

ATHENS TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Notes

March 11, 2025
Scheduled for 10:30 am

Attending Members:

John Oberling (JO) (presiding), Andrew Toepfer (AT), Janet Perry (JP), Mark Berman (MAB), Ivor Stevens (IS)

Absent Members:

None

Other Attendees:

Mike McConnell (WRC) (MM) (attended portion of meeting related to Town Plan); Hannah Regier (Town Clerk) (HR)

- 1) Call to Order: Meeting called to Order at 10:36 am at Town Hall
- 2) Past Minutes: Motion to approve Dec 2024 and Feb 2025 minutes (AT/MAB), unanimously approved
- 3) Three-minute public comments: No members of public present
- 4) Amendments to the Agenda: None
- 5) Working Session (Discuss Current Version of Town Plan)
 - a. Discussion of next steps: Informational Meeting → Town Comm'n Meeting → Public Hearing → Select Board → Windham Regional (will circulate to neighboring towns)
 - b. Discussion of how to give sufficient notice to residents
 - c. Information Meeting: April 22, 2025, at 7 pm
 - d. HR presentation regarding NFIP
 - i. Recap of NFIP
 1. Municipalities take certain actions in exchange for fed gov't providing flood insurance benefit to residents
 2. Actions include regulating development in flood plains
 3. Athens one of few towns not participating

ii. Requirements

1. Town needs to draft/institute flood hazard bylaws
2. Need flood plain administrator (Brookline interested in sharing administrator with Athens)
3. Board of Adjustment (possibly Town Planning Comm'n) to review certain types of permit applications

iii. Questions

1. AT: Does Select Board want this to happen (don't want to spend a lot of time on something Select Board is not going to approve)? A: Yes, but David Bemis wants TPC to vet it. Required for Town to receive funding and grants (HR gives examples).
2. MAB: Which residents would be affected? A: Property owners in Brookline Rd area (HR circulates new maps); those same residents would also receive the benefit of more-affordable flood insurance.
3. AT: How does it affect existing structures? A: Grandfathered in. Would affect new construction. Corinth prohibits new development in flood plain but allows improvement of existing structures, reduces administrative overhead.

iv. To Do

1. Will use Brookline Bylaws as model; HR to ask Aisa Brayton (State Flood Plain Coordinator) (AB) for comments on Brookline Bylaws
2. MAB to attend Select Board meeting to gauge Select Board commitment to project before TPC devotes significant time
3. HR to connect MAB to AB for coordination
4. JP/AT motion to make MAB contact person with AB, approved unanimously

2. Adjourn (at 11:30 am)

- a. Next meeting on April 8, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.
- b. Motion to adjourn (JP/AT), unanimously approved.

Mark A. Berman, Secretary