

**CHARLEMONT BOARD OF ASSESSORS
SEPTEMBER 9, 2024 MEETING MINUTES**

CHARLEMONT ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Members Present/ Participating:

Jacqueline Cashin: Chair, Anthony Ostroski, Karen Rau

Others Present:

Thorne Palmer, Town Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Cashin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

#1: Town Clerk Appointment to Notarize Board Signatures

Town Clerk Thorne Palmer attended the meeting to notarize the Board's signatures on one Chapter 61 classification land lien. This is an amended lien to reflect an ownership change.

- a. Laura, Peter, Mary & James Gribbin

The Board thanked Palmer for his time in notarizing their signatures.

#2: Approval of Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes from their 8/5/2024 meeting. On a motion by Cashin and seconded by Rau, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes, as written.

#3: Board Discussion and Vote

1. Reports were received of new structures with no building permit;
 - a. Large barn at 104 West Oxbow Road; Cashin reported that she picked up a two-story barn, estimated at 34x48 with tin roof and wood siding. It appears to be constructed with a mixture of repurposed and new materials. It is mostly finished and in good condition and average grade. The barn will be added to the property card.
 - b. Large building/greenhouse at 2143 Route 2; Cashin reported that she could not observe a greenhouse on the property from the road. The Board asked Hayden to request an inspection of the property with the owner.
2. Cyclical Inspections of vacant properties:
 - a. Ostroski reported that there were no structures on the 3 vacant properties he checked on Hawk Hill Road.
 - b. Cashin reported that there were no structures on the two vacant properties bordering her on Avery Brook Road, but did note that one of them has a wetland running along most of the frontage of the property. This will be entered on the property card and reduced accordingly.
 - c. Karen reported she found no structures on the vacant parcels on East Hawley Road & Thunder Mountain Road.
3. Other Property Inspections:
 - a. 50 Heath Stage Terrace-needs inspection to confirm fill-in of the in-ground pool. Cashin will visit the property this Saturday and asked Hayden to notify the owner.
 - b. 37 Schaefer Way-construction of a new barn, a building permit for a shed has not been issued yet. Rau will inspect this property to check for the building.
4. Great River Hydro (GRH) Confidentiality Agreement. Hayden reported that after speaking with an attorney at DLS Law, she was informed that they would defer to our Town Attorney regarding signing confidentiality agreements, but that they generally wouldn't recommend the Town acquiesce to signing CA's due to the requirements of the Open Meeting Law and Freedom of Information Act that the Town must comply with. He added that there are already adequate protections in the law for the 38D/F information not being open to inspection, other than

Assessing staff, the Commissioner of Revenue or the Court (G.L. Ch. 59, § 52B). Regarding GRH providing the financial documents only to the Assessor's consultant, the DLS attorney advised that the Assessors are entitled to this information and they could exercise the penalty fee, which for an industrial property, is \$250. He said they were free to assess the property based on the consultant's appraisal value, but if a taxpayer fails to cooperate with providing the Assessors with information, they are allowed to make their best estimate. Hayden explained that there is a provision for assessing a penalty, but only if the Board informs the owner that failure to submit the information will result in the penalty. Upon checking, she found that the 38D request letter provided by their consultant did not contain the penalty language, so she will make sure this is added to the letters going forward. In light of this, the Board will not levy a penalty this year, but Hayden will inform GRH that the Board may levy the penalty in the future. The Board will revisit this next year, prior to sending out 38D requests.

#4: Review Mail and Correspondence

1. The Board reviewed the Deeds for July & August, 2024

Adjournment

At 7:04 p.m. on a motion by Cashin and seconded by Ostroski, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn their meeting and enter into Executive Session for purpose #7; to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements; to deliberate on pending abatement and/or exemption applications, which pursuant to G.L. Chapter 59, Section 60 are not open to the general public, to sign the minutes from their last executive session meeting, and to not reconvene in open session afterwards. Roll Call vote: Cashin-Yes, Ostroski-Yes, Rau-Yes.

The next meeting will be Monday October 7, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carlene Hayden,
Assessor's Clerk

Documents Viewed in Meeting of 9/9/2024*

1. Agenda for meeting of 9/9/2024
2. Chapter 61 land lien for the Gribbin property
3. Minutes from the 8/5/2024 meeting
4. Property record cards for:
 - a. 104 West Oxbow Rd
 - b. 2143 Route 2
 - c. 50 Heath Stage Terrace
 - d. 37 Schaefer Way
 - e. Various vacant land parcels
5. Deeds for July and August, 2024

***Documents are stored in their respective files in the Assessor's office.**