



TOWN OF THOMPSON

Board of Selectmen

SELECTMEN'S MEETING

Tuesday, October 6, 2020

Via ZOOM Online Meeting Portal

First Selectman Amy St Onge called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with all three Selectmen together at the Town Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A. St Onge noted that the meeting is being recorded.

Roll call: First Selectman Amy St Onge, Selectmen Susanne Witkowski and Ken Beausoleil. Town Planner Tyra Penn-Gesek, John Rice (PnZ, Building Committee), JoAnn Hall, Charlene Langlois, Rich Benoit (Director, DPW), Joseph Parodi-Brown (Chair, PnZ), Brian Santos (EDC, Building, PnZ), Renee Waldron (Chair, EDC's Branding Strategy Implementation Committee), IT Tech from the Schools, Members of Boards/ Commissions, and of the public, WINY, Recording Secretary Dotti Durst

I. Approval of Minutes

Motion A. St Onge seconded by S. Witkowski to approve the 9-15-2020 BOS Regular Meeting Minutes with a modification carried unanimously. On page 2, Agenda item # V, was revised for clarity: Add: *There was significant discussion of the matter.* K. Beausoleil- reviewed the history of the 49 acre parcel, which came to the BOS relatively recently for resolution; *an offer for 200 acres +/- acres was not acceptable. The BOS rejected an offer of \$96,000 for 49 acres in 2019. ~~no action was taken at the time.~~*

II. Correspondence: a. St Onge noted that additional pieces of correspondence came in since the agenda was published: from Joe Parodi-Brown and JoAnn Hall both regarding 65 Main and from Carolyn Werge regarding a Conservation issue. All writers of letters regarding 65 Main Street asked that their letters be read into the record; all are invited to read their letter aloud. All letters will be published with the minutes of this meeting, as part of the official record of the meeting, and then filed with the Town Clerk and on the website.

- A. TEEG - Thank You
- B. SACCEC - Thank You
- C. United Services - Thank You
- D. DESPP Police Services Report
- E. EDC - 65 Main Street
- F. Jessica Bolte - 65 Main Street
- G. Joe Iamartino - 65 Main Street

- H. John Lenky - 65 Main Street
- I. Marcia Kettle - 65 Main Street
- J. Access - Senior Housing Development
- K. Chamber of Commerce - Coupon Book
- L. Friends of the Thompson Public Library - Raffle

III. Selectmen Comments:

K. Beausoleil- Community Vendor Day was extremely well attended. Organized by Thompson Together, Recreation and volunteers, with all protocols in place, an enjoyable day was experienced by all. * Noting the two additional letters regarding 65 Main that will be added to the record, every letter sent in was in support of the proposed rehab work on the structure.

S. Witkowski- suggests that when the N E Chamber of Commerce resumes meetings, that Thompson's BOS participates, as K. Beausoleil has done in the past.

A. St Onge *Animal Control met with the State ACO and found that additional structural and systems work is needed prior to re-opening; contractors are being considered. She noted the quarantine area as seeming to be cruel and a modification has been proposed. * On October 31 from 4-6 PM at Thompson Speedway, decorated vehicles from non-profits and local organizations will create a fun event for the anticipated crowd of about 1,000 trick-or-treaters. Organized by the Congregational Church, Recreation and the Fire Departments, businesses and organizations are welcome to dress up a vehicle and participate. (contact Krystal Simon ksimon@etfd.org before

Oct 23) * Two new matters have come in since the agenda was prepared.

Motion A. St Onge seconded by S. Witkowski to add, under XI, Other Business *Discussion of Conservation Issue per the request of Carolyn Werge and an inquiry about land acquisition from Joyce Hoyer* carried unanimously.

IV. Citizen Comments:

-R. Waldron, Chair of EDC Branding Strategy Implementation Committee, read aloud their letter in support of the proposed work on 65 Main Street, citing the history of the EDC efforts to rehab and preserve this historic structure.

-Joe Parody-Brown, Chair of PnZ, read their letter in support of the rehab of 65 Main Street

V. Appointment:

Motion A. St Onge seconded by S. Witkowski to appoint Norman M. Baker as Constable for the Town of Thompson through 11/16/2021 carried unanimously.

VI. Driveway Bond Increase – Discussion and Possible Action: A. St Onge requested a summary of work on the roads from Rich Benoit, Director of Public Works; he identified the major re-surfacing and construction projects, and the plan to remove more dead trees before winter.

R. Benoit suggests an increase in the Bond which is posted when an application is submitted for a new driveway; this is to assure the paved apron connecting the driveway to the road, which protects the town's road edge at the entry point of the driveway, and which is required by the town, is actually built. Currently, the bond amount is \$1,000, which, it has been learned, is not always sufficient for the property owner to follow-through to construct the mandated apron.

Motion A. St Onge seconded by K. Beausoleil to increase the Bond amount for a driveway permit to \$2,000 carried unanimously.

VII. Windham North Property Lien: A, St Onge- an offer was made, but there is no response yet.

VIII. Bid Opening – 1395 Riverside Drive: PnZ authorized the \$30,000 bid request to go out; one bid came in, at \$30,110, subject to perk test results, from the owner of an adjacent parcel.

Motion A. St Onge seconded by S. Witkowski. to accept the bid and move forward with the sale of 1395 Riverside Drive, carried. K. Beausoleil- believing that the parcel has possible advantages to the town which should be explored, voted “nay” and recommended that the process be reviewed with the Town Attorney.

IX. Foundation Repair 65 Main Street – Discussion and Possible Action; May Include Bid Opening:

A. St Onge noted that an enthusiastic response has come in from the community and from Boards/Commissions; she observed that there are other pending needs in the town (salt shed, bridges, and other projects, some of which could present liabilities if not acted upon) and that her role is to act in the best interests of the 6,000 taxpayers in town. Ordinance 10-005, specifying the matters that must go to the BOF and a town meeting, may apply to this situation. K. Beausoleil- there may be ways to get support for the repair to the foundation of this building such as with grants, volunteers or town staff, resulting in a minimal or zero budget impact. T. Penn-Gesek acknowledged the several letters of support regarding this project. She noted that the EDC already has funds targeted for it. K. Beausoleil asked for confirmation of the amount available. The EDC has set aside \$8,000 and two donations of \$1,000 each (Hometown Band and a private party) have come in for a total of \$10,000. Several other aspects of the project were discussed; T Penn-Gesek is gathering data about the scope and various aspects of the project. No action was taken.

X. West Thompson Fire Department New Truck Financing (\$280,000)-Discussion and Possible Action: Todd Mountford, Board President- IRS code 147F requires acknowledgement in writing by the BOS that the Fire Department is entering into this agreement. A. St Onge-The BOS can so state, with the understanding that they will continue to provide services to the town as usual. A

cover letter is suggested by the town attorney, stating that the IRS form is enclosed per your request, adding that the town does not have legal authority to act on behalf of the Department.
Motion S. Witkowski seconded by K. Beausoleil to authorize the First Selectman to complete paperwork for the Town endorsing the West Thompson Fire Department's financing of the equipment purchase as specified carried unanimously.

XI. Other Business:

Philip Thomas, Conservation Commission Chair- asks for the donation of 7 parcels of land in the Bull Hill area to the Windham Land Trust. It will be referred to PnZ, then go to a town meeting.
K. Beausoleil - The Windham Land Trust does extraordinary work; this is not time-sensitive; he will research the history of the parcels, which are adjacent to other town-owned land.
Joyce Hoyer, 7 Center Street-wants to be able to use some lots on Woodland Ave at Schoolhouse Pond for their boat. K. Beausoleil- there are many town-owned very small lots there, originally created as camp sites. There may be a possibility to grant limited-use of one or some; the town attorney should be asked about potential liability.

XII. Citizens' Comments:

B. Santos- 65 Main: private donations and volunteers are dependent upon the town keeping the building stable. Investors considering Thompson could view the building's poor condition and the town's lack of commitment as a negative indicator.
Renee Waldron, 79 Main St- as a resident of the area 65 Main, it is a positive that Boards/ Commissions and residents have come out in support of rehab of the town-owned building. Now it is time to move ahead; other projects have come to this point but not moved ahead.
John Rice- to clarify: PnZ authorizes the BOS to dispose of property valued at over \$1,000; that is their only role in a situation. The Building Committee was not involved in the 65 Main matter. Remember that the new TEEG building was approved, but to be built with grant funds only—and it was done.

XIII. Tax Refunds:

Motion A. St Onge seconded by K. Beausoleil to approve the Tax Refunds as presented, totaling \$454.14, carried unanimously.

Asal, Richard J. Jr./Piper, Debra A	\$3.37		
Bushey, Gale F. and Sharon L.	\$6.59	Hyundai Lease Titling Trust	\$212.98
CCAP Auto Lease LTD	\$153.98	Rekowski, James A.	\$25.92
Duquette, David J.	\$12.12	Spooner, David A.	\$4.17
Fournier, David R.	\$35.01		

XIV. Adjourn:

Motion A. St Onge seconded by S. Witkowski to adjourn at 8: 29 PM carried unanimously.

See and hear the entire meeting by clicking on this link: <https://youtu.be/ZVieNclG qc>

Letters regarding 65 Main Street are attached below.

Respectfully submitted by Dorothy Durst, Recording Secretary *Dorothy Durst*

These minutes have not yet been approved by the Board of Selectmen. Please refer to next month's meeting minutes for approval of and/or amendments to these minutes.

20 OCT -6 AM 11 49

SELECTMEN S OFFICE

October 6, 2020

Board of Selectmen
Town of Thompson

Dear Board of Selectmen:

I request that this letter be read in full into the minutes of the October 6 Selectmen's Meeting.

As a resident, a Realtor, an admirer of architecture and an enthusiast of local history, I find it incomprehensible that the town of Thompson might not be interested in saving the extremely significant property located at 65 Main Street in North Grosvenordale.

Frankly, I was dumbfounded when a member of our Board of Selectmen suggested that the property should be "torn down." Rather than refurbish, renovate and enhance this historical flagship on Main Street, it sounds like the town would rather demolish it instead of returning the home to its original glory as it deserves.

This property has been openly addressed over the past year as evidenced by the numerous grants that our Town Planner, Tyra Penn-Gesek, has written and submitted to acquire funding for this project.

The Tourtellottes entrusted this property to the town of Thompson over a century ago and it is our duty to continue to maintain it's purpose as a landmark. Therefore, we must seek every way possible to keep the home as a standing tribute to the Tourtellottes.

Respectfully
JoAnn Hall
342 Brandy Hill Rd.

Joseph Parodi-Brown
293 Thompson Hill Road
Thompson, CT 06277

20 OCT -5 AM 9:29

SELECTMENS OFFICE

September 29, 2020

First Selectman Amy St. Onge
Selectman Ken Beausoleil
Selectman Susanne Witkowski
Town of Thompson
815 Riverside Drive PO Box 899
North Grosvenordale, CT 06255

First Selectman St. Onge and Selectmen:

Responsible and thoughtful development of Thompson must be a priority of our town government. To promote that development, it is essential that we look to the future while honoring our history. That history includes the mills that dominate the North Grosvenordale area and the neighborhoods that arose surrounding them. It also includes the families whose names are familiar to all of us, chief among them, the Tourtellote family. The property at 65 Main Street offers the town an opportunity to further our historical legacy while promoting a promising future.

While the property will no longer serve the purpose for which it was deeded to the town, it can still have a positive influence on our community and benefit our community members. We have already seen the value of initiatives undertaken at that property, including the Thompson Garden by the River. This effort mobilized varied constituencies from the town. I am, for example, proud that members of the Marianapolis Class of 2020 contributed to the garden, assisting with the staining and preparation of the raised garden beds that students from Tourtellotte Memorial High School were key in constructing. The town should continue to promote projects like this which bring community members together.

The property at 65 Main Street, however, has even more potential to explore. This building has been a focal point for community involvement in the past, and we can again look to it as a model for growth, development, and community empowerment. The proposed plan to develop programming in this space connects seemingly disparate goals that our community members have identified as important — proximate food access, innovative entrepreneurship, and historical preservation that promotes progress for our town. It is important to note that the Tourtellote Trust, enacted by town ordinance to steward the legacy of the Tourtellotte family, has expressed its support for this project. By engaging a coalition of distinct community organizations and resident voices, we optimize our community resources, position the town as an innovative and strong community, and strengthen our municipal identity.

I encourage the Board of Selectmen to act in support of this project for the benefit of our community.

I request that this letter be read into the record of the meeting of the Board of Selectmen on Tuesday, October 6, and request acknowledgement of the receipt of this letter.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Parodi-Brown

TOWN OF THOMPSON

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Economic Development Commission Branding Implementation Committee

Memorandum

To: Board of Selectmen
From: Renee Waldron, Chair
EDC Branding Strategy Implementation Committee
Re: 65 Main Street Project

I respectfully request that this letter be read into the minutes of the Board of Selectmen's October 6, 2020 meeting.

The rehabilitation of the neighborhood surrounding River mill including the Main Street Loop has been part of discussions at the Mill Sites Redevelopment Advisory Committee as well as Economic Development Meetings as far back as 2017. Mr. Gumpart has mentioned such neighborhood improvements as being important to his project at River Mill.

The 65 Main project, born out of the effort to improve the surrounding neighborhood, was initiated in early spring of 2019. This project has come up at numerous public meetings including those of [DC, Branding, MSRAC, as well as Board of Selectmen. We had the grand opening of the gardening last October which was very well promoted and advertised. In addition, the project supports the work done by the residents of this community in promoting Thompson as a Farm Friendly Community.

As you know, the River Mill project is widely supported by the community as you have

Top Priority (91% important)

- 1. Local Identity***
- 2. City Branding***
- 3. Litter Management***

Sec lid Priority (82-73% important)

- 4. Citizen Participation***
- 5. Historic Landmarks***
- 6. Maintenance***
- 7. Pedestrian Safety***
- 8. Waste Management***
- 9. Access To Information***
- 10. Universal Accessibility***
- 11. Festivals***
- 12. Feedback Platforms***
- 13. Synergy***
- 14. Pedestrians***
- 15. Crosswalks***
- 16. Signage***
- 17. Stormwater Management***
- 18. Wetlands***

those large public information meetings that have been held. Further evidence of community support for the preservation of this historic place can be found by reading the results of the Branding committee's game night citizen engagement endeavor which by the way were published in the January 2020

Also, in my June, 2020 letter to the board the 65 Main Street Rehabilitation project was included. The two excerpts from that letter are included here:

"Projects established to meet with the above stated goals

Thompson Garden By the River in Memory of Harriet A. Tourtellotte — initiated June 2019 The first in a planned series of incremental phases to rehabilitate the town-owned building and lot at 65 Main

Fiona
Sent: Jessica Bolte <gscttroop65117@gmail.com>
To: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 8:47 AM
Subject: Amy St.Onge; Susan Witkowski; kbeausoleil@charter.net
Thompson Garden by the River

Dear Selectwomen St. Onge and Witkowski,

I request that this correspondence be read into the record in full at the Board of Selectmen's regular meeting on October 6.

I write this letter in support of moving forward with the opening of bids for the 65 Main St project as described by the town planner. My understanding that these were not opened and addressed due to your lack of knowledge or understanding of the project. This project has had widespread public discussion and been published in several local forums. The Thompson Garden by the River is a subcommittee under the EDC and is listed under the town website, and the garden has been publicized under the town facebook page. As representatives of the town, these should have been seen by you.

A brief history of the building as we know it: The home was purchased by Mrs. Tourtellotte to house the public school's superintendent. At the time, housing was part of the compensation package, and we held to that until sometime in the 60's. After that, the building became a division of the Library, before the building we have now, and then home to TEEG. Since TEEG relocated, it has become an eyesore. That is on every one of us. However, as today's town leaders, it is your charge to move forward and fix it.

This building has been a topic of discussion since at least 2012, when Joe Lindley compiled a report to the attention of Selectman Lenky. Since that time, Selectman Beausoleil and the current town planner have worked with the attorney to determine what if anything could be done with the property. As we have not been following the will exactly, and haven't for some 60 years, the attorney believes there to be no likelihood of any issues. Further, the Historical Society as well as the Tourtellotte Trust both support this project. I find it hard to believe that Selectwoman Witkowski is advising she did not know of this project, as she was a member of the Tourtellotte Trust when it was discussed during a special meeting in late 2019. Although Mrs. Witkowski clarified that she was not present at that meeting due to a family emergency, the minutes have been available since that time on the Town's website as a public record of the vote taken at that time to pursue the project.

Our town has a very sad record of letting our history sit and rot, and we have a very bad habit of sitting and waiting for someone else to save us. Our town must work on moving forward and doing it ourselves, not waiting for some developer to come in and do it for us.

Restoration of the 65 Main St building would not only assist in providing some very much needed revitalization of the Main St area, but would help to push further redevelopment. It would also help to provide another safe location for families and seniors to have active participation in their community. Further, the community garden aspect would allow members of the community to become more food secure. The building itself could be repaired to allow small business growth in our community. It could also be retrofitted with an apartment as per the original will, that would be providing funding for maintenance/repairs to the property, as well as support the Senior class trip as also required in the will.

The community garden has been well received and through this past pandemic has been a source of fresh produce to many vulnerable community members. Budget line items for this project were reviewed in January/February and were approved by the Board of Selectmen. This project was known and discussed at that time.

The project has received numerous donations as well as grant funding. It is supported by the EDC, the Historical Society, Tourtellotte Trust and active members of the community. There is no excuse as to why it is being delayed.

Thank You,

Jessica Bolte

From: selectmensoffice@thompsonct.org
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 8:18 AM
To: First Selectman Amy St. Onge; Susanne Witkowski; Ken Beausoleil
Subject: For BOS Citizen Comment

Good morning

I received this e-mail with a request to distribute it to the Board of Selectmen Marie

Submitted on Monday, September 28, 2020 - 8:30pm

Your Name: Joseph lamartino
Your Email Address: josephiamartino@gmail.com
Subject: 65 Main Street
Message:
To the Board of Selectmen of Thompson:

100 years ago this year, women in the United States received the right to vote. We have been celebrating this transition in world history even though some 40 percent of the women now living on this globe either have no voting rights or face such impediments that voting for them has little meaning. It is meaningful to consider the leadership of our town this year from this historical and current perspective.

Not long ago, we hoped to honor a special woman, Harriet (Arnold) Tourtellotte, a shrewd investor and the equal to her investor husband Jacob, for an investment they made In 1907 in their mutual hometown of Thompson. On 14 acres of land donated by the Grosvenor-Dale Company, Harriet led the mission to give the town a free high school and housing for teaching staff. This 1907 plan also included funds to support this gift for the future. The school was given to Thompson in memory of the two Tourtellotte daughters who did not survive their childhood.

Over the years, Thompson forgot this gift. The funds were misused by town leaders counter to the expressed wishes of the Tourtellottes. For all that they did for our town, no memorial exists to thank them for their generosity. It was hoped that some small token of our appreciation could be shown by preserving the little Superintendent's house Mrs.Tourtellotte gave the town as part of the 1872 North Grosvenordale mill renovation initiative. Their other donated building, the Teacherage, was taken down and is now a parking lot at the Town Hall.

Please take these factors into account when considering this project. The Tourtellottes impacted our town in many ways and deserve recognition even in some modest way as was proposed in the 65 Main project.

Sincerely,

Joe lamartino

Board of Selectmen
Amy St. Onge
Susanne Witkowski
Ken Beausoleil

Please read this letter into the minutes of the October 6th meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

I am writing because I support the 65 Main St. project to rehab the former TEEG building. I personally feel it is a good idea to rehab the building and the property. Being a lifelong resident of Thompson I remember what Main Street was like when there was some business in that neighborhood, and being on the P&Z it is nice when we accomplish something to help this town as a whole to move forward. Like the person who came to P&Z that wants to expand the use of 77 Main St. we need to start somewhere. Instead of selling it or knocking it down, let's take some pride in what we have. Maybe people will see what is trying to be accomplished, and feel good about the neighborhood.

Thank you,

John B. Lenky

Board of Selectmen

I'm writing this in regard to the Project at 65 Main St, Garden by the River. I have been on the committee since it's inception. We cleaned up the property, had raised beds put in to have a community garden, ordered playground equipment, plans include rehabilitating the house to use as a small business center and the wooded area developed into a food forest.

This spring unfortunately, the Covid 19 virus made our plans not possible this season. We as a committee didn't want the garden to remain empty so we did all the work, shoveling dirt, compost, mulch, planting seeds, vegetable plants, blueberries, raspberries, apple trees. We did the weeding, watering, harvesting. The times I did the harvesting the produce went to TEEG and to Our Fathers Table for weekend meals.

The vision is to have the community have the ability to grow their own food, many don't have access to a place to garden, a place to bring children to learn how food is grown, get their hands dirty and see food doesn't just come from a store. A place to gather as we teach and learn together, children, parents, seniors, we all can benefit from spending time outside in nature, playing, growing our own food, getting to know each other.

We have playground equipment ready to be installed, just waiting on the DPW to install. Another plus for the community.

We need to get the house stabilized, start the work of getting it back into a useable part of the community. It is just wasting away and going further into disrepair. Let's stop that. The house will be a great small business center. Another plus for our community.

I would like this project to keep going forward. Please open the bid to start the process of getting the house stabilized. We are taking one step at a time, please help us continue to move forward.

I would request that this letter be read into the full record at the Board of Selectmen's regular meeting Oct 6th, 2020.

Thank you, Marcia Kettle

18 Wilsonville Rd

North Grosvenordale

Oct
20 SEP - 1 2 : 04
SELECTMEN'S OFFICE