

Select Board Members

Peter Hood, Chair
 Mary Just
Skinner,
Vice Chair
 William Callnan
 Steve Martin
 Liz Scharf

MINUTES

MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD

Tuesday, July 28, 2015

5:00 PM

Middlesex Town Clerk's Office

5 Church Street

Middlesex, Vermont 05602

(802) 223-5915

MINUTES

Present: Chair Peter Hood, Vice Chair Mary Just Skinner, Member Steve Martin, and Bill Callnan, Gunner McCain, president of McCain Consulting, Middlesex Country Store owner David Specht, and Select Board Assistant Sarah Merriman.

Call to Order/Amendments

Peter called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. and welcomed Gunner and David. There were no amendments

McCain Consulting's Survey of Town Hall Septic Options

Gunner recapped the results of his July 22, 2015, soil tests on Town Hall property to locate alternative wastewater sites should the town decide to sell the abutting Morse property to the owners of the Middlesex Country Store. He located two dry wells – one for Town Hall and one for the old fire station – and dug three test pits. He found the soil to be sandy to at least seven feet below surface.

Based on estimates that the Town Hall at the most serves ten people per day and occasional gatherings of 50 people or more, Gunner said that roughly corresponds with a three-bedroom house. He said sewage capacity in those circumstances would not be an issue. The only question would be the proximity of a Town Hall septic system to the store's water supply, but as David said his well was far away from that area, this should not be a concern.

Gunner said the Town should also be mindful of the 25-foot setback from the Morse property line, once that is officially determined by a licensed surveyor, and might want to consider an easement. The Board asked that Mike Patterson, who surveyed the Town Hall property when it included the Morse lot, should redraw the new map delineating the original property lines.

Intent to Sell the Former Morse Property to DAMSTAT Properties, LLC

The Board reviewed David's original offer of \$21,500 for the 1.6 acres between his store and Town Hall formerly known as the Morse property. David said he would resubmit the same offer now.

The Board also considered appraiser Rich Lewis's report that after viewing the property this month as part of a town-wide reappraisal, he determined its value would be \$31,000 if it sold as a separate residential property in the village. However, considering current market conditions, he said it could be as long as ten years before that property sold at that price and, meanwhile, it would remain untaxed.

If the property were joined with the country store, it would add approximately \$23,000 of value to DAMSTAT's current property, according to Lewis's report. Therefore, it was his opinion that \$21,500 was reasonable in this real estate market.

The Board reviewed Patterson's 2002 survey map of the town property and David agreed that he would be willing to grant a perpetual easement to permit a septic system on town property within the 25-foot property line setback if the redone survey map shows it will be necessary.

Bill noted that even before the statutory 30-day public input period begins, David's proposal and surrounding issues have been warned and discussed at numerous Select Board meetings starting with the December 9, 2014 meeting when David first approached the Board with his offer. He also said that the store – or any commercial enterprise in that location – would have a better chance of thriving with this property which could provide room for gasoline tanks, expanded septic capacity and parking. Peter added that this sale would be part of the Board's effort to improve the Middlesex village.

MOTION: Steve moved and Bill seconded approving DAMSTAT's offer to purchase the abutting 1.6 acres of town-owned property for \$21,500 after compliance with 24 V.S.A. § 1061, to hire Mike Patterson to redraw the new survey map, and to allow for a possible easement for a septic setback. The motion passed.

The Board reviewed and agreed with the Public Notice of the Board's intent to sell the above property which will be posted in three public places around Middlesex, advertised in the Times-Argus and posted on the Town's website on July 29, 2015.

OTHER BUSINESS

MOTION: Steve moved and Bill seconded approval of the 7.14.2015 amended Select Board minutes. The motion passed.

The Board reviewed a memorandum of agreement from Efficiency Vermont's LED Municipal Streetlight Program. The Board approved and Peter signed the agreement.

Regarding Lauren Heyl's dogs, Sarah reported that Lauren came to the office with up-to-date rabies vaccine certificates and licensed them. In addition, Select Board member Liz Scharf discussed the dogs with Lauren who has also been in contact with Animal Control Officer Erika Holm. Neighbors have reported that their midnight barking has stopped. Peter said a letter should be sent to Lauren noting that the Board's concerns have been substantially resolved, but she should make an effort to keep the dogs on her property.

The Board asked that Bill May be hired to brush hog the Walt Kelley picnic area.

All orders were signed.

The Board agreed to cancel the next regularly scheduled meeting on August 11, 2015, to accommodate vacation plans.

Peter adjourned the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Sarah Merriman, Select Board Assistant