

## WHITINGHAM HIGHWAY GARAGE

The Whitingham highway garage was built in the mid-1960s with a two-bay addition in the 1980s. Now, more than 60 years later, the structure needs too much work and should be replaced.

In 2020 a “highway garage committee” was formed in part to search for a potential new parcel of land for a new garage structure. Members were Marshall Dix, Chair; Richard Lemaire, Vice Chair; Gig Zboray, Clerk; Scott M. Reed, Richard Tefft, Allan Twitchell, and Donnie Boyd. The committee found one parcel located at 1177 Town Hill Road but shortly before the property transfer the offer was revoked. The committee was disbanded in 2021.

In 2022 the Selectboard contracted with Stevens & Associates for a feasibility study to determine if we could rebuild on the same site. That study was completed in September 2023 and found that there were a number of site constraints.

With no other suitable properties available, the Selectboard focused on the current site with the engineers to determine how to overcome the site constraints. After many meetings with VTrans and the Agency of Natural Resources a site plan was developed that allowed the garage structure to be enlarged from 4,500 square feet to the proposed 8,801 square feet.

An open house was held at the garage on October 28, 2025, for the voters to see firsthand the condition of the garage and the proposed plans for a replacement.

A suitable architectural plan by Stevens & Associates was completed and a Request for Proposals was issued for a Construction Manager (CM) for the project. Three bids were received but the board felt misunderstood in their wish for a CM; they did not wish to hire a construction company at this time, what we needed was an “owner’s representative” to guide us through the construction process. Gordon Bristol, who served as the owner’s rep for the school project, was hired.

In order to be ready to move construction forward upon a positive bond vote on November 3<sup>rd</sup> it was determined that a bid for a Pre-Engineered Metal Building (PEMP) provider should be issued. Unfortunately, there were no responses to the bid request. The board then went back to the proposals that were received for the Construction Manager request. They interviewed two of the companies that responded (the third had gone out of business). After much consideration DEW Construction was chosen.

Although, not related to the decision, DEW had twice provided an opinion of cost for the project (at no cost to us) so that we had an idea of what the bond dollar amount should be.

On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026, the voters are asked to **vote YES** to approve a \$4,200,000 bond to rebuild the highway garage on the same site.

DEW Construction's "Opinion of Cost," dated July 25, 2026, estimated the building's construction cost at **\$2,878,140**. Additional project costs and contingencies were included to provide a complete project budget, resulting in a total estimated cost of **\$4,179,685**. These contingencies are intended to account for unforeseen conditions and market fluctuations. The Selectboard is optimistic that careful project oversight and competitive bidding will allow the new Highway Garage to be completed on time and under budget.