

Town of New Fairfield
Board of Selectmen
4 Brush Hill Road
New Fairfield, CT 06812

MINUTES
Board of Selectmen
Board of Finance
Special Meeting
Monday, April 20, 2020
7:30 pm
Virtual meeting via Zoom

BOS Members present:

Pat Del Monaco, First Selectman

Khris Hall, Selectman

Kim Hanson, Selectman

BOF Members present:

Wes Marsh, Chairman

Michael Cammarota

Tom Garben

Jane Landers

Cheryl Reedy

Anthony Yorio

Brian Shea, Alternate

Mark Werner, Alternate

Greg Williams, Alternate

Other Town Officials Present:

Ed Sbordone, Finance Director and Town Treasurer

Dr. Pat Cosentino, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Rich Sanzo, Director of Business and Operations

Peggy Katkocin, BOE Chairman

Greg Flanagan, BOE member

Kimberly LaTourette, BOE member

Rick Regan, BOE member

Stephanie Strazza, BOE member

James D'Amico, High School Principal

Christine Baldelli, Middle School Principal

Phil Ross, Director of Buildings and Grounds

Don Kellogg, PBC member

Dave Grogins, Town Attorney (Cohen and Wolf)

Peter Bachmann, JCJ Architects

Paul Gouveia gave a brief overview of the rules and procedures for having a virtual meeting.

Call To Order First Selectman Pat Del Monaco called the meeting to order at 7:30pm and explained the process for considering the purchase of the property at 78 Gillotti Road. She spoke of the Governor's order regarding this property and noted that a vote of both boards is required in lieu of a town meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

Kathy Proteau spoke of her concerns with the timing of this purchase and that it shouldn't be done at this time.

Kelly Zurzola spoke against the building of the high school on the property at 78 Gillotti Road and spoke of the potential safety hazards and the effects on the property values of the houses on Gillotti Road.

Claudia Thiel spoke of her concerns with the building of the high school using 78 Gillotti Road especially in light of the coronavirus and the uncertainty of what will happen in the near future. She further spoke of concerns of the process for this purchase and if it is in compliance with the Governor's order.

Phil Frobey spoke of his concerns that this purchase does not fall under the guidelines of the Governor's Executive Order. He noted that any money saved on the project regarding this purchase should go back to the taxpayers and not used for additional amenities for the school project.

Monika Thiel noted that if the original site is no longer a viable option then multiple options should have been researched and communicated to the public.

John Hodge spoke in favor of the purchase of 78 Gillotti Road but urged everyone to slow down. He spoke of concerns as to whether or not this purchase met the criteria to purchase under the Governor's order and further asked that the town solicit more comments from neighbors on Gillotti Road to see if a more amicable solution can be found.

Matt Wolowitz from 59 Gillotti Road spoke against the new location and how the additional traffic and lights would negatively affect residents on Gillotti Road.

First Selectman Pat Del Monaco spoke of emails that were sent to the BOS and noted that there were 7 letters in support of the project using 78 Gillotti Road and 5 against the project using 78 Gillotti Road.

BOS Vote to authorize and appropriate funds to purchase 78 Gillotti Road

Peter Bachmann from JCJ Architects spoke of the different options for the project both with and without using 78 Gillotti Road.

Pat Del Monaco noted that the Permanent Building Committee voted to recommend the purchase of 78 Gillotti Road. They recognized the potential for approximately \$2.2 million in savings to the entire project and have taken the cost of the purchase of 78 Gillotti Road plus the state reimbursement amount and moved it out of the construction budget so that the construction budget is not increased. Additionally, the PBC put an additional \$547,000 out of the budget and put it in a contingency account so that savings will be passed on to the taxpayer.

Dr. Rich Sanzo spoke of the timeline for this project and noted that the PBC set a deadline for a decision by the town for the purchase of 78 Gillotti Road. It was noted that if this purchase was not approved by April 21st, then Option E would be chosen. This would be so that there is not a need to design two options at the same time. This would allow for the bidding of this project at the same time as the Consolidated Early Learning Center thus giving the potential for savings with two projects.

Selectman Kim Hanson noted that these are unprecedented times and encourage everyone to slow down with the planning of the project. He further spoke of the lack of proper notice from the Planning Commission regarding the 8-24 referral and that this purchase does fall within the boundaries of the Governor's Executive Order.

Attorney David Grogins from Cohen and Wolf gave his opinion on how this purchase fits into Executive Order 7S.

Pat Del Monaco made a motion to approve the following resolution:

Whereas, the Permanent Building Committee has voted unanimously to recommend the purchase of the property located at 78 Gillotti Road for construction of a new high school, and

Whereas, the Committee has deemed the property at 78 Gillotti Road critical to the most cost efficient construction of the high school, providing approximately \$2 million savings in site development costs, and

Whereas, the purchase of the property at 78 Gillotti Road is time sensitive and must be approved prior to April 21, 2020 to avoid significant project delays and additional costs to the project and

Whereas, timely purchase of the property at 78 Gillotti Road is necessary to permit the orderly operation of the municipality and therefore, be it resolved that:

1. the Town acquire the property known as 78 Gillotti Road from Jerry and Patricia Gay for the sum of \$325,000 pursuant to contract between the Town and the sellers, and
2. that the sum of \$325,000 be and is hereby appropriated for the purpose of purchasing the property known as 78 Gillotti Rd. in New Fairfield, Connecticut.
3. Be it further resolved that the First Selectman is hereby authorized to take any and all actions required to effectuate said purchase.

Khris Hall seconded the motion. **Vote: 2-1-0 (Motion approved-Kim Hanson opposed)**

There was a brief discussion among the members of the BOS as to the notice for the documents and resolutions.

Board of Finance vote to appropriate funds to purchase the property located at 78 Gillotti Road

BOF Chairman Wes Marsh spoke of email that the BOF received regarding this purchase. He noted that there were 7 emails in favor of the purchase and 2 emails against the purchase.

Wes Marsh made a motion to make an Additional Appropriation in the amount of \$325,000 from the unappropriated capital and nonrecurring fund balance for the purchase of property located at 78 Gillotti Road. Anthony Yorio seconded the motion. **Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)**

Discussion among BOF members regarding the purchase of 78 Gillotti Road

Cheryl Reedy noted that she is in favor of the purchase of the property and glad that it is coming out of the unappropriated capital and nonrecurring fund instead of the general fund as to not affect the general fund balance. She further spoke of her concerns of the process and encouraged everyone to become more transparent. She asked both the BOS and BOF to make sure that the public is getting as much information as possible.

Brian Shea spoke of his concerns with the purchase and encouraged everyone to slow down and reevaluate the process.

Adjournment

Pat Del Monaco made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:57pm. Khris Hall seconded the motion- **All in favor**

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Kloos