

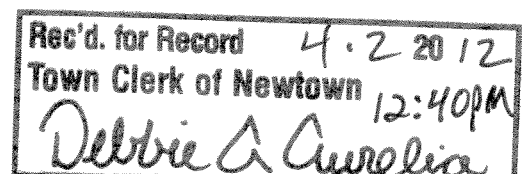
THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY BOARD OF SELECTMEN

The Board of Selectmen held a special meeting Thursday, March 29, 2012 in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown. First Selectman Llodra called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

**PRESENT:** First Selectman Llodra, Selectman William F.L. Rodgers, Selectman James Gaston, Sr.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Planning and Land Use Director George Benson, Planning and Land Use Deputy Director Rob Sibley, Community & Economic Development Director Elizabeth Stocker, Economic Development Co-Chairs Don Sharpe and Margaret Olinger, Economic Development member Walt Motyka, Director of Public Works Fred Hurley, Planning and Zoning Chair Lilla Dean, Town Attorney David Grogins, sixteen members of the public and one member of the press.

First Selectman Llodra explained the purpose of the meeting was for discussion on the sewer plan in Hawleyville saying what is learned at this meeting will inform decisions going forward. Mr. Hurley went over the history of the sewer line along Rte. 6. In 2000 the line was extended from Bethel to the Homesteads, now known as The Woods. To extend the sewer from The Woods to the intersection of Rte. 25 and Rte. 6 would cost \$4 to \$5 million dollars. Depending how the property is utilized there are options that would keep the costs down. Ms. Dean explained that the M-2A zone allows for hotels, large businesses, research and development and conference center all with a small component of retail associated with it. First Selectman Llodra said that Exit 9 is the last exit on Rte. 84 that is absent of any significant commercial presence. It has been suggested to her that the delay in developing the area has more to do with the absence of sewer than anything else. Mr. Benson said people have come to both him and Ms. Stocker with concepts and ideas. They don't want to spend money to design the project without a guarantee from the town that the sewer will be put in. Land Use and Planning and Zoning feel this area is the future development area of the town; the sooner the sewers go in the better. Selectman Gaston asked who would pay for the expansion, the town, the WSA customer, the developer or a combination of all of them. Mr. Benson said that these are the things that need to be worked out. There is an affordable housing project that is proposed that would require the sewer; it would be the catalyst that would start the sewer project. Ms. Stocker said that the EDC supported putting that into the town's capital improvement plan; it was envisioned in earlier days that the sewer line would go up to the M-2A parcel. The cost is too great for the developer to bear alone; there are others that will benefit, not just one user. Mr. Hurley said a change in philosophy for this district opens up other opportunities in terms of financing. Mr. Sibley spoke about environmental issues, watershed and septic systems in the area. Putting in a sewer will change all the septic systems. Mr. Hurley said a sewer is cheaper than an engineered system. Selectman Gaston asked if the WSA customers or town would carry the burden. Mr. Motyka said a self supporting system should be evaluated and the cost to maintain it. There is sewer capacity; it needs to be hooked up. First Selectman Llodra mentioned the Dauti case and our understanding of sewerage the area. When the decision was made to extend the sewer into Rte. 6 the expectation was clearly for economic development. The recent interpretation of zoning relative to sewers is that, even if there were a proposal for a high density development in that residential area, we would not be able to say they couldn't hook up. Attorney Grogins reported the history of the Dauti case on Church Hill Road. He is unsure of what precedent it provides however, if you say there is unused capacity in the system and you want to limit it, and the limitation is solely based on zoning classifications, there is a possibility it would not withstand a challenge similar to the Dauti challenge. If we build a system and try to limit it, there is a question relative to the legality of the regulation. Ms. Stocker added that out of three projects, two are housing and one is economic




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development. The assisted living portion of the Homesteads provides staffing for 24 hour care; this provides a service for the town but it also considered economic development. Liberty of Newtown was a project supported by the Economic Development Commission because it would create the opportunity to generate economic development in the area. The town needs to decide if affordable housing is something that should be embraced by the community. All commissions need to look at what benefit that type of development can bring to the community. First Selectman Llodra noted that Bethel has an elevated commitment to investing significant energy and planning to continue on their piece of Rte. 6. Additionally, it is important to bring the trailer park on Rte. 6 onto the sewer line. Ms. Dean said that it is not possible to put a septic tank on the M-2A property. That property is what should be considered when thinking of adding diversity to the housing stock. Mr. Rodgers asked where affordable housing would go. He said it would be a shame to see a commercial site be used for residential and believes it would require a zone change. If we do something proactive with extending the sewer line we keep commercial development viable. If we don't do something proactive, the choice will be taken from us and the result will be residential. Mr. Sharpe said the Economic Development Commission is in favor of economic development. He hopes that a \$5 million sewer cost would be shared by a large developer. The hope is that by raising the commercial/industrial component on the grand list we will be able to take some pressure off existing tax payers and that the several properties should be reserved for that purpose. Attorney Grogins said it makes sense to have an analysis done on parcels that exist between the end of the present line and where it will be directed. Mr. Hurley said the system would have to be structured so it would not become a burden on existing users. First Selectman Llodra wants to be planful and come back to this group with options, the best steps that can be taken to help preserve the integrity of our growth plan, while considering all points that came up at this meeting. Ms. Dean agreed that the data is there but needs to be looked at in a more innovative way.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Having no further business the Board of Selectmen adjourned their special meeting at 8:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Susan Marcinek, Clerk