Originally scheduled for January 12 has been postponed until further details regarding the plan and cost of the reconstruction of the Clarry Hill culvert project is obtained. The workshop will be re-scheduled before spring work is scheduled. A definitive position from a past Select Board vote was requested regarding the paving of gravel roads.

Thompson Community Center: The continuation of a conversation that began on December 15 regarding the possibility of forming a town committee regarding possibilities for this building is expected to continue at the Select Board's next meeting on January 19.

Volunteers Requested: Both the Broadband and Aging in Place committees are requesting additional participants. The Broadband committee is in particular need of an educator on the committee.

Aging in Place will be having a "to go" luncheon for seniors to celebrate St. Patrick's Day on March 18. The committee is in need of volunteers who care about our aging population in Union and resources to keep them healthy.

If interested in participating in any Town committee a "Statement of Interest" is to be submitted to the Town Manager. The form can be obtained on the Town's web site, click on the "Government" tab, then "Boards & Committees", the last item on the drop-down menu is the "Statement of Interest" form.