

TOWN OF DEERFIELD
Public Hearing – Discretionary Preservation Easement for a Barn
May 6, 2019
MINUTES

Call to Order

5:30 pm – Chairman Robertson called the public hearing to order

Present: Andrew Robertson, Chairman; Richard Pitman, Vice Chairman. Fred McGarry, Jeff Shute and Cindy McHugh, Selectpersons.

“Notice is hereby given of a public hearing to obtain input regarding a proposal to have a discretionary preservation easement as described in RSA 79-D, applied to the property of David Irish.

This property is located at 145 South Road, Deerfield NH, Map 420, Lot 57-1.”

Chairman Robertson stated for those of the public that haven’t memorized your map and lot numbers, this is the large gray colonial farm with the attached barn at the junction of South and Birch Roads and continued reading the public notice.

“The hearing shall be held for the purpose of weighing the public benefit to be obtained versus the tax revenue to be lost if the easement is consistent with the purposes of RSA 79-D.

The Board of Selectmen shall hold a public hearing on Monday, May 6th, 2019 at 5:30 pm. The hearing shall be held in the downstairs conference room of the George B. White Building, 8 Raymond Road, Deerfield, NH.”

To which Chairman Robertson added where they were now assembled.

With that said, the chairman would open the public hearing and asked if anyone was to comment, please move to the microphone so that their comments could be recorded and at least get the back of your head on camera.

David Irish – 145 South Road

He stated that he just wanted to thank the Board for considering his request.

They have been doing a lot of improvements to the property since they had bought it in the last year including the roof on that whole barn.

He did appreciate that this is out there to be considered, an old barn going back to the 1700’s and one thing he would say is as a new member of this community, making investments in the property. If anyone has been down South Road recently, there is a large indoor arena that they are adding. They will be back on the taxes for that. He is definitely contributing to the community.

Chairman Robertson asked for any other comments.

Jim Cannon – South Road

He stated that he came to speak on behalf of the historic easement.

He stated that he and Sally interact with their neighbors quite a bit and know them pretty well. He didn’t want to speak for it but the general impression of all the neighbors is that they are thrilled that the Irish family moved in there and what they are doing for the property.

They were all concerned that they would go back to the disarray that it was many, many years ago so they are happy that they are keeping the place up and improving it.

They are all in favor of them although one of his neighbors is not in favor and his thought was that they were just jealous.

He stated that he came to speak personally for himself and his wife Sally but that also he thought that they should know that the general feeling in the neighborhood is in favor of it or have no objection to getting a tax break on the old property which he believed, and he didn't want to misspeak, he thought it was one of the earliest homes in Deerfield. Anything to keep it up adds a lot of character to the town.

Harriet Cady – Old Centre Road

She stated that she didn't have a problem with the discretionary preservation easement but just wondering if this is the Old Batchelder Place which Jim Alexander bought?

Chairman Robertson stated that yes, that is the property in question.

He continued, just for the benefit of the group, the Board has looked at the application, looked at the figures and the barn is presently appraised at the tax value of somewhere between \$42,000.00 and \$44,000.00. He didn't remember the exact amount.

The construction date is listed as either 1790 or 1792.

The Board's authority as it regards to the preservation easement is to offset the taxable valuation by 25 to 75 percent.

The reason that the easement is made available, the intent behind the law, is to help owners of large colonial barns and older barns defray the cost of taxes so that they could use that money for maintenance and improvement, that sort of thing.

He would also mention, if you have not been in that barn, it's certainly a beautiful barn from the outside but he thought that the real beauty of that barn is the interior. The rounded center aisle and the lamps, although he thought the lamps weren't original but that they certainly add a nice touch.

Chairman Robertson stated that if there were no other comments that he would call the public hearing to an end and depending on the Board's pleasure, they would take it up during their regular meeting which is immediately following this one.