

BOARD OF SELECTMEN PUBLIC HEARING
Tuesday June 5, 2018 6:30pm

A Public Hearing of the Board of Selectmen was held on Tuesday, June 5, 2018 in the Assembly Room. (Due to recording being unclear to hear, for transcribing purposes we have referenced those participants as 'Residents').

Members present: First Selectman Michael Criss, Selectman Rick Fowler, Selectman Evan Brunetti.

Attendees: Numerous Public Members, Town Atty. Michael Rybak, BOF Chairman Peter Thierry, Josie Albertson Grove – Republican American

Call to Order

Mr. Criss called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm.

Public Hearing – Wilcox Property – Mr. Criss explained that the purpose of this hearing is to comply with the state statute 7-163e; which requires that when the town decides to sell a piece of property, there has to be a legal notice posted twice within a 10 day timeframe and the town has to hold a public hearing for public comment before going into the sealed bid process.

On March 21st, 2017 the Board of Selectmen approved to add to the call for the Annual Town Meeting (April 25th, 2017) the sale of the Wilcox Property up to four (4) acres of land. On March 23rd, 2017, the Board of Finance approved the Annual Town Meeting Call (April 25th, 2017) with the item pertaining the Wilcox Property to be no more than four (4) acres and less than four hundred feet (400) of road frontage. On March 29th, 2017, the Planning Commission gave a favorable 8-24 report recommending the town to sell up to 4 acres of the Wilcox Property. The BOS notes that on April 4th, 2017 a change suggested by the BOF and approves the call authorizing the BOS to sell the property by advertised sealed bid. On April 25th, 2017, the motion authorizing the sale of the Wilcox Property carries at the meeting. On September 14th, 2017, the BOF votes to recommend to a town meeting the purchase of the Thierry Property in exchange for the Wilcox Property using the proceeds from the Wilcox Property to offset the output cost for the Thierry Property; motion passes. The Annual Town Meeting called on January 2nd, 2018 and was held on January 23rd, 2018 approved by the BOS authorizing the BOS to purchase the Thierry Property which would be partially reimbursed by the sale of the Wilcox Property contingent on the State of CT approval of transfer of the open-space restrictive covenant from the portion of the Wilcox Property to be sold to the Thierry property when purchased and to enter into an agreement with the State of CT to transfer the open-space/recreation restrictive covenant on the portion of the Wilcox Property for the sale & purchase of the Thierry Property & the Wilcox Property as a whole. On January 23rd, 2018, both motions pertaining to the Thierry and the Wilcox Property, as worded on the call, were passed. On May 25th, 2018 & June 1st, 2018 notices of the public hearing appeared in the Waterbury paper and were posted in the main hall and on the website. On June 5th, 2018, pursuant to sec.7-163e, a public hearing will be held on the Sale of the Wilcox House.

The sealed bid itemizations have been put forward for the selectmen to review as well as the resolutions authorizing the Sale of the Wilcox for the 3.18 acres that will have to

be notarized and signed. The notice of the sealed bid public auction of the Wilcox House has a bid date to formal form. The sealed bid is to be delivered by mail or in person to the Office of the First Selectman. The BOS will determine the date of when they will be opened. There is also an outline of terms and conditions, general information of how the sealed bid system works and who can bid and what they have to do in accordance with the bidding process and the state of CT statutes (see attached). Any alleged oral agreements or agreements made by any bidder are suspended until the contract of the sale. Amending or concealing requests, presentation of supporting evidence, changes to the proposal, permit requirements, authority of the buying respondents and authority to obligate the Town of Harwinton; this means that they have to put insurance on it immediately and remove the Town of Harwinton from the insurance liability.

Mr. Criss opened up for public comments.

Resident – asked if there were people interested originally in purchasing the Wilcox House.

Mr. Criss responded that there are about six people interested in buying it however it still has to go to sealed bid.

Resident – Why did it only go at 3.99 so you can only use it for one house? Why not for 4 acres so you can have two houses and possibly more money for the land?

Mr. Criss responded that there was a condition put on by the Planning Commission at the time in agreement with the BOS & BOF to keep it to just the house and barns and sell only the 3.19 acres. Originally the motion that passed with the Planning Commission was up to 3.99 acres which was just under; they did not want to make a two house sub-division in that small area. They wanted to keep the one house in that small area just as it sits now and the town still retains all the land around it.

Resident: Would you get more bidders if it was two lots?

Mr. Criss answered that we may have, but we have bidders now, including realtors that have expressed interest in the available property, asking when it will go to sealed bid. It appraises right now at \$70,000 as it sits (3.19 acres).

Resident: Asked if there is a minimum price set yet?

Mr. Criss said that the BOS will discuss & set the minimum.

Resident: Asked if there is a possible chance of a cemetery on the land would it affect the sale of the Wilcox Property. He also asked if it is close to the Wilcox Property.

Mr. Criss stated that it's about a half an acre between the two. Mr. Criss explained that there were preliminary prices given for demolition and abatement costs that would be a combined amount estimated \$100,000, including the septic & asbestos abatement.

Alan Innes asked to do a presentation on potentially using Wilcox Property for a solar electric generating facility. Mr. Fowler summarized and commented on the idea of solar

energy being a possible benefit to the town. A resident asked how many acres would be left on the property.

Mr. Criss answered that there would be about 33 acres of property owned by the town.

Resident: Asked if the property is under a covenant because the town is switching out public land to private land or if it is free to move onto something like this.

Mr. Criss explained that the covenant is ready to be switched under the condition that the Wilcox Property sold, they would then sign over the covenant to the Thierry Property and the remainder of the covenant will stay with the rest of the property that the town still owns.

Resident: Commented on the financial benefit of installing solar panels as a source of heat and energy, and asked about when the sale of the Wilcox Property was publicized.

Mr. Criss responded that the sale of the Wilcox Property has been publicized since March 21st, 2017 on numerous occasions. It was also held in two town meetings. The first meeting was approving the sale of the property; the second meeting was approving the moving of the covenant from the Wilcox Property to the Thierry Property. There were two legal notices for the public hearing and a post for the public hearing. When it goes up for sale it will go on the State site.

Resident: Commented on solar panels and her experience with it on her property. Privately a resident loses what it doesn't use. The town would probably benefit with some kind of solar energy. Mr. Innes talked about the state offering funding for towns to set up a micro-grid for a project like this. Municipalities can accept up to five different buildings from the benefit of the energy; the energy/usage can be allocated.

Resident: Asked about cost for installation of the panels as well as having to work with solar energy when the power goes out. There is an initial cost for the town and the rest is covered by the state.

Mr. Fowler: Thinks it's a great forward thinking idea that will generate revenue.

Adjournment – Mr. Brunetti made a motion to adjourn at 7:14pm. Mr. Fowler seconded. All in favor. Motion carries.

Minutes submitted by _____
Jen Minery

RECEIVED FOR RECORD AT HARWINTON CT
ON 06/12/18 AT 2:28PM
ATTEST NANCY E. ELDRIDGE TOWN CLERK