

Meeting Minutes for the fourteenth meeting of the Land Bank Study Committee

2.19.20 6:00 PM Room 310 of Town Hall

Present: Harold Petersen, Linda Olson Pehlke, Bob Lepson, David Pearlman, David Lescohier, Blair Hines, Joanne Sullivan, Heather Hamilton, Chair

Members of the public: John Vanscoyoc and Ruthann Sneider

The chair opened the meeting at 6:04 PM.

The Chair asked if everyone could review the meeting minutes for both December and January meetings and either make a motion or edits. Blair Hines moved the December 2019 meeting minutes. Joanne Sullivan seconded. Unanimously approved.

Chair asked for a motion regarding January meeting minutes. Harold Petersen offered an edit, "CPA offers possible exemptions". Bob Lepson moved the minutes as amended. Linda Olson Pehlke seconded the motion. Bob, Linda, and Harold approved. David Lescohier, David Pearlman, Blair Hines, Joanne Sullivan, abstained since they were not present at the meeting in January.

Harold recapped the discussion from January's meeting and how we came to focus on the Community Preservation Act (CPA).

Blair asked if the other members are comfortable with going forward with this path.

Joanne said this is the logical path forward given the recent passing of WA 9.

Linda pointed out that it would have been difficult to move forward with a transfer tax that had three possible uses. She was a supporter of both attempts to pass the CPA both times it came before the Town. It is a good deal and many other communities have taken advantage of it.

David Lescohier added that the origins of his land bank idea was a direct result of the painful process of trying to site a new elementary school and the issues involved. He thinks it is a great time to revisit the CPA and believes strongly that 1% is the right number.

David Pearlman expressed his disappointment that the land bank is not moving forward with a transfer tax proposal, but also understands that funding is fungible and that if we get more money to help with open space and affordable housing, it will inevitably help alleviate the burden on the schools.

John Vanscoyoc (member of the public) was impressed by Harold's overview and synopsis of the work to date. The timing and how it is communicated to the voters at large will be critical. We have had a number of overrides in the past five years. Voters will need to know what they are getting out of this deal. He also encouraged us to reach out to the school supporters to get their buy-in early.

Ruthann Sneider (member of the public) wanted a copy of the WA language that is being proposed by the committee.

Harold pointed out that we are leaving money on the table and passing this could actually stave off overrides.

The committee expressed interest in including two exemptions:

- Low income
- Senior low and moderate income

We should not include:

- \$100,000 exemption because the residential exemption does this already
- Commercial property

David Lescohier moved version 2 of the proposed language with two exemptions. Blair seconded. It passed unanimously.

David Lescohier will send the language adopted to Joe Viola from the Planning Department for him to submit and develop a petitioner's description. Harold will also send along some of the documents he has produced for the committee as well as a list of CPA projects from other communities.

Linda outlined what the report should include:

- Who might qualify for the two exemptions
- American Community Survey data
- Tax assessor's data
- Senior Tax Committee data

Next steps discussed include:

- 1) Submit WA
- 2) Draft petitioner's description
- 3) Draft report
- 4) Include report in combined report to Town Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.