

Wallingford Board of Civil Authority
Minutes
July 18, 2017

Present: Board members for Justice of the Peace were Chair Wendy Savery, Sue Thayer, Judy Edmunds, Lynn Edmunds, and Tom Truex; Selectboard Nelson Tift, Rose Regula, and Gary Fredette, and Town Clerk & Treasurer Julie Sharon

Others in attendance: Town Assessor Lisa Wright

J. Sharon called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. Nominations for chair were taken. N. Tift nominated Wendy Savery as chair. R. Regula seconded the nomination. As there were no other nominations, W. Savery was elected chair by unanimous vote.

The minutes of August 10, 2016 were approved on a motion made by S. Thayer, and seconded by J. Edmunds. Motion carried (7-0). G. Fredette abstained.

The agenda was changed as Caleb Scott withdrew his grievance request.

Pursuant to 17 V.S.A., §2150, the Board must complete a review of the entire checklist, prior to September 15 of each odd-numbered year, and consider, for each person whose name appears on the checklist, and determine whether that person is still qualified to vote. The Board reviewed the Wallingford voter checklist dated 7-17-17. The names of three deceased voters will be purged. Four additional voters will be challenged.

TAX APPEAL #1 – Harry and Grace Chapman – 1540 Mitchell Road (0531540)

Appellant Harry Chapman (via telephone) and Assessor Lisa Wright were sworn in. Lisa Garcia introduced the property as a 35.6 acre parcel with a 2017 listed value of \$35,500 that was reduced to \$35,100 as a result of the Lister Grievance. This parcel is surrounded by the national forest. Access on Mitchell Road is not understood to be restricted by the assessor; however, there have been years of contention about the access. The owners present that access is restricted.

Owner presented previous court case on lands of his brother and other family members. Court case concluded that other lands on Mitchell Road should be assessed as a “building lot” due to the access; hence, the assessor removed the assessment labelling the first two acres as building lot and assessed it as vacant land. The grade already reflects a substantial diminution in value due to remoteness and access.

Mr. Chapman had no additional testimony other than his letter and court documents. The Chapmans’ letter states that their property borders 1670 Mitchell Road and references Rutland Superior Court Docket #506-9-15; a portion of the findings state “the property at 1670 Mitchell Road has no vehicular access and rec use through non-vehicular access only” and “firewood, forestry and development uses are no longer viable”. The Court assessed 1670 Mitchell Road (35.6 acres) at \$20,800, or \$582.63 per acre. Since our

property is accessed by Mitchell Road, it seems reasonable that our property would be assessed at \$20,742.

An inspection committee of T. Truex, G. Fredette and W. Savery will visit the property on July 20th at 9:30 a.m.

TAX APPEAL #2 – Michael & Sandra Lallier - 1444 Beaver Meadow Road (#4031444)

Lisa Wright introduced the property as a camp and detached garage on 3.6 acres surrounded by national forest. The camp was rebuilt in 2008 and only the basement is finished and used as the living area, with the above grade portion a shell.

After the lister grievance, Lisa Wright and data collector Jacob Dorman viewed the exterior of the property and found it to be as owner stated. It had been assessed as an average year-round dwelling, with no depreciation and zero percentage incomplete, as it apparently hadn't been re-inspected since 2008. A number of items on the assessment record were corrected, and the rating was changed to a "camp". Ms. Wright gave a functional depreciation and a fair condition for physical depreciation for a total of 32%.

Mr. Lallier showed several photos of the interior of the camp taken on his cell phone today. These photos showed the first floor is a shell. They testified that there is electricity, but no water or sewer on the property. It is a seasonal-use camp with living quarters in the basement. Only three quarters of the basement is insulated. The assessor card should be corrected to show that there is no kitchen. Mrs. Lallier added that there are no bedrooms, their heat source is a wood stove, and they cook with a propane stove. Mr. Lallier stated that the property is insured for \$76,000.

Assessor's photos of the exterior were also passed around.

An inspection committee of S. Thayer, J. Edmunds, and L. Edmunds will visit the property today around 10:30 a.m.

W. Savery moved that the BCA recess the hearings until Monday, July 24th at 11:00 a.m. at the Wallingford Town Hall. R. Regula seconded the motion. Motion carried (9-0). There being no further business at hand, Chair Savery recessed the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

Julie M. Sharon, Town Clerk