



The Town of Fenwick Island

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SPECIAL MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL JULY 26, 2019 AT 2:30 PM

MINUTES

In Attendance

Town Council Members:

Mayor Langan, Vice Mayor Mais, Treasurer Bunting, Secretary Merritt, Council Member Carmean, Council Member Lee, Council Member Williams

Staff in Attendance:

Town Manager Tieman, Building Official Schuchman, Town Clerk Martin

Also in Attendance:

Fred Pearson (Pearson's Appraisal Services)

Mayor Langan began the meeting at 2:30 PM.

711 Bunting Avenue

Christine Keisling, the owner of 711 Bunting Avenue, provided two opinion letters, one from Charles Zonko and the other from John F. Kleinstuber. Per the letters, it is stating that there is a 20% loss in property value.

Mr. Pearson noted that he again reviewed the property and did not think the handicap ramp changed the property value. He spoke to John Kleinstuber who commented that he did not see the ramp enhancing the value of the property and also spoke to Chris at Sussex County who commented that on similar situations that Sussex County never adjusted taxes.

Ms. Keisling commented that she was told by Charles Zonko that the handicap ramp is comparable to a water tower or boardwalk in front of the property.

Ms. Keisling asked if Mr. Pearson has ever been inside her home to look at the handicap ramp. Mr. Pearson replied that he has never had the opportunity.

713 Bunting Avenue

One of the owners of 713 Bunting Avenue, Debbie Lundy, added to the comments presented by Ms. Keisling by stating that the letters from John Kleinstuber and Charles Zonko are "telling" and there is nothing comparable in Town. The handicap ramp absolutely devalues the property since it is like having a boardwalk in front of the home.

4 W. Houston Street

Town Manager Tieman noted that Gary Hunter, one of the owners of 4 W. Houston Street, submitted an appraisal he had done in 2018.

Mr. Pearson reviewed the appraisal and noted that one of the comparables in the appraisal was from South Bethany Beach.

Discussion

711 Bunting Avenue

Council Member Williams questioned if DNREC has determined if the ramp will be moved. Ms. Keisling replied that she has not heard from Mike Powell from DNREC since the meeting in May. She added that if the ramp is moved, that any adjustment given today can be taken away.

Due to the property being diminished, Council Member Lee made a motion to readjust the property value. Council Member Carmean seconded the motion.

Secretary Merritt questioned how to determine a decrease in value. Mr. Pearson replied that John Kleinstuber stated that it could be at least a 5% decrease, but John Kleinstuber also added that some would not have a problem with a handicap ramp being by their property while others would have a problem.

Council Member Carmean commented that she is sorry to see what DNREC has done but noted that any view of public land is never protected. Ms. Keisling replied that the handicap ramp is a permanent structure that is obstructing her view.

Council Member Williams noted that the handicap ramp was changed from what was previous and feels that an adjustment should be given.

Council Member Carmean amended the original motion to readjust the property at 711 Bunting Avenue by 5%. The motion was seconded by Secretary Merritt, and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer Bunting confirmed that the tax value would go back up if the ramp is moved.

713 Bunting Avenue

A motion was made by Council Member Lee, seconded by Secretary Merritt, to readjust the property at 713 Bunting Avenue by 5%. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Carmean confirmed that the tax value would go back up to the original quote if the ramp is moved.

4 W. Houston Street

Secretary Merritt commented that if the property is adjusted per the 2018 appraisal provided by the owner, it would only result in about a \$20 difference in taxes.

A motion was made by Treasurer Bunting, seconded by Secretary Merritt, to stay with the assessment given by Pearson's Appraisal Services. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

A MOTION was made by Secretary Merritt, seconded by Vice Mayor Mais, to adjourn the meeting. The MOTION passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 2:52 PM.