



Town of Bolton
3045 Theodore Roosevelt Highway
Bolton VT 05676
802-434-5075

Board of Civil Authority Meeting Minutes

July 13, 2015
5:45 p.m.
Bolton Town Office

BCA members present: Gene Armstrong, Josh Arneson, Amy Grover, John Devine, Jen Dudley-Gaillard, Ron Lafreniere, Brenda McKeown, Sharon Murray (5:55 p.m.) Rich Reid

BCA members absent: Paula Gervia

Also present: Ray Atwood, David Parot, Pete Siegel, Guy Andrews, Linde Emerson; Assessor Assistant, Kermit Blaisdell; Assessor

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m.

BCA members:

- Took the BCA members' oath.
- Appointed Chair: Amy made the motion "to appoint Brenda McKeown as the chair of the Board of Civil Authority." Jen seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed (8 - 0).
- Jen made the motion "to accept the minutes of May 11, 2015." Gene seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed (8 - 0).
- Reviewed statutory procedures and timelines.

Gene made an addition to the agenda; public comment.

Public Comment:

David Parot requested information on the process for grieving assessed value to share with his condominium association. Kermit reviewed the grievance process and timeline. Kermit noted that next year will be the end of a 5 year appraisal cycle and all property owners will be notified of the grievance process and timeline. Amy noted there was a PDF on the process from the VT Institute for Government that she would send to Mr. Parot.

The assessor assistant, assessor, and appellant all took and signed oaths as required by statute.

Ray Atwood – 3582 Theodore Roosevelt Highway

BCA members reviewed documentation:

- Duplex with commercial building in back, on 1.4 acres.
- Assessment prior to Lister Hearing was \$390,800, assessed value lowered to \$369,500.

Mr. Atwood stated that:

- He was protesting value of his property, and shared pictures from Irene.
- Flood insurance would cost \$8,400/year

- He asked Guy Andrews to attend and provide information to the BCA.

Mr. Andrews stated he was a certified appraiser in the state of Vermont, appraising real estate since 1996, and stated that:

- Flood zone property is a form of external depreciation, virtually 99.9% of the time is incurable.
- The external component, in this instance the flood zone, adversely impacts the land and improvements.
- He had called another assessor, Ed Klodfelter, who had assessed both Richmond and Northfield, who stated that he had given a 50 – 60% reduction in assessed value of properties in the flood zone.
- He had called Cy Bailey at PVR and asked if there was a protocol for assessing homes in a flood zone. Mr. Bailey stated that the state was encouraging assessors to lower assessments in those areas as they recognize the external component (flood zone) and burden of high flood zone insurance premiums.
- Buyers want clean, safe, and quiet or will expect a discount from the affected property.
- Mr. Atwood's property is a classic example of property adversely impacted by several forms of external components; I89 traffic, Route 2 traffic, railroad traffic, close proximity to town garage, and the flood zone.
- He was suggesting that the assessment on land and development be reviewed to be sure that external components were being addressed.

Kermit asked if Mr. Andrews had appraised the Atwood property. Mr. Andrews said no he had not developed an opinion of value, and was here as a consultant.

Kermit stated that:

- Mr. Atwood's property had nearly a 50K reduction with a \$21,300 reduction after the Lister's Hearing, as well as a reductions to all the other properties in the neighborhood with a lower neighborhood multiplier.
- There had been only one sale in the neighborhood – garage structure across Route 2.

Mr. Atwood stated that:

- The numbers were wrong, there was not a 50K reduction.
- He did not feel it was a fair appraisal, and showed a sales contract from before Irene 400K. Mr. Atwood stated the he lost the sale when the buyer backed because of restrictive zoning in town; the zoning regulations are too restrictive for a town this size.
- The property had been for sale since then, beginning at 490K, he will lower the price 50K and then will continue to lower it to try to sell it.

John asked how good the insurance was for \$8,400. Mr. Atwood stated that his knowledge was that he would be fighting forever to try to get any money. John asked if he had flood insurance before. Mr. Atwood stated no. It was noted that without flood insurance, property owners would be unable to secure financing.

Brenda noted:

- The BCA cannot address the zoning piece, and asked if Mr. Atwood wanted to share any other information for the record before the meeting was closed. Mr. Atwood stated that he didn't know if anyone knows what the property is worth, he just wanted it to be fair and fair to everyone else in the flood zone, the land value of 93K needs to be reviewed, and that the BCA should inspect his cellar – it was wet.
- At least three members of the BCA must inspect the property; John Devine, Gene Armstrong, Rich Reid, Josh Arneson, Brenda McKeown (if available) volunteered to do the site inspection.

- The inspection committee has 30 days from the date of the hearing to complete the property inspection and report back to the BCA.

ACTION: Site visit scheduled for 8 a.m., Wednesday, July 22, 2015.

The next scheduled meeting of the BCA will be on Monday, August 17, 2015 at 5:45 p.m. to receive the report of the inspection committees and render appeal decisions within 15 days.

No other business was brought before the board at this time.

Gene motion to close at 6:35 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Attest: Amy Grover, Town Clerk

Minutes are unofficial until approved. These minutes were read and approved on:

August 17, 2015 Date

Brenda McKeown For the BCA

