

October 9, 2013

Minutes of the 9AM September 15, 2013 Ad Hoc Committee Meeting, Town Hall Council Chambers

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:05AM by Bob Manchester

Present were committee members Bob Manchester (chair), Joel Hellmann, Bob Dillon, Mike Minardi (assessor) and John Harker. Bob Manchester reported that committee member Don Nessing has resigned from the committee.

2. Approve Minutes: No action required

3. Public Comment:

Barrington resident Gary Morse asked to address the committee. He asked that the Ad Hoc Committee (AHC) not exempt any private ratable property from the AHC's standards work. He cited a supreme court case, Willow Tree, that provides guidance on applicable law on the assessment of affordable properties, i.e., page two of the decision speaks to uniformity of assessment to include affordable housing.

No action was taken by the AHC though the committee affirmed its intention to include affordable housing in the standards development work to be accomplished.

4. Review Status of 2014 Revaluation

Discussion was had on the use of the Uniform Appraisal Dataset (UAD) in the 2014 revaluation. J. Hellmann noted that whatever terminology is used to classify properties that it be in such form that it be easily understood by property owners. M. Minardi noted that the use of UAD terminology, while written such that there is uniformity at the assessors' level, will allow for long term consistency within the town. B. Manchester noted that the use of UAD's be supported by standards documentation so that property owners can easily understand deviation from the UAD used to assign value to ratable properties.

There was public comment a) on the importance of standards from G. Morse and b) on the public education of revaluation process from J. Black. On standards, G. Morse noted that the AHC remain vigilant on the establishment of assessment standards such that an ordinary resident with no prior knowledge of assessments will be able to understand them. J. Black asked the AHC to ensure that adequate public information be provided about the revaluation work, especially in local print media.

5. Review of RFP Process

M. Minardi noted that the AHC received seven responses from the RFP process. These were previously made available to all committee members in time for the meeting, today. J. Hellmann noted that there was a lot of boiler plate and expressed concern that whatever the AHC does with standards, there will never be an exact science to the revaluation process. He also inquired as to where the funds were to come from for the standards work.

There was general discussion and agreement that while there will always be a subjective nature to the revaluation process, work can be done to establish process standards such that there is consistent methodology, over multiple revaluations, as to how the revaluation data set is created, managed and interpreted.

B. Dillon inquired as to how to conduct the interview process with those who have responded. After some discussion, it was agreed that all seven respondents be invited to present to the AHC. Two dates were set for this, Monday 9/30/13 and Tuesday 10/1/13.

General discussion ensued on the various RFP responses.

#### 6. Affordable Housing/Revisited

The AHC discussed, in general terms, the merits of included affordable housing assessment standards in the body of work to be done to establish process standards for all ratable privately owned properties. There was uniformity of opinion that the AHC will deal with this at a time best suited to do so.

There ensued a public discussion on the applicable laws pertaining to affordable housing.

Secretary J. Harker, from written notes, provides a record of the discussion as follows:

There was divergent opinion, and tension, between two positions, a) that affordable housing is essentially a taxing scheme and b) that applicable laws today are unclear and do not specifically speak to the constitutional property protections provided by the RI Constitution, i.e., that like properties be assessed in a uniform manner.

To the question of whether deed restrictions are a form of a taxing scheme or a form of an exemption, the AHC could not determine.

There was general consensus that standards be established such that full market values (FMVs) for affordable housing properties are included in the AHC's standards work, not unlike conservation land on the Town's rolls, today. There was discussion on whether deed restrictions and their applicability to affordable housing is an issue for the committee. There was general consensus that the work to create standards that promote uniform valuation of like properties, to include affordable homes and developments, is germane to the AHC. It was generally agreed that process of assigning deed restrictions in Town be further considered for written standards and that the AHC was not suitably informed on this matter at the present time.

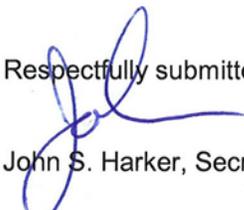
#### 7. Next Meeting

The next meeting(s) will be held on September 30<sup>th</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup> in the Town Council Chambers. The meeting times will be set by the assessor for all RFP respondents. These meetings will allow for approximately an hour's time to hear first hand from the respondents.

#### 4. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

  
John S. Harker, Secretary

Ad Hoc