

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF CROMWELL

2 RIVER ROAD SUB-COMMITTEE OF
THE TOWN COUNCIL OF CROMWELL CONNECTICUT
PUBLIC HEARING
TOWN HALL GYM, 41 WEST STREET CROMWELL, CT
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 08, 2016, 7:00 PM
MINUTES

RECEIVED FOR FILING
9-16 2016 at 10:24 AM
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
CROMWELL, CONN.

Julia Conroy
TOWN CLERK

PRESENT: Chairman Ed Widders, John DiMauro, Samantha Slade, Allan Spotts, Stan Stachura

Chairman Ed Widders called the Public Hearing to order at 7:00 PM.

Each of the Committee members introduced themselves to the assembled.

Chairman Widders read the public hearing legal notice into the record. The notice stated that the purpose of the hearing is to obtain views of Town residents on the best use of 2 River Road. He said that after this hearing the Board members will provide recommendations to the Town Council in about a month. He informed the assembled that each person would be allowed three minutes to comment and only after all those residents that want to comment have spoken once, then a person can have three minutes to make additional comments. He also asked that only the Town residents comment on the matter.

Note:

All references to "COA" stand for the Cromwell Outboard Association.

Jeff Polke of 12 Pond View Drive said he is not a boater. He said the land next to the property is used for the Farmer's Market and that the area needs to be used for recreation for the Town. He said to keep it a park environment and continue leasing to the Cromwell Outboard Association. He said that the Town should lease it to them for a dollar a year because they save tax money in upkeep of the property and the members take such good care of the property.

Alice Kelly of 47 Willowbrook Road said that she is not a boater and that her late husband, a Cromwell native, was Commodore of the Outboard Association for years. She said the volunteers kept and continue to keep the whole area immaculate. She noted that it is volunteers that plant the pretty flowers at the park where the Farmer's Market is held and no tax dollars are used. She said it is so well run and to leave it alone, as it has been this way since 1959. She noted that every resident can join and that taxpayers are already able to enjoy the area.

Anthony Varricchio of 6 Kowal Drive said he has lived in Cromwell all of his life. He said it is open to everybody in Cromwell that owns a boat. He said not to mess with something that is already good. He said that the Town should take on projects that need to be done instead.

Don Swanson of 8 Parkview Road and former Commodore of the COA said he had the pleasure of establishing the Cromwell Outboard Association in 1959 there were only three Selectmen on the Board at the time. He said he went before the Board to ask about a way to start a launching business from Cromwell's shore and as a result it was agreed that the property be leased to the COA. He said the Town Attorney, at the time, had a boat and wanted to join so he donated all his time. He said he did everything needed to form the association for nothing, as well as many Cromwell volunteers and local businesses that cleared and cleaned

the property donated all the material and built the various improvements, all for no cost to the Town. He said he would like the Town to lease the property to the COA for another 20 years.

Jennifer & Ian Woods (along with son-Ryan) of 497 Main Street spoke.

Jennifer Woods spoke first. She commented that she is not sure why the lease is under consideration and agreed that leased should be renewed for another 20 years.

Ian Woods spoke next. He said the work ethics of the COA and all its volunteers and families is to be commended. He said the COA has brought families together. He commented that his son has special needs and that the time on the river with his son is very important them. He said they love to fish, look at the nature and the birds and spend quality time together. He said that the Town should keep things as they are as the families in town need it.

Casey McCormick of 12 Riverside Drive said that he is a member of the Association. He said he heard there is grant money the Town could apply for improvements, but he wanted to know what happens when the grant money is gone. He asked who will pay for the upkeep of the property and noted that right now it is free for the Town.

Bryan Gran of 609 Main Street and the Recording Secretary for the COA said the support is overwhelming and it would be terrible to lose an organization that has been part of the Town of Cromwell since 1959. He commented that is probably the biggest club and non-profit organization in town. He asked if the Town is going to consider expansion of recreation in the area that they keep the COA as an anchor to anything done. He said it is a well-kept landscape because of the COA. He said that the Association donates to several charities in town and every year throws a Christmas party for the kids in town. He said they do a lot to be very proud of.

Laura Stull of 15 Coles Road is on the board of directors for the COA and said that one of the things in their lease is that there is a 100 foot access to the area near the river for all residents and if they want to use the docks or restrooms or the facility then you have to become an official member and pay the fifty dollar fee per year. She noted that all residents are allowed to enjoy the beautiful land that the COA has created on the river. She said as a resident she wouldn't want to see her taxes to go up to maintain something if she didn't even use it.

Al Koch of 39 Elm Road said what alternative do they think that area would be good for other than what it is used for now. He said it is a relatively small piece of land and good for the purpose it is being used. He said he is in favor of keeping the COB lease.

Frank Czech of 25 Oakwood Manor asked how many club members? (some comments were not spoken into the microphone and were not audible to the clerk during the meeting or on the tape recording when reviewed.) There was a brief exchange with a few audience members, also not audible. He then asked why we aren't developing the entire area and what can it be used for. He said he is not a boat owner and that the Town should have done a better job getting the word out as he had to read an article in the paper to realize the hearing was being held.

Richie Waters of 83 South Street said he has been a member for of the COA for fifty years. He commented that it takes a very long time to get permits to develop the coast. He said the COA was originally granted a lease for 99 years and that years back a former selectman knocked it down. He commented that there are eight miles of Cromwell river coastline to use and that the COA does not deserve to have their lease taken away.

Helen Zalewski of 26 Geer Street said that the area was a mess and it took a lot of hard work to make it good and that it is free to everyone. She said she pays enough for taxes already and the Town should stay with the COA. She commented that there is already not enough people to water the plants and to leave things alone.

George Lawler of 34 Nooks Hill Rd said he agreed with everything that Jeff Polke commented on. He said he has been in Town 19 years and a member of the COB over the years. He said that his children have gone off to college and that they look forward to coming back to Cromwell to water ski and board on the river. He commented that club members keep an eye on the road and the area to keep it safe and clean for the public. He asked if the Board knew how many people are here tonight (an inaudible response was made). He said that the people's applause shows overwhelming support to keep the COA and that a list of the names and addresses of the supporter would go a long way.

Julius Neto of 12 Cannata Drive said he is member of the club and in full disclosure his comments and thoughts are also from the position of a Fire District Commissioner. He said that for public safety there needs to be a faster response time to get the Town fire boat onto the river. He noted the boat resides at West Street and that the current response time is 3-6 minutes. He said that doesn't seem like a long time, but when a person is in distress a quicker response can make a difference in the outcome of an emergency. He said no matter what is decided that the fire boat needs to be moved to reside at the river, 24/7 for the season, to assist the great men and women of the Cromwell Fire Department in meeting the needs of the public. He said this action could cut the response time in half.

Chairman Wenners said that they would add Julius Neto's comments to the discussion and recommendations made to the Town Council.

He then thanked the speakers that already commented and invited the assembled to make additional comments.

Don Swanson 8 Parkview Road commented that Portland and Rocky Hill already provide public access to non-residents.

David Yanaros of 65 Coles Road said he was looking to get to know people in the community. He said he is here more as a taxpayer although he is a member of the COA. He said he believes that no one could or would run it better than Al Waters, who does it at a minimal cost to its members. He said that not renewing the lease would destroy the fabric of the club and it would be at the cost of the taxpayers. He said he is in favor of renewing the lease.

Allen Spotts, Committee Member, read the following correspondence into the record: See attached correspondence

Rodney Bitgood of 251/253 Main Street
Eleanor Corciullo (no address provided)

Al Waters PO Box in Cromwell said he would like to personally thank all the people who came out and that he is overwhelmed by the amount of members that showed up for the meeting. He said this has been going on for 12 years and needs to be put to rest. He said that 90% of the letter (2nd read into the record by Allan Spotts) is false. He said he wanted, on record, that he does not get paid \$7000 to run the COA. Mr. Waters then asked how many of assembled are not members of the COA and approximately 15 people raised their hand. He then asked how many people are here tonight and someone said approximately 115 to 120. He talked about comments made regarding having access to the river. He said you really can't build near the river because of the 100 year flood zone. He commented that a few weeks back at the Farmer's Market you

could smell the sewage treatment plant, so who would want to build down there. He said if the Town wants to go through the hoops to get permits to build that it will be about eight to ten years on average.

Samantha Slade Town Council/Sub-Committee Member said she reached out on social media on this topic and two people responded. She then read the following correspondence into the record: See attached correspondence

Joseph Nguyen of 41-43 River Road

Ondria Mantovani (no address provided)

Anthony Varricchio of 6 Kowal Drive said he has been in town since 1936 and is in favor of keeping the lease with the COA. He said that anyone can go down there and enjoy the river. He also said that the Town does not own the docks, that they belong to the COA. He said that the Town would need to buy the docks, permit users and keep a program running. He also said that there is no way to run a program like that without cost to the taxpayers.

Heather Polke of 12 Pond View Drive said she has been a resident in Town for 21 years. She said hats off to the great work that the volunteers do. She commented that things are moving along really well as they are. She said that the town does not have the money to put in all the amenities that would be needed such as lights and docks and so forth.

Bill Larson of 12 Timber Hill Road said he used to be a boat club member and that he enjoyed the beauty and friendship of the people he has met there. He commented that so many people in attendance are in favor of keeping it. He asked if they could find out how many volunteer hours are spent in the upkeep of the boat club property. He asked who will take on all the expenses. He said his opinion is to leave it the way it is because we can't afford to keep it in the condition it is in now.

Chairman Wenners stated that no one's mind is made up.

Ericka Johnson of 4 West Street Heights said there needs to be talk among the civic organizations in town to bring more folks into town. She said that they should come together and meet with the Town and discuss what we can do for these folks.

David Madej of 23A Timber Hill Road said he is the Membership Officer for the COA and that the 2016 membership is 244 and 158 of those are Cromwell residents. He said that there is a pay rate for members that live in town, one for those that live out of town to be part of the club. He said another option that they have been looking into to offering a pay rate for those that just want access to the river and not be part of a club membership.

Alice Kelly of 47 Willowbrook Road said she understood that the October meeting would be held in executive session. Ed Wenners said yes it is. She then asked if there would be a public meeting before the executive session to tell the public and taxpayers, which have a right to know, what the Committee's recommendations are. She said that outside the actual negotiations, for a lease, that the discussion on what to do with the property does not come under the FOI jurisdiction of what can be held in executive session. Chairman Wenners said they would review that and check into it.

Don Swanson of 8 Parkview Road said that if the recommendation should be that the Town take over the property that the other privately sponsored programs that cost three or four hundred dollar such as midget football, little league and basketball programs should be looked at too as to not single out any one group. He said as a taxpayer he would not want to pay all of the fees that go along with that.

John Croasdale of 4 Bellevue Terrace said he has been a member since 1977. He said that COA members volunteer at no cost to the town now and that the Town will have to come up with money to monitor and manage the launch area. He said that someone should come to the club when a decision is made and meet with the members.

Erika Johnson of 4 West Street Height said that the Rails to Trail system in Connecticut should come through Cromwell too. She said that we need to better utilize our Main Street. She suggested the Town work together with other committees to develop ways to bring in revenue to the town.

Matt LeDuke of 14 West Tract Road said he is in favor of the COA. He said he has been a member for three months and that he and his family love the access to the river. He cautioned not to get caught up in the drama and that the biggest value of the property is its value to its residents.

Al Waters asked if there were any members that joined within the last two years that would speak.

Mark Bonacquisto of 7 Patricia Lane said he has lived in Cromwell since 1974 or 75 and that he was never a member until they recently joined. He said he used to take his boat and Jet Ski to Rocky Hill where it is free after 5 PM to launch onto the river. He said there is no one to monitor the launch then and he would come back to find parts missing from his trailer and trash everywhere. He said he has a heart condition and can't do hard labor so they found light duties for him to volunteer for. He said he has been to hundreds of marinas and never saw one as well maintained as this boat launch is.

Marisol Bonacquisto of 7 Patricia Lane said it is the volunteers that keep Cromwell so beautiful. She said that other places she has lived that kids gather in the woods and do what kids do, which is not the case for the river front areas the COA maintains. She said she is a Vet and served for our country. She said many people have spoken in favor of the COA and asked to have a vote to keep the process a democratic one.

Rich Water of 87 South Street said that you don't have to own a boat to be a member of the boat club.

Robert Fuller of 7 Wexford Lane said that there is a high level of morale between the Farmer's Market and the COA and is in favor of keeping it that way.

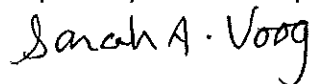
David Yanaros of 65 Coles Road said that Cromwell taxpayers currently have access to the river 24 hours/7 days a week. He asked if they would still have this right and compared to what cost.

Al Waters said that the people here tonight, members and residents, realize that before they come up with a recommendation a few options will need to be considered. He said one is to leave it as the boat club association, another is to sell it to a private owner and the last is to have the Town take over. He asked that the Sub-Committee and the COA have a meeting with the Town Council before making a decision that could be costly.

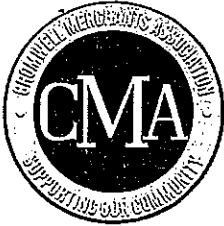
Chairman Wengers thanked the assembled for coming and everyone the speakers for their comments.

Chairman Wengers closed the Public Hearing at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted By:



Sarah A. Voog
Public Hearing Minutes Clerk



*Cromwell Merchants Association
41 West Street
Cromwell Connecticut 06416*


September 8, 2016

Members of the number 2 River Rd sub-committee:

As the co-chair of a downtown business group (CMA), a downtown business owner and property owner and as a member of the first boat launch committee. I would like to say that I am in favor of the town running the boat launch and making it accessible to everyone who is willing to pay a fee. Whether they are a town resident or not. I feel that while this may not be a money making venture for the town from the sales of launch permits it is another opportunity for the town to showcase its water front and drive people not only to the downtown area, but to the entire town of Cromwell. I believe this is how it should be looked at. More sales of fuel, food, gas etc. in our town may far out reach the revenue of launch permit sales. As an example all one has to do is venture up to the Rocky Hill public boat launch on a Summer Saturday or Sunday afternoon to see the amount of activity that is going on there. All the while being run in a very organized manner by one young adult. Lastly, I believe that the opening up of the town owned launch is another big step towards the development of our underutilized waterfront here in Cromwell.



Cromwell Merchants Association
41 West Street
Cromwell Connecticut 06416


Thank you,
Rodney Bitgood
251 and 263 Main St. Cromwell



Enzo Faienza <e.faienza@gmail.com>

Fw: boat club hearing

2 messages

Joseph Corciullo <corciullo@sbcglobal.net>
Reply-To: Joseph Corciullo <corciullo@sbcglobal.net>
To: Enzo Faienza <e.faienza@gmail.com>

Thu, Sep 8, 2016 at 1:03 PM

On Thursday, September 8, 2016 10:02 AM, Joseph Corciullo <corciullo@sbcglobal.net> wrote:

Mr. Chairman and Members,

I am unable to attend your hearing tonight concerning the town owned property at 2 River Road. I would appreciate your consideration of reading and entering my written impute into your record.

As you know the Outboard Associations have been leasing the River Road property since 1959 {59 years}.

It has never gone out to bid. The last 3 leases have been given to Commodore Waters. The town has been more than generous by charging the paltry fee amount of only \$500.00 a year for prime river front town owned property. As a taxpayer it has been my opinion that the leasing fee is ridiculous. I payed double that fee just to rent a hall for 6 hours.

In a recent article I read that Mr. Fazekas suggested a proposal for a joint town/Outboard Assoc. operating agreement and half the proceeds would go to the OBA. His stated reason was "Be respectful to the OBA and sort of take baby steps". *it appears to me that Mr Fazekas efforts are not what is in the best interest of the town, but further attempts of negotiating another deal in the interest of Mr. Waters. Is he not aware that the lease expires on Dec.31,2016.*

Myself and other taxpayers are in agreement with Mr. Popper, that the town take over the boat launch and open it up for public access. In doing so the docks may be eligible for federal funding.

Our town recently purchased two parcel of properties on River Road. The intent is for development opportunities in the future that is long overdue. Any future leasing would handicapp the town and prospective developers.

Last year Mr Waters stated publicly that, " the boat club built the big concrete wall down there and that the town did nothing". To set the record straight, the town payed for the concrete wall and the town employes worked on it....Mr Waters also claims that the boat club is non-profit {501c3}. That would mean all the money would have to be donated. Thats not the case. Mr Waters makes money from the membership fees

It is time to end leasing the property for membership access only and for profit .I am not a boat club member, more importantly I am a life long resident and taxpayer. Lets get back our long over due control of our Riverfront property and develope it into something we can all be proud of.
Thank You,

Corciullo

Respectfully, Eleanor

Cromwell, Ct.

Enzo Faienza <e.faienza@gmail.com>
To: Allan Spotts <spottsad@gmail.com>

Thu, Sep 8, 2016 at 1:38 PM

Sent from Enzo's iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Joseph Corciullo <corciullo@sbcglobal.net>
Date: September 8, 2016 at 1:03:21 PM EDT
To: Enzo Faienza <e.faienza@gmail.com>
Subject: Fw: boat club hearing
Reply-To: Joseph Corciullo <corciullo@sbcglobal.net>

[Quoted text hidden]

Voog, Sarah

From: Samantha Slade [samantha.c.slade@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, September 09, 2016 12:29 PM
To: Voog, Sarah
Subject: Fwd: 2 River Road in Cromwell

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Joe Nguyen <joe.nguyen@fieldsmfg.com>
Date: Wed, Sep 7, 2016 at 3:24 PM
Subject: 2 River Road in Cromwell
To: "Samantha.C.Slade@gmail.com" <Samantha.C.Slade@gmail.com>

Hi Samantha, we own the property at 41-43 River Road. While we love the concept of the Cromwell Outboard Association and their great work. It's time for Cromwell to take the hard road and spend some real money to invest in the area. It has so much potential and several of the surrounding towns are working their assets. We would love for Cromwell to utilize the area with commercial development. The type of development that has foot-traffic or a destination type of resort. All of the surrounding merchants would love the town leaders for it. Say hi to my old school classmate, Enzo for me. Thank you.

Joe Nguyen, SVP of Marketing/Product Development

Direct [800.280.8125](tel:800.280.8125) | Cell [860.759.9242](tel:860.759.9242) | Office [800.654.1517](tel:800.654.1517)

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We are nominated for 2017 PPAI Supplier Star Award. Please vote by Friday, September 30.

Voog, Sarah

From: Samantha Slade [samantha.c.slade@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, September 09, 2016 12:32 PM
To: Voog, Sarah
Subject: 2 River Road

Message received from Ondria Mantovani on my Facebook page:

Although I am not a member, the outboard association has and will be a viable asset to our town. They keep the area beautiful with no cost to the town. I know many members and what they contribute and how they care about keeping it a great place for Cromwell boaters. If the town takes over the land, they will not have the resources for the upkeep or funds. No offense but Cromwell has not done a great job in providing community resources. It takes far too much time and money to get anything done around town and there will be too many hands in the pot, so to speak! Do residents a favor and let the Outboard association Continue with their ongoing success!

**CROMWELL WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY
TOWN OF CROMWELL**

Public Hearing Sub-Committee for Town Council - 2 River Road

September 08, 2016
Meeting date

September 16, 2016
Date Submitted

Sarah A. Voog
100 Laura Lane, Apt B2
Rocky Hill, CT 06067

(860) 632-3454 Work

MEETING TIME: 7:00 PM

START: 7:00 PM FINISH: 8:40 PM = TIME 1 hr. 40 mins.

OTHER HOURS EXPENDED RELATED TO MEETING:
(List briefly what was done and length of time to complete task)

Typing the Minutes: 2 hrs. 20 mins.
mins.

Filing Document(s) - 0

TIME: 2 hrs. 20 mins.

TOTAL TIME: 4hrs. 0 mins.

Department Supervisor/ Chair's Signature

1. Lack of Quorum – Cancellation of Meeting - \$25.00	<u>\$ 0</u>
2. Meeting (or for the first 3 hours)	<u>\$ 75.00</u>
3. Meeting, Overtime Hours, and other Related Duties	<u>\$ 9.60</u>
*After the first 3 hours - <u>1.00</u> x \$9.60 Per Hour	<u>\$ 84.60</u>

Approvals:
Date Minutes Received, September 16, 2016

Town Manager's Signature