

Special Town Meeting

September 5, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 7:40pm, by 1st Selectman James Zeoli. It should be noted for the record that Patrick O'Sullivan Orange Town Clerk swore in James Zeoli as the Special Town Meeting Moderator. The Registrars of Voters checked electors and persons qualified to vote at this town meeting. It should be noted that 197 elector names were checked.

Town Clerk Patrick O'Sullivan read the Notice of the Special Town Meeting, signed by the Board of Selectmen, and he stated that the return of posting and publication of the legal notice was in the Orange Times having circulation in the town on August 30, 2018 and the notice was placed on the bulletin board and sign post at the town hall.

The Town Clerk stated all speakers should go to the podium & microphone and state their name and address and speak for up to 2 minutes.

To consider and act on the purchase of property known as 28 Salemme Lane from Orange Land Development Holdings, LLC contingent on the receipt of a grant-in-aid in the amount of \$6,143,250.00 from the State of Connecticut and to authorize the First Selectman and the Town Attorney to take all steps necessary, including signing all documents, to effectuate the grant-in-aid and acquisition.

1st Selectman Zeoli described the history of the land and the 15 to 18 year plan to develop the parcel into a train station by the State of Connecticut. However during that time other stations and lines took priority and when Connecticut had no immediate plans for developing the station, the current owner Orange Land Development LLC through its member Edward Crowley, had worked with the state for an Urban Act Grant. The purchase price for the 8.2 acres of approximately \$5.5 million to the current owner and the other expenses and studies brings the grant up to \$6.143 million; the town will own the property outright with an easement to the State of Connecticut covering the road (Salemme Lane) for 25 years.

Thomas Hurley questioned the loss of taxes and other town liabilities and how the land is currently zoned.

Michael Sodins questioned the assessment and or the appraisal of the property and adjacent property owners and any upkeep and who owns the fencing?

Town Attorney stated the current zoning is TODD and not LI2 and that the adjacent property owner has the right of first refusal and if sold to a developer, that developer could submit a CGS sec 8-30g application for affordable housing apartments. He continued that once the property is transferred to the town that the entire property is unencumbered and that the town would have the option to sell.

Selectman Goldblatt pointed out that once the town owns the property, the town charter requires another town meeting to sell the property.

Board of Finance member J. Leahy wanted to make sure there were no unanticipated future costs or expenses. He also asked why this was being offered.

1st Selectman Zeoli explained that the State of Connecticut at its July 25th State Bond Commission approved the grant and although the town will have the right to market the property with the efforts of our Economic Development coordinator Ann Marie Sliby, the State of Connecticut with its easement leaves the option of future train station development.

W. Musco thanked the 1st Selectman for his efforts; superb job.

F. Messore asked about the total cost, appraisal and easement.

Town Attorney Marino stated this town meeting is the first step in the process; and reiterated absolutely no cost to the town taxpayers and the easement is only for access on Salemme Lane.

Jeff Gordon a Land Use Planner spoke in favor of the acquisition. He thinks it is a golden opportunity but expressed concern about potential devaluation of adjacent properties.

1st Selectman Zeoli thanked all 200 electors and residents for attending this Special Town Meeting and the great dialogue.

Selectman Carangelo made a motion to purchase 28 Salemme Lane as described in the call and was seconded by Selectperson Williams.

1st Selectman/Moderator Zeoli explained the vote will be taken by voice and raising of hands.

All were in favor of the purchase of 28 Salemme Lane, except one.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:22pm