

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 22, 2022

At the Selectmen's Meeting held on Monday, August 22, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. the following Board members were in attendance: John Tholl, and Abbey Querrard. Shawn White is unable to attend the meeting tonight.

Acting-Chair Tholl called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Abbey Querrard led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Others in attendance: Scott Burns, Bob Loiacono, Tom Ladd, Rob Larson, Public Works Director, Alan Theodhor, Robert Wisnouckas

Public Hearing – NH RSA 79-E – Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive

Acting-Chair Tholl called the Public Hearing to order at 6:30 p.m. pursuant to NH RSA 79-E, Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive to review an application that has been submitted by Robert Wisnouckas and Burleigh Wyman for the Allard Block located at for 8 King Square.

At the March, 2010 town meeting, Article 18 was approved which authorized the Selectboard to accept for consideration requests for community revitalization tax relief incentives pursuant to RSA 79-E. As this warrant article was adopted, it allows owners of downtown buildings who intend to substantially rehabilitate those buildings to apply to the selectboard for tax relief.

Acting Chair Tholl asked Robert Wisnouckas to give us a presentation on his project. Robert said he did not really have a presentation. This focus was given to him when he was working with someone to help him finance the purchase of the building, and they told him about this tax incentive and that his project fits every box with what he is actually doing with the building. That is why he completed the application for this tax relief.

The Board reviewed the four specific qualifications for this project:

1. Is this building a qualifying structure? Yes

The answer to this question is yes, as the building is located in the Town's downtown district.

2. Is the rehab going to be substantial? Yes

This means that the rehab will cost at least 15% of the building's pre-rehab assessed value (\$80,800 x 15% = \$12,120) or \$75,000 whichever is less.

This will only include rehab work that happens after the Board approves this tax relief application and the applicant signs the protective covenant. A lot of work has been done thus far.

Robert said the remaining work to be done will be greater than \$12,200.

3. Will the project be consistent with the Town's master plan and Development Code? Yes

Robert said he has met with the Planning Board and obtained all his approvals and permits from the Planning Board per the Town's master plan and Development Code.

4. Would the project create the kind of "public benefit" required for this program? Yes

This is the major question for this hearing. It has to provide at least one of the following kinds of public benefit:

1. Enhances the economic vitality of downtown – Yes

The Board agreed rehabilitating this building will enhance the economic vitality of downtown.

The building has been abandoned for a number of years. It will bring jobs, money, work and tourists to the downtown and improve the look of the downtown.

2. Enhances and improves a structure that is culturally or structurally important on a local, regional, state or national level either on its own or in the context of the downtown area where it is located. This should be backed up by some sort of evidence, preferably something from a local, state, or national historical society – Yes

Robert said that he got feedback from someone on the Historical Society in Lancaster who was able to find photos of downtown Whitefield from years ago which showed the Allard Block was a significant landmark in the downtown.

3. Promotes the preservation or re-use of existing building stock through the Town by rehabilitation of historic structures. Yes

4. Promotes development of the municipal center providing for efficiency, safety and a greater sense of community consistent with RSA 9-B, which is a statute regarding efficient outdoor lighting and dark sky preservation. Yes

Robert said that he is going to be using the existing exterior lighting that is provided by the Town and will not be adding any extra lighting sources.

5. Increases residential housing in town centers No

Robert said potentially. He said there are going to be 8 units that will be for housing units.

There is potentially a ninth unit in the basement, which will probably not be used for housing.

Tom Ladd said he has some public input. Acting Chair Tholl said the floor is open for public comment. Tom said he is concerned about the residential component because what he has seen in the press, which is 50/50 right, is the intention was for this to be an Air BNB project and not housing. We are talking about getting more residential, affordable housing. Robert said initially, for financial reasons, the eight units will be for short-term rentals, but potentially they could be for long-term rentals. Alan Theodhor was under the impression that it was going to be 12 short-term units. Robert said that there will be two storefronts, one of which will be for a tea/coffee shop, and the eight short-term rental units.

Chair Tholl said that these benefits must be protected throughout the term that the tax relief is granted. The covenant agreement that the applicant will be required to sign needs to be designed

to preserve that specific benefit or benefits during the term and what conditions are going to be required to preserve and protect the specific benefits involved.

The Board determined that the length of the tax relief is going to be five years.

A motion was made by Abbey Querrard to accept the Community Revitalization Tax Relief Program (RSA 79-E), which was submitted by Robert Wisnouckas and Burleigh Wyman and to approve and grant the tax relief for a five-year period. The motion was seconded by John Tholl. All in favor, 2-0. Motion passes.

The Selectboard will contact the Town Attorney to draft a covenant document for the applicant to sign, at the applicant's expense.

The Public Hearing adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

New Business

Richard Wilson – Re: Junkyard Permit Renewal – Tax Map 251/Lot 21

Richard Wilson attended the meeting to discuss a renewal for a junkyard permit. Richard purchased the property in 2014 from George Dean, who ran a scrap yard and who did have a junkyard permit. Seven years later he got a building permit from the planning board, and they are asking to see his permits and were asking him why he didn't have a junk yard permit? He is not sure. He researched the town minutes from 2015, and it went through the planning and he believes Mark Lufkin and Scott Burns were on the board back then. The question is what is the definition of a junk yard permit in Whitefield? Mark thought he didn't need one because it not cars, rather it is metal and scrap recycling. Rob Larson said it can be any type of scrap metal. John doesn't think the town process is difficult to go through. All Scott can remember is that you can apply to the town for a junkyard permit. Judy said she emailed the NH Green Yards Program at NH DES asking if Mr. Wilson needs a permit, and we have not heard back from them yet. We can wait and see what we hear back from the state. John said as he recalls they are concerned with fluids. John thinks a junkyard doesn't have to be just vehicles, but it can be any kind of salvage. John doesn't think it will be an issue if he does need to go through the approval process for a new junk yard license. We will get back to Mr. Wilson once we hear back from the state.

Whitefield Special One Time Highway Payment in Accordance with Senate Bill 401 for Maintenance, Construction, and Reconstruction of Class IV and Class V Highways

We received \$68,480.70 as a special one-time highway payment in accordance with Senate Bill 401 for payment for maintenance, construction and reconstruction of Class IV and Class V Highways. These funds are used to supplement (not supplant) local budgets and can be used to provide services that repair, maintain, and construct municipal bridges, repair and maintain Class IV and V roads or acquire the equipment necessary to maintain Class IV and V roads so we need to come up with a project we would like to use the funds for. We need to hold a Public Hearing pursuant to NH RSA 31:95-b once we know what we want to do.

The Board asked Rob to come up with a proposed project for the Board to review and approve and the Board will schedule a Public Hearing once that information is received and reviewed.

Rob Larson – Public Works Director

Pre-Approval for Zero Turn Mower

Rob said he submitted a purchase order for a zero-turn mower. H20, as part of their treatment plant operation contract, was going to provide the labor to mow if we provided the mower. Rob asked BCM to give them an estimate to do the outlying mowing at the treatment plant, and it was just over \$3,000 a year. Rob would like to revisit that mower pre-approval so H20 can do the job they are contracted to do. John would like to wait to decide on this until our next meeting. Rob said that there is 7 acres of grass to mow. H20 is going to be doing the actual mowing. Rob said he would purchase the machine and have H2W0 do the mowing rather than spend \$3,000 a year to have a contractor do it.

Procurement Policy

Rob wanted to give his input on this because the amount that is required is unreasonable. This policy was in 2018, and the number came from a policy in 2015. Rob said we are now in 2022 going into 2023 and he feels the \$2000 limit is too low. He would like it set at \$5000 because of inflation. \$2000 is not good for 2022. \$2000 is totally unreasonable. He is looking for it to be changed for no pre-approval for up to \$5,000. John said without Shawn being here he would like to wait so it is a full board decision.

Old Expedition

Rob said that we tried to salvage another vehicle, and come to find out after talking with Ford you can't replace the transmission as they are on the computer. That is why it went through the garage door. It didn't know it was in reverse so it shot out the back. The underneath is all rusted out, and Rob feels it is dangerous to sell. Rob said it is junk anyways. It has been passed down from the Police to Fire to Rob. We have gotten 13 years out of it. Rob said we will have liability issues with selling it for parts. Tom said he went over to Dalton Town Square days this past weekend, and they were making bank when everyone paid money to take whacks to the cruiser. Could it be used for community day? Rob said we can junk it after that. Abbey

Querrard made a motion that the Expedition be used at Community Day and then junked after that. John seconded the motion. All in favor, 2-0. Motion passes. Rob said he will get with Courtney to arrange this.

Boat Ramp Rubbish Removal

Rob said the boat ramps at Mirror Lake and Burns Lake the town does the trash removal. The Town doesn't own either one of those. John said that he believes we have a Fish & Game contract. They told Rob they have no contract with the Town. Rob said daily they are picking up to 5 to 12 bags a day. People are just dumping their household trash. The state told Rob just remove the rubbish cans. The next issue is the bears that get into it every night scattering it all over. Bear proof dumpster might be the answer, and Rob said he would need two dumpsters. There is not really a good solution. Scott Burns said he thought the best solution is upgrading. Rob said that he can put up surveillance signs. Judy will reach out to Wayne's and see what they have for dumpsters available and the cost.

Rob had a pre-approval for a transmission for a 350. We lost our transmission in the only vehicle we have to haul the sludge. He would like to get that approved tonight. It is a local purchase. John said he would like the pre-approval signed by the Department Head, which often times they are not signed. The Board signed the purchase order. Rob was given the signed purchase order to attach to the bill once it is received.

Rob said this is a good example of why the pre-approval limit is too low. It is micro-managing.

Union Street Federal Funds

Rob said he have not received an official letter yet, but Senator Shaheen put in the \$1.4 million for Union Street in the federal budget and it got approved. To the best of Rob's knowledge, we will be receiving this in February or March, 2023. Rob said in talking with USDA and DOT, they are both talking that we should use that money for a leverage grant for Cherry, View and all of Greenwood Street because all that drainage, water and sewer is very old. Rob is getting those figures together. He would like to use that \$1.4 million towards a larger grant so there is no tax impact to the town so we can get all that work done, paving, water drainage, water, sewer, slope, aprons, etc. The Board thought this was a good idea as long as we have that \$1.4 million available even if we don't get the additional funds.

Tom Ladd asked about Gooden Drive, Rob said that would be included.

Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber – Map 253/Lot 004 & Map 251/Lot 004/Kimball Hill Road

The Board reviewed and signed the Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber for tax map 253/lot 004 and tax map 251/lot 004 on Kimball Hill Road.

Rob said if these lots do not have existing driveways or entrances, they will need to file for temporary driveways.

Approve Selectmen's Meeting Minutes of August 8, 2022

A motion was made by Abbey Querrard to approve the Selectmen's Meeting Minutes of August 8, 2022 and seconded by John Tholl. All in favor, 2-0. Motion passes.

A motion was made by Abbey Querrard to enter non-public session at 7:13 p.m. pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3, II(1). The motion was seconded by John Tholl. Roll call vote: Querrard: Yes; Tholl: Yes. The board entered non-public session at 7:13 p.m.

The Board adjourned from non-public session at 8:15 p.m.

A motion was made by Abbey Querrard and seconded by John Tholl to seal the non-public session meeting minutes because it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this Board and would render a proposed action ineffective. Roll call vote to seal the minutes: Querrard: Yes; John Tholl: Yes. Motion passes, 2-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.