

Frequently Asked Questions: 25 Watson Avenue

June 5, 2023

This FAQ, prepared by the Town with input from the Solicitor, addresses questions received during the review of new development concepts for 25 Watson Avenue reviewed by the Planning Board in March and April 2023.

1. Can you clarify the purpose of the proposed Request for Proposals (RFP) for the individual lots?

Reply: The Town has not yet prepared an RFP for development on any part of the 25 Watson Avenue property. The decision on how to proceed will be determined by the Town Council. The Town will need to engage professional expertise to assist with writing the RFP, evaluating development proposals, making recommendations on the selection of a developer, and assisting with negotiations on a development agreement and/or purchase and sales agreement.

Approval at a Financial Town Meeting is required to move forward with any sale of all or part of the 25 Watson Avenue property.

2. If the town wishes to sell the lots individually, what would be included in the RFP?

Reply: A helpful resource to understand the development RFP process is the Housing Toolbox for Massachusetts Communities, which was developed by the Citizens Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) and the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP).

<https://www.housingtoolbox.org/development-process/create-an-rfp-choose-a-developer>

The RFP will likely include many of the same items described in the Housing Toolbox:

- Description of the site
- Type of disposition (sale or lease)
- Target population, type of housing and level of affordability desired
- Submission requirements
- Design guidelines and performance standards
- Evaluation criteria
- Schedule for site visits, interviews, and selection
- Forms and certifications

Some of the above items are not necessarily applicable to the sale of individual single-family market rate house lots. More detailed requirements will be needed in an RFP for any proposed cottage housing, as these units, along with green space, parking, driveways, utilities, etc., would be built as one project.

3. Also, would we need a third RFP for the monastery demolition and asbestos abatement?

Reply: Assuming the Town has the authority granted by voters at a future Financial Town Meeting (FTM) to demolish the building, the Town would need to issue a Request for Qualifications for consultant services or utilize companies already listed on a Rhode Island State Master Price Agreement. This consultant will be needed to assess the extent of the hazardous materials and develop a demolition and abatement plan. That plan will be needed to secure competitive bids for the demolition through a public bidding process. Council approval of the bid award is required for the Town to contract with a company to complete the abatement and demolition.

The Rhode Island Department of Health manages the application process for the Asbestos Abatement Program in Rhode Island. For more information:

- <https://health.ri.gov/applications/AsbestosAbatementPlan.pdf>
- R.I. General Laws, [Chapter 23-24.5 - Asbestos Abatement](#)

4. Could you please discuss the process going forward, specifically after the April 26th Planning Board voting. Reply: The Town Council received the Planning Board’s recommendation made at the April 26th meeting of the Planning Board but declined to act at its May 1st meeting. The Council in the future could accept the recommendation, make revisions, or pursue a different direction.

The plan recommended by the Planning Board requires demolition of the monastery building, which would require a vote at a future FTM to remove the requirement to “preserve” the building that was included in the resolution to finance the purchase approved at the 2021 FTM.

The demolition question was NOT put before voters at the annual Financial Town Meeting of May 24, 2023. However, the Council could decide to bring the issue up for a vote at a special FTM anticipated to take place sometime prior to the regular Financial Town Meeting in May 2024.

5. Could you explain how more than one option can be voted on during an FTM meeting?

Reply: One way would be to list the several options, with the order determined by the Town Council, presumably in order of Town Council preference. Each option would be voted on and in the event that more than one option were approved by a majority of electors, the Council would be empowered to move forward with any of the approved options. If no option should receive a majority, then the status quo would be maintained until another FTM.

6. If there is a motion to demolish the Monastery, will that vote be a singular vote or incorporated into another motion?

Reply: Since past motions for demolition that have not provided a definitive plan on the reuse of the Monastery parcel have failed to obtain an FTM majority, it is likely that the Council would approve putting forward a resolution for the FTM authorizing demolition of the monastery with

Council-approved conditions on the redevelopment of the site, such as a detailed plan previously approved by the Council.

- 7. Could you clarify the rules regarding Affordable Housing, specifically whether the requirement for affordable housing development falls on the Town of Barrington as it sells lots or if it falls to a developer that purchases lots.**

Reply: If the Town is developing housing on its own, the Town would be exempt from the 20% minimum affordability requirement for developments or subdivisions resulting in 3 or more new dwelling units and/or house lots¹. However, if the Town is selling lots to a developer, this requirement would apply. Selling lots one at a time does not circumvent the affordability requirement. As a condition of the sale, the Council has the option to require additional affordable units above the 20% minimum.

- 8. Will you commit to selling the lots incrementally and/or commit to selling to different developers so that no single developer can combine the lots and seek relief from the State to build dense housing?**

Reply: The Council could approve selling the lots individually rather than all at once. Further, the Town has the option to prevent further subdivision or development – through a deed restriction or similar binding legal agreement that runs with the land – beyond what is in the approved plan/new zoning the Town approves for the property.

- 9. Have you approached the Barrington Land Conservation Trust Board of Directors about the possibility of donating the land (or a portion of it) for preservation?**

Reply: The Land Trust has been a partner with the Town in protecting open space throughout Barrington. While the Planning Board recommendation includes dedicating a portion of the site as open space, the Council has not yet decided whether to dedicate any portion of the parcel as conservation land.

- 10. If there is a commitment to open space and/or public parking, will you guarantee that the town will limit the number of parking spaces and monitor the parking area and/or require permits and time limits for that area?**

Reply: The Council has made no commitments. The Council could limit the number of spaces built on-site or it could utilize the existing parking lot to encourage public beach parking to alleviate the perceived pressure of beach parking on neighborhood streets. The Council could also institute a variety of parking restrictions by Town ordinance.

¹ Low- and Moderate-Income Housing: Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning Requirements (Article XXVII of the Barrington Zoning Ordinance)

11. **Can the Town conduct and share an environmental and conservation study about this property before asking the voters to develop it? The environmental impact of development should be quantified and clear to town residents.**

Reply: The Town has surveyed the property, including the location of nearby wetland areas, topography, and floodplain elevation. There are no wetlands on the site, and as a heavily developed site for decades, there are no significant animal habitat areas. An environmental and conservation study is not required for developing plans for the site. However, a future development / subdivision application for development contemplated in the plan recommended by the Planning Board or a future plan chosen by the Town Council would be subject to compliance with CRMC and/or DEM regulations as appropriate.

12. **Has there been a needs assessment conducted regarding senior housing needs and could you share that with the public? Specifically, how much housing is necessary and at what price point?**

Reply: Goal HN-1 of the 2015 Comprehensive Community Plan states, “Expand supply of senior housing to meet growing demand of retiring Baby Boomers and the needs of residents with disabilities. Demand for senior housing (55+ years old) was evaluated in a Market Study completed as part of the 25 Watson Ave. planning process. It included the following finding (p. 11):

Given nearby amenities and the close proximity to Providence, accommodating AA [active housing] housing within the project site could satisfy existing and future demand from the aging baby boomer population (currently ages 57 and older) in the Providence metro. There is currently no existing nor planned AA rental housing in the Barrington area, suggesting a niche opportunity for such a product

For the full study, see <https://www.barrington.ri.gov/DocumentCenter/View/595/25-Watson-Ave-Market-Study-PDF>.

The 2022 Housing Fact Book is available online here:
<https://health.ri.gov/publications/databooks/HealthyHousing.pdf>

13. **The Barrington Comprehensive Town Plan stipulates that zoning should be compatible with existing neighborhoods to “better reflect an area’s character”. Why is the Town Manager continuing to pursue development with a density (24 units) greater than the surrounding area?**

Reply: As part of the planning process for this site, the Town’s architectural consultant developed a floor plan illustrating the conversion of the existing building, without any additions, into 24 apartments. Voters have supported keeping and repurposing this building, though this type of structure is not permitted under the current R40 zoning in place for this site. Therefore, a new zone would be required to convert the building to a new use. However, a financial feasibility analysis developed by the consultant determined that keeping the building is not feasible due to the high cost of converting the building to individual residential units and the projected income generated by the apartments.

The Town Manager, in an [April 4th memo to the Planning Board](#), recommended limiting the overall number of dwelling units to no more than 24. This included approximately 10 single-family house lots and up to 14 senior “cottage” housing units on one lot. This is a significant reduction compared to previous concepts that were based on the unit count in the financial analysis. The memo states the unit count could be reduced through a new concept that utilizes existing street frontage on Watson and Freemont for the subdivision, minimizing the cost of infrastructure (roads, utilities, drainage) that requires more housing units/lots to offset.

14. Given that voters voted to preserve the monastery twice, has there been an architectural / engineering feasibility study about other uses for the Monastery, or parts of it (the chapel for example), if not housing? Might the town at least consider partial preservation of the monastery?

Reply: The building has multiple issues making repurposing the building very expensive. Many of the interior rooms are small; the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems would all need to be reworked throughout the building; the elevator is non-compliant and in need of replacement; all the windows require replacement. The Town’s architectural consultant determined the structure of the chapel is integrated in the main building itself. This condition makes it very difficult to leave the chapel structure intact while demolishing the remainder of the structure.

15. The surveys conducted by the town found that residents prefer to maintain green space rather than support housing. Why is there so much focus on *more development*? If town residents vote to demolish the monastery, could the town preserve the open land for public use through a trust or non-profit organization for conservation purposes?

Reply: Responses to an online survey posted on the Town website included input in support of green space, as well as other ideas such as a sports complex, affordable housing, senior housing, a community center, senior center, a Town park, a nursing home, a school, etc. Input received from the public can be found below.

- <https://www.barrington.ri.gov/DocumentCenter/View/596/Watson-Property-Suggestions-Compiled-rev-12-29-2021-XLSX>
- <https://www.barrington.ri.gov/DocumentCenter/View/601/Public-Comments-02-28-to-04-18-2022-PDF>

A vote of the Town Council would be required to keep the site as undeveloped open space, and dedicated funding allocated for maintenance and security of the site for use as public open space. The initial cost of acquiring the property would also make it extremely expensive for open space.

16. What was discussed at the Financial Town Meeting in May 2021 when voters approved \$3.5 million to finance the acquisition of the 25 Watson Avenue property?

The video of the 2021 Financial Town Meeting, in which voters approved financing for the purchase of the property, can be viewed here: <https://www.barrington.ri.gov/361/25-Watson-Avenue>.

See also:

- The 2021 FTM Minutes: [2021, Financial Town Meeting Minutes, Excerpt](#)
- A transcript of the 25 Watson financing discussion generated by otter.ai, revised by the Town to correct typos (attached)
- Otter.ai-generated transcript further revised to include the FTM minutes of the discussion (attached)

Based on the otter.ai-generated transcript, the following is a count of keywords from the discussion of 25 Watson Avenue at the 2021 FTM, related to development (including housing and preservation and conversion of the building to a new use) and open space/land conservation.

Development-Related Keywords

- “housing” – 75
 - “senior housing” / “elderly housing” / “housing for seniors” – 36
 - “affordable housing” – 27
- “develop(ed)” / “developer(s)” / “developing” / “development” – 27
- “preserve(d)” / “preservation” / “preserving” – 26 (related to building)

Land Conservation-Related Keywords

- “park” – 1
- “open space” / “green space” – 9
- “preserve(d)” / “preservation” / “preserving” – 0 (related to open space or land)
- “conserve” / “conservation” – 0
- “cemetery” – 0

17. When did the Town receive the financial feasibility report indicating that preserving the monastery was not viable for developers? Was this known prior to the 2022 FTM where the vote to permit demolition did not pass?

The [final report](#) was issued in September 2022, well after the May Financial Town Meeting. Based on input from the Town’s real estate development consultant prior to the release of the report, the Town was concerned ahead of the May 2022 FTM that repurposing the building into housing was unlikely to be financially feasible and therefore receive no interest from the development community. However, the report was incomplete at the time of the FTM and not yet available to be made public.

- Otter.ai-generated transcript
- Revised by P. Hervey to fix spelling errors

june_16th,_2021___financial_town_meeting (240p)

Mon, May 08, 2023 6:28PM • 3:47:59

00:03

Good evening.

00:08

Welcome to the 2021 financial town meeting. If you're not already seated, we invite you to find a seat so we can get our meeting underway. I apologize for the late start. But we did have some residents who are trying to get in and I'm sure you would like to have them here to hear as much of the discussion as possible. Before we begin with our business meeting, I want to just remind you, we have emergency exits in this room, the two doors in the back of the auditorium, one of which you came through, as well as two doors on either side of the stage. And there are restrooms available down the hall toward the cafeteria. And also there are some restrooms over in this quarter. To my right. So if you need to use those feel free free. And we'll see you back in here when you're done. So first of all, I'd like to thank a whole bunch of people, which I'll get to in detail in a moment, but we had the checkers at the front door, checking us in following certain protocols, of course, some of which were determined by COVID 19 pandemic, and we do have over 200 people here tonight. So we have a quorum and that in some and I appreciate your interest in our town's finances by being here tonight.

...

27:10

The second is a resolution to appropriate \$3,500,000 to fund the acquisition and preservation of the former Carmelite monastery and the financing of that purchase through the issuance of general obligation bonds and or notes in an amount not to exceed \$3,500,000. And again, council president Mike Carroll will move this resolution

27:38

and make a motion that the financial town meeting appropriate \$3.5 million to fund the acquisition and preservation of the former Carmelite monastery and the financing thereof through the issuance of general obligation bonds and or notes in an amount not to exceed \$3.5 million.

27:59

Thank you, Mr. Carroll. Do we have a second for that motion?

28:03

Your second discussion on the motion?

28:08

Mr. Grove?

28:19

Thank you, Jeff Grove 16 Robbins drive.

28:24

This is the first that many people have seen of this resolution and this request. Beforehand, there was a motion for \$250,000 that most people were

28:36

familiar with. So this is a surprise to many people. I was in communication with Steve Permian Oh, the chairman of the COA while he's traveling today. And I asked him if it would be alright if I

28:50

communicated his his comments and and he said yes. So let me just tell you that what he said is that allowing the town to purchase the property without a better idea of use is premature. It may be a good idea but so might several million several multi million dollar homes paying full taxes, voters need time to weigh options. Although there would be a cost this could be decided at a special meeting when more info is available.

29:21

Since this was

29:25

most people have not had enough time to process this nor has a plan for this been presented to the townspeople. I think it's premature to vote on this at this point. Thank you. Thank you Mr. Grove.

29:50

Okay, Mr. Carroll, would you like to respond to that made by Miss pirate, thank you. That's that's a fair point that we that your first hearing about this. So let me give you as much

30:00

information as we have out a month ago, we found out that the Carmelite monastery was gonna go up for sale. People had heard earlier in the year that the Carmelite nuns were leaving. But we didn't know it was up for sale.

30:16

Maybe a little over three weeks ago, we found out there would be we there would be accepting bids on that.

30:25

About the lover maybe two weeks ago, we held a meeting, it was about three weeks ago, we held a meeting, we held that meeting in Executive Session. Why would we do that? Well, for a few reasons, one,

30:39

when we decide to bid on a piece of property, we don't want to tell everybody else what we're willing to pay. Open Meetings Act, in a lot of cases requires us to discuss our business in public. And that's fine, except if you're negotiating, you don't want to say, well, we're going to offer this but we'll go as high as that. Because the seller will take the highest possible bid, we also didn't want to disclose what we were going to bid for the property because then the next available person could come along and say three point \$5,000,001 And beat our bid. So there are a lot of reasons not to do that, including, we don't necessarily want others to know that there is interest in the property from the town.

31:28

So the important thing to note is that we didn't vote to decide to buy this property. We can't do that. That's what you're going to do tonight. We voted to give you the chance to buy this property. And what do we suggest that it's for we have a desperate need a desperate need in this town for senior housing. We've been looking at the Zion property for a long time hoping that we can put senior housing there, we want our seniors not to move out of town when they decide to downsize. This is a fantastic opportunity to have senior housing, that parking lots already there. The building is there need a lot of work. But this is a great opportunity for us to have senior housing. And so we decided it's a once in a lifetime opportunity. And so the town council unanimously voted to make a bid on this property. I can also tell you that the bid has been tentatively accepted for \$3.5 million. So tonight, you will decide if we go forward.

32:40

I see someone over here to my left.

32:44

Please.

32:47

So I did take off your mask when you speak. So thank you. My name is [Karla-Carla Destefanode-Stefano](#), 23 Pine Avenue. I did I did oh, both of the comments by the first speaker. And by the chair of the town council, I would just like to say that it would have been nice to see in this information that there was a proposed use, and it is if it is senior housing, I'd like to add

that it'd be senior housing that also include affordable senior housing as part of it. So I'm reluctant to vote for just an open purchase without the use being part of it. And maybe some of the town residents sort of agree with that. Thank you.

33:33

Thank you, Mr. Stefano.

33:35

And I see a hand up here on the [Dyessdias](#).

33:39

I guess I'm confused. In the

33:43

resolution, it talks about preserving the monastery. So is it to preserve the monastery or is it to develop the monastery, Sidney here on the committee on appropriations, process matters. And so does trust. Now throughout the process, through meetings in the fall through meetings in the winter meetings in the spring, there was no discussion of the town wanting to buy property to develop. In fact, what they said was given the fact that the payments are going down, this would be a great idea that we should perhaps fund the \$500,000 as a test.

34:24

Okay. Throughout the spring, they kept saying, Let's do 500,000 as a test, because this is the year because the payments are going down. And then surprise. We're hit with a request for \$3.5 million.

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The process ends tonight. But the trust that I have with our town council or the lack thereof, will endure. We need to be forthright for this process to work. We need people to be honest and transparent and that did not have

35:00

happen. And you deserve that. You deserve that, and you didn't get it. So now we're going to be forced to make a decision without a real sense of where your dollars are going to go. And if we really want to keep seniors in town, let's stop raising their taxes and let them enjoy the homes that they raise their kids in.

35:25

Mr. Carroll, thank you, Mr. Moderator.

35:30

I want to respond to that.

35:32

I would have disclosed this earlier. But it wasn't available earlier. It wasn't we didn't know about it in the winter, we didn't know about in the fall. So the COA would never have found out about this, because we're not clairvoyant. We didn't know this property was going up for sale. I don't think that there's any reason to to make those kinds of allegations. But putting that aside, let's be clear about this. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity that came up about a month ago, you can decide that you want to pet take a pass on it. If you do, you're giving up the opportunity to have seen your housing. Now, what is going to how is that property going to be developed, we're not going to ~~raise~~raze the building, we're not going to knock it down, it's going to need a lot of work inside. It's already got a parking lot. It's already got a structure. We can work with that. But I'll tell you specifically, that whatever we do with the property, it will be through public hearings throughout the process. And so that's when you'll have your opportunity to talk about what will happen there. We found out about this about a month before you did. And we couldn't say anything because we didn't win the bid. But this is your opportunity to decide if we did a good thing. And if we gave you the chance to buy this property. Thanks.

36:48

Thank you, Mr. Carroll.

36:50

Others wishing to speak?

37:01

I believe people don't understand that they can get in line at the microphone. Oh, yes. You gotta line at the microphone. If you wish to speak, please. Yes, you can come down just your available space be all we'd ask.

37:13

Go ahead.

37:17

Can you Okay, thank you. Thank you so much. My name is Deborah ~~nizer~~Nyser. I live at 30 Adelaide Avenue. Nothing floored me more. Because I didn't know about this until Monday. I think my my neighbors and I actually knocked on doors of people who bought the property. And were they were shocked that they did not even know about this. I hope tonight you're here. I'm Can I turn this put this down? So I can? Sure. Oh, okay. Thank you so much.

37:46

Ladies and gentlemen, is this senior housing? Is this affordable housing. The thing about this is I don't see a plan up here. All I see is nothing. I see a lot of talk. So if you think tonight is yes. Oh, yeah. If you think tonight, that you're here to vote for senior housing,

38:09

and you don't get it, you've kind of been lied to. If you're here tonight to vote that you think that it's going to be affordable housing, and it doesn't become senior housing, then you've been lied

to, once you vote on something, it's going to become permanent 3.5 million in an amendment that was given five days prior to this meeting is is a horrible, horrible thing. In fact, what's interesting is that this wasn't even in last week's Barrington times, or yesterday's Barrington times. So the poor people, and I have a feeling that if they had known about this, this, not only would this auditorium be overflowing, but I think the cafeteria, the hallways, etc, would be overflowing. You can't sit there and ask for people to to fund something you have absolutely no idea, no plan, no nothing other than to say, well, you know, we want it No, no impact of what the neighborhood would be no impact of what the schools would be nothing at all. Let a developer I found it interesting that in Mr. niece's article today, that was quoted with Mr. Hakuna in there, I'm sorry,

39:20

was the fact that they're eyeing the property as a place to build new affordable or senior housing. Whereas he said a private developer would likely use it to build seven or eight large beachfront Type homes instead. What the hell's wrong with owning a home? I don't get that. You all live in homes that are values of a million or more what is wrong with having a home and living in a neighborhood? When did that become a sin in this town? Enough is enough. Please vote no. Thank you.

40:00

My name is Sam Chase, and I live on the road. I'd your address are 95. Great, thank you. First, I want to compliment the town on how well they notified town residents of the COVID problem and how you could get shots. If you could do that, so well, why couldn't you notify the town about what you're going to discuss today? To Mr. [CatCarroll](#)?

40:28

To Mr. Carroll?

40:30

Have you heard of an impact study? I'm sure you have for those in the audience and impact study is basically they look at what the what the program is being offered. And they see how it will affect the town, how will affect taxes, schooling, traffic, and all other aspects of the town. And that is usually done before anything is passed. If you had a month, Mr. Carroll, you certainly could have done an impact study on this. Even for your own committee, if not for the town.

41:03

Why you want to put affordable housing in one of the most expensive areas in town is beyond me.

41:12

The I think that this this is is poorly planned. And I'm ashamed that you came to the town to present it this way.

41:31

Slowing down the applause will speed the process up. Thank you. Go ahead.

Christina ~~squatter~~ IdoSquatrito. I live at 25 Appian- Way,

41:40

thank you to bill for bringing that to our point, I think all of you for being here and the things that you do for our town. But as a resident and of the town.

41:51

I think it's extremely valuable to inform all of the residents of what's happening. And the options that are in front of us. And having this immense opportunity handed to us on a last minute basis

42:11

is really uncalled for. And at three and a half million dollars. It's not it's a large sum of money. And without a plan and without a goal. And to just ask us to vote yes. And to trust that you're just going to do what's best for all of us, is hard to trust. And I think knowing that there are other people out there that want to participate in the growth of this town, whether they personally purchase it and use it for access from the schools, maybe somebody who wants to purchase it and keep it as open space. Maybe someone's willing to purchase it and keep it for the value of the nature, you don't know you haven't explored those options. And I think the townspeople deserve the opportunity to know who else wants this property and what their goals are for it other than you're willing to pay the asking price, and just hope that we will trust that you make the right decision for us.

43:09

Thank you, Mr. Carroll.

43:12

Thank you, I should be clear that we weren't, as we're told we weren't the only bidder on this property. By law, if whoever buys it decides to put more than two houses on this property. There will be affordable housing on the property, not 100% affordable, but it's required that if they put more than two houses on this property, it would have to be some portion that would be affordable. Now we've talked about senior housing that's distinct from affordable housing, some portion of it would be affordable housing, no doubt. But that doesn't mean 100% of it would be affordable. So we should be clear that this isn't a choice between leaving the property as it is and nobody touches it. Because the Carmelite nuns are gone. It's a question of whether we as a town control what gets developed on there, or someone else does.

44:15

Tip it down. Go ahead, please.

My name is Beverly migliori Migliori. I live at 51 ~~Cheshmeh Castle~~ Chachapacassett R road for a very long time. And I was very familiar with a lot of the nuns that lived in the Carmelite monastery. And so there's a lot of people in the neighborhood and the town. Everybody knew

that the land was going to be for sale. In fact, it was listed on Zillow in early spring, I believe, and

44:43

well knowing the property, it's not going to be 3.5 million that's to buy the property. That piece of property is very, very rundown. And so it may double, triple. So we're not just asking for 3.5 We're asking once we get involved in it

45:00

were involved.

45:01

I don't believe that that's the right space for, you know, having SR or that type of thing. But I think it's most ingenuous for you to put preservation into the name of this, because that is by no means preservation. Removal, the best thing for that property would be removed, you know, the parking lot and all that it's very out of place where it is now, from an environmental standpoint, that's subject to runoff and everything else to the bay, it's right on the water, I think the town could be very could do very better, very much better job putting affordable housing in another area of town, I live in an area of town that has some, some affordable housing now, and I don't believe that the Affordable Housing has to go on that same location just has to be built somewhere in town. So I think that, you know, I would urge you to vote no, thank you.

46:03

Yes, sir. We over here. Sorry, that mics come out of my field of vision. So that's where you go, Hey, and I went over your way. Go ahead.

46:12

Mark, ~~and chair~~ [Hanchar](#) from 25, Frederick ~~drive~~ [Drive](#), Barrington. And I sat on appropriations as much as you have. And I agree with you, that there needs to be a process.

46:25

And the process includes a financial plan, as this lady was just talking about the exposure, the town is more than \$3.5 million.

46:36

There's environmental issues of asbestos, and other things in that building that need to be addressed. If we're going to take ownership of that building. And then you have the cost of getting it ready for sale or us being asked to fix it up ourselves. I would recommend that this resolution be withdrawn and that a financial plan B come up with something for this property. If we lose the property, we lose the property but we can control how it's developed through the normal process. invariant. Thank you.

47:18

I'd like to have a quick point where Mr. Russo.

47:41

By Michael Strahan shark, if you wish to do it, you may in fact make a motion to withdraw the motion. If it oh,

47:53

oh, okay, nevermind, I worded it poorly. But I'm new at this. So please forgive me. All right.

48:02

But it's nice to see you up there. Again. Thank you.

48:05

All right over to this side, back on track here. Good evening. My name is John Conte. I live in to Donald Ross road.

48:13

I just like to support those in opposition to this proposal for the

48:20

reasons aforementioned stated, including environmental impact, and also much likely overrun costs, that will be

48:31

necessitated by the condition of the property. And because there were always overruns and any project

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I would like to see this perhaps devoted to open space.

48:43

However, that might come about in the future. But that is May I think it is. It's interesting that the council was prescient, maybe and if they knew that this bid was going to be accepted. How did that happen? Was there negotiations happening before this proposal?

49:02

The other so therefore, I am opposed to this. Thank you.

49:07

Mr. ~~Keller~~Carroll, any response to that?

49:14

specific way to open space, if you will, to to open space.

49:18

Certainly, it's theoretically possible that someone, some private bidder might spend \$3.5 million to create a park. I think it's unlikely and my guess is that most people who are bidding on it, bid on it planning to develop the property in a way that's different than we're talking about, which could include some open space in addition to that building.

49:43

Probably most people want to tear down that building and that's kind of what we heard from the real estate agent. We would prefer to keep it that way and renovate the interior.

49:54

Thank you.

49:56

Okay, nobody on that side. So we'll go to you okay, Chris, more than 50

50:00

Before you drop your mask, FDA points out.

50:04

So people realize that if you vote no today that your opportunity is more likely going to be lost for the town to buy the property and have an opportunity to develop it. And it will go to a private developer.

50:17

I also,

50:19

here hearing people say a lot of other that you've been lied to, and this didn't come up from what I understand from what was said before is that during real good real estate negotiations, use your public and they didn't No tower did not know about the acceptance of the offer until recently, I assume.

50:39

And so I think that all this talk about being lied to and stuff is a little ridiculous.

50:45

Also, looking at the budget, I see how little goes to our seniors in Barrington. And it concerns me that we are not putting seniors welfare in their ability to stay in the town, and so forth.

50:58

As important as we should. And I think that's something we really need to look at is how we, we don't respect our seniors as much as we should. And we put in if you look at the budget, you know, we respect our students, which we should.

51:13

And I think it's really important that we give a seniors opportunity to stay in Barrington. So thank you.

51:20

Thank you.

51:23

I see your way over there. Thank you. Good evening. Oh,

51:28

Elizabeth ~~greaser~~ Grieser, 42 Watson Avenue. And I think everyone in this room knows that I live right across the street from this proposed site.

51:38

I would like to hear you clarify what preserve means, when you put Preserve? And that's what people think that they're voting for? Does that mean that it's going to stay beautiful green space, and you're just going to renovate that building? Or are you going to divvy up all the rest and make that into lots of little houses? What does that mean to preserve the monastery, I also would like to express my disappointment with whoever is responsible for disseminating this information. Because I myself only heard about it within the last few days. And talking with my neighbors, none of them made the connection between town financial meeting is tonight, and are we going to buy the monastery decision is tonight, which is why we only have 200 people here and not a higher percent of Barrington residents, nobody knew that this was one in the same meeting. So I don't think that's a great dissemination of information. This seems like an 11th hour deal trying to slide it in with as few people as as knowing about it.

52:45

And of course, it's given fodder to a great number of rumors, plans, some sound great, some sound not so great.

52:55

And the people who are tucked into it or getting the great version. As a realist, I have to assume the worst case scenario when I hear anybody's plans because nothing like like everyone has said there is no actual plan being presented tonight, which means it could change 100 different ways before anything actually happens to that land. It's a lot of money.

53:18

And so I just asked for some clarification on what what does preserve me and when it's written in in the

53:25

handout tonight, thank you. Mr. [Kerem Carroll](#).

53:31

Preserved means that we don't intend to tear the building down to put up multiple

53:38

McMansions. We,

53:41

we want to keep it essentially as it has been for many years that is as senior housing it will be a little bit more luxurious senior housing than the sisters were were living in because I'll tell you having toured that building, they lived very simply. So it would be

53:59

people would not have to hang their clothes on the lines that were in the basement, they could use a dryer and that sort of thing. But we're looking at this for senior housing and preserving the structure but obviously renovating the interior to make it more

54:14

so there isn't a

54:17

group bathroom for example, rather than individual bathrooms in individual apartments.

54:23

As to the other questions about

54:26

distrust, I can only tell you that we found out today that we have a tentative deal we have to work out the language but the dollar amount was accepted by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence. So

54:42

tentatively we have a deal on that but we only found that out today.

54:47

Thank you.

54:49

Yes. [Ann Strong](#), 55 ~~teed~~ [Teed Avenue](#).

54:55

for him back is every most of us have to Bill's point of trust, which I think

55:00

He

55:02

made a very good point. My concern, since you have gone forward with negotiation with the Diocese of Providence, I am concerned, what's going to happen if this is not approved? I'm assuming and Executive Session, you've discussed taking that 3.5 ~~billion~~ million out of your \$20 million surplus fund. And I'd like somebody to talk about that.

55:33

Carroll?

55:35

No, it's the motion says, the motion really says that we're going to borrow it either through bonding, or through borrowing as a triple A rated town, we get extraordinarily good rates. And that's a good way for us to do business. In terms of if this FTM doesn't approve it, it was contingent on that. We made it contingent on that. So they would have to go out to bid again, if this FTM rejected this opportunity.

56:06

And it is my understanding. I know I have to address you. But my question is for Mr. Carroll.

56:12

That Mr. Carroll has done legal work for the diocese in the past. And if that is true, which I believe it to be, I think he should recuse himself. Thank you.

56:25

Mr. Carroll.

56:27

Thank you. That's false.

56:36

Yes,

56:38

hello, ~~you Tara~~ [David Butera](#), local builder. I live in 275. Near my backyard is the monastery.

56:47

I liked the idea of developing the building for elderly housing.

57:20

Jeopardy theme song you know why you're?

57:25

Okay. Here we go. Okay. Can you hear me now? Thank you.

57:29

All right, so So I back up to the monastery. And I liked the idea of developing the building, restoring the building as elderly housing. My worry is that the rest of the property could become close to developments. And I like the way it is now, of course, I would because of the trees, and it's it's a beautiful scenery.

57:50

I think if there were, there was something in this that

57:55

that stated that the property would be restored and there wouldn't be building on the rest of it, I could see myself voting for it. It's just the fact that, that it's the big unknown is probably stopping a lot of people because that [mosque-monastery](#) has been there for a long time, I don't think anyone rejects the idea of that.

58:13

The other thing is, it could be developed as open space, you could knock the building down. And that could be a beautiful place for the townspeople of [Harrington-Barrington](#) to go and enjoy. It's near the water.

58:23

It's a great spot. So that's something you know, instead of restoring the building, thank you. All right.

58:31

Mr. Carroll on a comment.

58:34

So thank you. So the only opportunity to decide to take part in what will be developed there is if we own it, if somebody else owns it, then they have the power to decide what goes there. How will we decide what goes there, there'll be if this passes tonight, there'll be a lot of hearings on this. We'll be talking a lot about how we can do this, what the plans are, what we should do with it.

59:06

You know, is it how much is worth.

59:10

And by the way, I should point out, we don't really want to be owners of the property. Ultimately, what we would intend to do and at least what we talked about doing is we would work with developers to renovate that building for senior housing, and that property in some form, using some open space so that it was a an attractive place for seniors to go.

59:37

But then we would sell the property contingent on the buyer developing it as we've described. So would we get the 3.5 back? I don't know what the market is going to be like. I can't tell you that. But we would certainly try to get most of it back.

59:54

And frankly, in this market, we didn't. I shouldn't speak for myself.

1:00:00

I didn't think we had much of a chance, we thought we'd ask for asking price. Nothing's going for asking price. So we thought we'd been fortunate to be able to get it for this. And

1:00:10

I don't think we're gonna have much of a problem selling it even as we decide how it's developed.

1:00:18

Let's see, we're, well, he Mr. BUTCHER switched. So

1:00:23

I think we'll go back over here. Thank you.

1:00:28

Stephen Vvenuti 17, Stanhope ~~drive~~ Drive

1:00:33

going to give voice to what seems to be a minority in this room. That is that I am very much in favor of this.

1:00:43

I spent a number of years working on the zoning board. I also spend

1:00:49

part of that time working on a zoning update committee subcommittee was an ad hoc committee of people from planning and people from zoning. And the one thing we were looking at very closely was the need for not only affordable housing, but senior housing in the town. I know that my wife and I would very much like to stay in Barrington, but we looked around, and we don't see a whole lot of opportunities for seniors to stay in this town. Earlier, there was nobody who

spoke about and asked the question, well, what's wrong with more housing? Well, we've got plenty of high end housing in this town. What we don't have is plenty of housing for seniors. I want to applaud the town council for recognizing the timeliness of this and being quick and taking the action. Because the housing market is such and property properties, particularly in places like Barrington, they go quick, and a moment of hesitation, and we would have lost this. I honestly believe that this is a golden opportunity. It was simply no other choice. If we are actually going to live up to our obligation to provide senior housing for those of us who want to stay in the town. This is it. Don't blow it down.

1:02:29

Thank you for yielding your turn. Now. I Tom ~~remonstrate~~ Rimoshytus, is 1one Howard Street. First of all, I'd like to thank the committee on appropriations for doing such a wonderful job over the last couple of years, you guys are really stuck it out, looked out for the townspeople that she had more than any, I really like to appreciate that for you guys. I also agree with Mr. DeWitt, on the housing for the seniors.

1:02:54

I know a lot of seniors that get some type of a break, but they have to go to the town hall and flight for that break. So I think we need to come up with a better system for our seniors and more of an aggressive tax reduction for them. I don't believe this \$3.5 million project would be anything except Money, money, money, money, money. So you're looking at 3.5 million to buy the property. We're gonna knock it down, or whatever, rehab it millions.

1:03:26

You got to form a committee, you want to be in the building business. Now the housing business. Now you need a

1:03:33

maintenance team. Now you need a grounds team. Money, money, money, money, money. We don't have money, money, money, money. So at this point, I urge you to vote no. I would also like to find out what affordable housing is. We take a million dollar house and you reduce it by 20%. That's 800,000. So at affordable, I know it's not for me. But is that how it works? Or is there a set value? Because I know North Kingstown or South Kingstown has a set value of affordable housing from like one point for

1:04:14

140,000 to 365. Give or take. So is that something that can be adjusted here and explained? You know, and then the other thing was in the paper or on the news? We went from senior housing to affordable housing.

1:04:34

Is it one or the other?

1:04:36

So I want to know, Mr. Carroll.

1:04:40

It's both. It's not 100%.

1:04:44

The council hasn't voted on this, but there's no reason that it would have to be 100%. But there's every likelihood that there would be affordable housing unless Unless somebody wants it if this FTM rejects the

1:05:00

A chance, then what will happen is somebody else would develop it, they could build one house on there. And if that's the case, there wouldn't have to be affordable housing. If they want to build more than two, there would be affordable housing and to answer the one four, it's possible that they could find it somewhere else in town, we do allow someone to provide affordable housing somewhere else in town. If and that's happened, if they happen to own another property in town. That's theoretically possible. But to answer your other question, there's a formula that's done based on the area median income. And it's more complicated than that I understand. But the short answer is that, depending on your family size, a house of \$400,000 might be affordable. I think it's a family of six or something that would be considered affordable. So two things would happen be the size of the family, I should say, three sides of the family, the family's income, and the house itself would be limited to that dollar amount. It's more complicated than that. Because if we're selling condos, I don't know what the formula works out to for that. So we have no set value for affordable housing. No, there is it's it's adjusts every year based on the area median income and a number of other factors in there. So

1:06:22

if you have a family of seven, or six, I think I think, I'm not sure I'm right on this, that the maximum housing price is about \$400,000.

1:06:33

If you have a smaller family that value, that maximum value goes down. And there are other ways of calculating it based on the number of bedrooms and things like that. So in this proposal for the 3.5. Was there any thought of how much it's going to cost us in the long run to get into the housing business? Oh,

1:06:55

if I if

1:06:57

that's my last question. Okay. Thank you.

1:07:01

You raised some very good points. And I certainly don't want to be in the housing business. But I would like to control what happens there. We have a choice about what's going to happen there tonight. We have we don't have a choice. If somebody else owns the property, they can do what they want with their property. Within Limits. We know that under state law, they wouldn't be able to if they provided

1:07:26

a certain minimum amount of affordable housing, they wouldn't be able to

1:07:32

essentially ignore a lot of our zoning regs. We've seen that happen before.

1:07:37

So state law would allow them to build a denser community. If if they wanted to, as long as some portion of it was affordable. It's our vision that this be senior housing, we want to preserve the building

1:07:53

and make that happen.

1:07:55

Thank you, Mr. [Gir#Carroll](#).

1:08:04

James [Eagan-Hingham](#), 50- Watson Avenue.

1:08:09

My question is about the only time the word preserve preservation appears in the title. I wondered if that had any binding effect.

1:08:22

Maybe the town solicitor can answer that. And if that word has any legal definition. And then thirdly,

1:08:32

if it's past whether, if preservation does have any binding effect, whether the anybody in the town can has any recourse against the town, if it's not preserved.

1:08:47

The term as explained here this evening, is to not tear it down to preserve the building. That's all it means. There's no special legal effect. It means if you approve this, the town or a subsequent developer would not be able to tear the building down and in fact, would have to preserve the building. That doesn't mean that it can't be upgraded, inside change, etc, that the building would have to stay in place. That's That's all. You just said it has to stay in place. The building has to

stay in place. If the vote that's correct, the building would have to stay where it is. And then the surrounding five acres or whatever it is, does that have to be?

1:09:34

That is not included in this? Not at all.

1:09:38

It's just the building would have to remain. Are there any zoning restrictions on what can be placed in the surrounding five acres or so? Right now? I think it's

1:09:51

our 40 Is that the term 40 acres of 40 square feet. Is that true? I'm just being told by the town man

1:10:00

digits in off 40 zone. I mean, there's zoning issues you have to comply with. But as Mr. Carroll mentioned, if there's a comprehensive permit, then then those zoning regulations would be subject to whatever's in that comp permit. A comprehensive permit is the process whereby someone comes in puts in affordable housing, they can increase the density. That's that's really what that's all about. So So you're saying then if the vote is yes, it's passed, and the town takes possession, and they don't preserve it. And we can fight about what that means that residents can sue the town for violating this resolution? Or

1:10:44

if if the town does not follow,

1:10:48

if it does not,

1:10:51

do what the FTM mandates in a resolution? Yes, someone can absolutely sue in superior court. That is correct.

1:11:02

Thank you.

1:11:05

Over to the side.

1:11:08

Laura Yyoung, 14 Mana Manor roadRoad.

1:11:12

I just wanted to say that I'm I'm really pleased that we may have this opportunity if the town supports it. I'm an advocate for seniors in this town and have spoken to many of them. The need for senior housing is apparent and spoken about often. And although the tax exemption is an enormous help, for people to be able to afford to stay in their homes, the homes themselves are not always the best situation as people get older, and mobility needs change. When it comes to trust, I feel after our experience with Zion and our experience with Nakum Hill, that I really trust the town to do a great job with this. And I'm appreciative. I hope that everyone will support it. Thank you.

1:12:05

Good evening. I'm here because compelled because the there was a gentleman earlier saying your name. Sorry, my name is Irene. You know, I live at 18 ~~Chachapacassett~~~~Chattarpur~~~~Cassatt~~. Thank you. Welcome. So as I was saying, there's a gentleman earlier who said, why do we need affordable housing. So I will say it's not an abstract concept, because it's for people like me, because I live in an affordable house on ~~Chachapacassett~~~~eating chashma~~~~Cassatt~~ and I'm your new neighbor. So I just have to say, I'm really grateful for the opportunity that I've had to live in this beautiful town and.

1:12:57

Sorry.

1:13:07

My son just graduated from high school. And we have been given this amazing opportunity, and I suppose, say and give a face to what affordable housing is. So thank you. Thank you.

1:13:33

Hi, Jamie ~~Triebwasser tree, Blosser,~~ 139 ~~Night~~ Nayatt Road.

1:13:37

I want to thank the committee on appropriations, and for all of you guys for what you do. But my thing is, is that there is a process, and it has to be followed. i

1:13:49

We just found out about this yesterday, and trying to spread the word around town. We all knew that the monastery was for sale long ago, more than a month ago.

1:14:00

So I find that hard to believe that you guys just found out about it a few weeks ago. The other thing is is that you you don't have a plan.

1:14:10

And you also we're making it sound like the scare tactic that if we don't get it, it's gonna be horrible, you know, somebody else might buy it and put up seven houses or five houses and Okay, some might be affordable housing, that's great. Have a plan. The other thing is, is what is wrong with having seven houses, the amount of taxes that get collected yearly, believe me, I know, is significant. And I think this town could use some more money. So that's another issue. And the other thing is, is you talk about preserving the building. I don't know if anybody has looked I think a lot of people have because, you know during COVID Everybody wanted to fix up their houses.

1:14:55

Because to put a cost of plywood when I check out

1:15:00

but a while ago was \$80 a sheet, it's gone way up higher than that a two by four was \$10 \$12 is crazy expensive right now. So 3.5 million. Let's keep going. Because it's gonna it's going to be snowballing one after the other. And then the last thing, my last point is, is that you keep saying there's going to be no control if somebody else buys it. Well, in this town, there are a lot of controls. There's a planning board, there is a building official, and there's a zoning board. You also have to answer to coastal resources. So you make it sound like there are no checks and balances in place. But there are so I urge you to vote no.

1:15:49

Have you settled? Who's gonna go? No. Okay, go ahead.

1:15:52

I Kelvin [Misiurski Mazursky](#) 221- Promenade Street. I appreciate the effort from the council by taking the initiative to look at this property and see what's best for our community. I think affordable housing and senior housing

1:16:10

would be ideal. Thank you.

1:16:21

Back over here, are we.

1:16:24

So go ahead. Hi, I'm Mary Kay Talbot and I live at 37 ~~fields~~ [Fales](#) Avenue.

1:16:30

I'm not a building official, I don't have a lot of experience in real estate. But I can give some observations that I would just like to have noted, I live on ~~faile~~ [Fales](#) Avenue, which is, as you may know, a lot of small bungalows and cottages, which are fastly are quickly disappearing. My own house is 1000 square feet. And in the past five years, three of the houses within two doors for me have doubled in size. There, there aren't many affordable housing opportunities

available. There's no place for seniors. And as one of the previous speakers said, I do a lot of work in elderly housing as a public relations consultant that I am aware of the fact that a lot of these houses aren't equipped for seniors. And we've all lived through COVID. And we know that a lot of people have senior seniors in their family.

1:17:30

And we've seen the fact that isolation really hinders mental health and seniors. If we have elderly housing here in town that's very close together. The isolation that we saw during COVID doesn't have to happen. And socialization leads to better quality of life for seniors. And that's a proven fact. I'd like to thank Mr. Carroll for taking this opportunity, seizing it. And

1:18:00

being opportunistic, I don't think that he thinks that this is the ideal situation. But he's trying to seize the opportunity and to do something right for Barrington. And finally, I'd like to say don't let this be another Pawsox situation where we lose an opportunity, because we ponder it. And we look at it too much. And don't jump on the opportunity when it presents itself. Thank you.

1:18:31

Yes, good evening. Hi, [John-Joan Warren](#), 19 Adams Point Road. I'm just wondering about the preservation of the monastery building itself. What is so significant about this building that it needs to be preserved? What year was it built? What is the condition of the building other than its significance? Its religious signification. You know, there's a chapel there. I don't see what it is about this building that is so important that it must be preserved.

1:19:00

Mr. Carroll.

1:19:02

Thank you. So it was built in 1957. Why is it important? A lot of people lived here their whole life have been used to the Carmelite monastery. It's where I used to go, my mother used to go to get [MasterCards](#) [mass cards](#). From the Carmelite nuns, lots of folks have gone there for just a quiet place to, to meditate. It's sort of part of our community. And so the idea of tearing it down, for some of us.

1:19:30

Doesn't sound like a great idea. Others may disagree, but And certainly, what we've heard from the real estate agent is that other folks looking at it.

1:19:41

Would want to tear it down. Yes, I understand. I just I feel personally that if there was some historical significance, or if it was in an area of town that was more visible. A lot of people don't even know that the monastery exists. Unfortunately, because it is a beautiful place.

1:20:00

Tonight, my son was baptized there. So I have a

1:20:04

very strong feeling about it myself. But I don't think that that building just because of our sentimental value is a justification for preserving it.

1:20:18

Go ahead. Hi, Pamela Lauria, 56- Martin Avenue. I just wanted to make the point that we don't have senior housing in Barrington. We don't have nearly enough affordable housing in Barrington.

1:20:33

And the opportunities to do this are very small, there are not big swaths of land that are going to come up for us to have an affordable housing complex anytime soon. Where are they? So I think that, and we all know that right now, then, housing and properties have been going crazy and fast. And the presumption that somehow somebody's trying to pull the wool over your eyes, I think is unfortunate. I think that there's a whole row of people, not just the COA, or the town council, or the school committee, that are up there to serve the town for the best of their abilities, nobody's making any money doing it, or barely any money doing it. So they're trying to look out for the talent, you can agree or not agree, but to accuse them of some malfeasance or dishonesty, I think is unfair.

1:21:34

You're probably gonna hear me again, when we actually talk about the 500,000, because I'm on the Barrington housing board. And I think strongly that we need to take our opportunities to do that. But for senior housing, there's nothing, there's nothing. And the opportunity to do this is significant. And I think it's a significant opportunity to lose. Thank you.

1:22:06

Go ahead, Julia.

1:22:09

Julia [Califano, California](#), 151, Matheson [Road](#) wrote, I couldn't waste this opportunity to speak up. Are you speaking to me?

1:22:21

This is a moment. I think this is a beautiful piece of property, and certainly a wonderful opportunity. But the reality is that we do have senior housing that was developed by private developers, and by not for profit developers. And we do have affordable housing, also mostly developed by not for profits. And the town really doesn't have the experience or the expertise to go into this line of

1:22:53

work. It's expensive. The Carmelite monastery is actually quite small, it wouldn't allow for very many apartments. And we have the example at the moment of design Bible property, which has been sitting, and the town has tried desperately to find someone.

1:23:14

And in fact, we've talked about elderly housing, and affordable housing there and it hasn't happened and it hasn't happened. Because it isn't affordable, it isn't affordable for for a private developer, and therefore it would be probably unaffordable for the town. And as tempting as this piece of property is, I think the town has to do more due diligence before we would go forward.

1:23:52

I just wanted, you all elect us to present you with a budget.

1:23:57

And we can't present you with a budget. If we don't have all the information. And whether it was six months ago, six weeks ago, four weeks ago, three weeks ago, it would have been appropriate for the committee on appropriations to be communicated with so that we could understand the ramifications. And so we could talk to the town council about it. We were not given that opportunity on your behalf to vet it. I'm not accusing them of any malfeasance but there is a process and process matters. And when you violate process that breaks down trust and that's too bad

1:24:42

Yes,

1:24:45

Mary Alice ~~guests barrel~~Gasbarro, 14 Robbins ~~drive~~Drive.

1:24:50

I know what it's like to sit at this table and get yelled at

1:24:55

my last town meeting in 2000. I was very glad it was my last town meeting.

1:25:00

You know,

1:25:01

but you're a legend. Well, really, as I looked at the table, what I don't see is history, because we've been down this road of a senior housing for years. I remember being at a meeting at the middle school maybe 40 years ago when Barrington college, was looking to make some money and wanted to partner with Ferland out of pocket to build apartments on what is now Lions Gate and the property going down to Riverside.

1:25:34

They were screened out of town, nobody wanted apartments. Then came look de Stefano, who bought the Lighthouse Point property off Washington Road, wanted to build high end condos.

1:25:47

And people yelled him out, and there's now million dollar homes there. And most people are living over an Oyster Point that evening, Polina

1:25:58

because we all don't want to stay here. Mr. DeWitt brought up the problems of old age and I'm old town, I was 30 years old when I came to Barrington. That was 45 years ago.

1:26:12

And maintaining a house the size that we asked up, getting people to do the work is tough. It's not always about affordability, I can afford the taxes. I'd rather spend the money on something else. But in the early 90s, this discussion came down the road again, and the town decided they didn't want to be in the bill business of maintaining elderly housing. And I was on the council when the filling chain building opened. And I went with Sharon Brinkworth, who was the president at the time.

1:26:49

I don't know how many units there were there, but it was affordable senior housing, one and two bedroom apartments. On the day we went in, it was only one quarter full.

1:27:02

No other applications, no waiting list.

1:27:07

And it was for people over 55 with certain incomes, if you were over income, you paid a little higher rent. And it took them quite some time to fill up that building. And most of the more Barrington residents, so

1:27:22

I don't know that I would support this because of the lack of information. It's a beautiful spot. It's very valuable.

1:27:29

But I don't think you can do what needs to be done in a building that size without adding on and moving out into the lot. Thank you. Thank you, Mario's

1:27:42

after eD²aft

1:27:45

I just like to comment on back with Bill that the COA had a meeting as recent as last week. Thank you.

1:27:54

Yes, sir.

1:27:56

Good evening, Mr. Moderator. Michael ~~Squatrito, score Fredo~~-25 Appian: ~~W~~way. I have a couple of questions.

1:28:04

Number one, do we have any idea what the maximum capacity of the existing building is? In as it relates to residency? Mr. Carroll?

1:28:18

I don't have a maximum occupancy number. I can't remember how many nuns were there at the height of it. But it would depend on how it was developed. So

1:28:32

that I hear did I hear 2020?

1:28:41

You can come up in my opinion.

1:28:46

Would you like to ask your second question while you're up there? My second question is do we have any idea as to whether or not there is interest from any person or organization within the community that would want to purchase the property and not develop it?

1:29:04

Mr. Carroll?

1:29:07

I'm not aware of anyone who wants to purchase the property and just hold it.

1:29:13

Thank you. Thank you.

1:29:17

Yes.

1:29:21

Okay.

1:29:25

Oh, good.

1:29:26

Thank you all right ahead.

1:29:33

Okay, Kathy ~~Lariviere Larbey are~~, 29 Rosedale Avenue, that you just drop your mask to speak because Sarika for 29 Roseville Avenue. The Carmelite nuns moved into that property in 1957. Previously to that, it was still own it was always owned, and still to this day owned by the Diocese of Rhode Island of Providence, and they actually had a camp i

1:30:00

in that area, so that area has been mostly open space except for the building. The nuns came to Barrington when they ran out of room in Newport, this Calots Carmelite does callous nuns take a vow of poverty. And they are

1:30:19

contemplatives, who pray for the world who pray for everybody. And the people in this town knew a quiet presence for the last 57 years, have a group of women that open their doors, their hearts, their phones, to anyone that came there had nothing to do with religion. They were there to listen, and to pray for the world's ills to be solved in a peaceful manner. Now, they weren't as high as 20 members, at some point, they were reduced down to the last 10 or 15 years 12. And then most recently, nine, several had to be placed in nursing homes. The reason that they did not renovate the building themselves, to be able to stay there or ask for anybody is because of their vows of poverty. So they give up everything when they go in there. They live off of donations, and they made incense that was supplied to some other monasteries someplace else.

1:31:30

These women that gave their lives to God in this community, we'd be more than thrilled to find out that this is an opportunity for senior housing, on that property. So I urge you to all stop and think, of course, nobody wants another thing next to their house. I live in a little tiny house and someone built a giant house next to me. And of course, I don't like it, because I want things to stay the same. But as we've learned through the pandemic, and everything that's happened in the last year, things are changing, and people need to move forward and have changed for the better.

1:32:18

Actually, she answered quite a few. There are a few more when we moved into our home 40 years ago, it was an extremely active Carmelite monastery, actually, they also would have nuns from all over the world come and be part of their retreats. Actually, to the nuns, when we first

moved there, we're just actually able to start walking outside and they were allowed to walk around the block. And they many of them would come and sit at my doorstep and tell us the stories of how mother they called her mother the head would they were kept under lock and key. So mother every night would the nuns would go to bed, the the gates would close and the key would lock them in for the evening. And in the morning mother would then let them out.

1:33:09

The stories of these wonderful women just touched my heart. So it was an extremely active Carmelite monastery monastery. And also, besides living off of donations, they also paid for everything themselves through their social security. So you're right. They talk very much about poverty. They did not go out into the

1:33:33

neighborhood or into the town. They were cloistered nuns, and I believe, right now there might only be two Carmelite cloistered monasteries left in the world.

1:33:45

Thank you very interesting.

1:33:50

Okay, the microphones are empty.

1:33:54

This is your town meeting at work. And thank you very much for everyone who took the time to come up and state your point of view about this motion.

1:34:04

It's time now to make the vote happen.

- Otter.ai-generated transcript
- Revised by P. Hervey to fix spelling errors, insert meeting minutes

june_16th,_2021___financial_town_meeting (240p)

Mon, May 08, 2023 6:28PM • 3:47:59

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

town, barrington, motion, vote, people, budget, year, affordable housing, town council, financial town meeting, senior housing, paper ballot, property, tonight, number, committee, seniors, building, meeting, increase

00:03

Good evening.

Moderator Richard F. Staples, Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:17pm and welcomed everyone to the 2021 Financial Town Meeting.

00:08

Welcome to the 2021 financial town meeting. If you're not already seated, we invite you to find a seat so we can get our meeting underway. I apologize for the late start. But we did have some residents who are trying to get in and I'm sure you would like to have them here to hear as much of the discussion as possible. Before we begin with our business meeting, I want to just remind you, we have emergency exits in this room, the two doors in the back of the auditorium, one of which you came through, as well as two doors on either side of the stage. And there are restrooms available down the hall toward the cafeteria. And also there are some restrooms over in this quarter. To my right. So if you need to use those feel free free. And we'll see you back in here when you're done. So first of all, I'd like to thank a whole bunch of people, which I'll get to in detail in a moment, but we had the checkers at the front door, checking us in following certain protocols, of course, some of which were determined by COVID 19 pandemic, and we do have over 200 people here tonight. So we have a quorum and that in some and I appreciate your interest in our town's finances by being here tonight.

...

27:10

The second is a resolution to appropriate \$3,500,000 to fund the acquisition and preservation of the former Carmelite monastery and the financing of that purchase through the issuance of general obligation bonds and or notes in an amount not to exceed \$3,500,000. And again, council president Mike Carroll will move this resolution

Motion by President Michael Carroll and seconded from the floor to adopt the following resolution:

27:38

and make a motion that the financial town meeting appropriate \$3.5 million to fund the acquisition and preservation of the former Carmelite monastery and the financing thereof through the issuance of general obligation bonds and or notes in an amount not to exceed \$3.5 million.

Resolution of the Financial Town Meeting Appropriating \$3,500,000 to Fund the Acquisition and Preservation of the former Carmelite Monastery and the Financing thereof through the Issuance of General Obligation Bonds and/or Notes in an Amount not to Exceed \$3,500,000.

Be it resolved that:

SECTION 1. The sum of \$3,500,000 be appropriated to fund the acquisition of real estate known as the former Carmelite Monastery located at 25 Watson Avenue, Plat 7, Lot 4 in the Town (the "Project") and to raise said appropriation, the Finance Director, pursuant to Section 45-12-2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island with the approval of the Town Council is authorized to issue general obligation bonds therefor in an amount not to exceed \$3,500,000, to issue temporary notes in anticipation of the issuance of bonds, and to issue refunding bonds pursuant to Section 45-12-5.2 of the General Laws.

SECTION 2. The manner of sale, amount, denominations, maturities, conversion or registration privileges, interest rates, medium of payment, and other terms, conditions and details of the bonds and notes may be fixed by the officers authorized to sign the bonds and notes. The bonds and notes shall be signed by the Finance Director and by the President of the Town Council.

SECTION 3. The Finance Director and the President of the Town Council are hereby authorized to take all lawful action necessary or desirable under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"), to insure that the interest on any bonds and notes will remain exempt from federal income taxation to the extent provided in Section 103 of the Code, and to refrain from taking any action which will cause interest on such bonds and notes to lose the benefit

of exclusion from gross income provided by Section 103(a) of the Code. The Finance Director and the President of the Town Council are further authorized to take all lawful action necessary or desirable to designate the bonds and notes as “qualified tax-exempt obligations” within the meaning of Section 265(b)(3) of the Code.

SECTION 4. This resolution is an affirmative action of the Town toward the issuance of bonds and notes in accordance with the purposes of the laws of the State. This resolution confirms the Town’s declaration of official intent, pursuant to Treasury Regulation §1.150-2, to reimburse the Town for certain capital expenditures for the Project paid on or after the date which is sixty (60) days prior to the date hereof but prior to the issuance of the bonds or notes. Such amounts to be reimbursed shall not exceed \$3,500,000 and shall be reimbursed not later than eighteen (18) months after the later of (a) the date on which the expenditure is paid or (b) the date the Project is placed in service or abandoned but in no event later than three (3) years after the date the expenditure is paid.

SECTION 5. This resolution shall take effect upon passage.

27:59

Thank you, Mr. Carroll. Do we have a second for that motion?

28:03

Your second discussion on the motion?

28:08

Mr. Grove?

Geoff Grove, Robbins Drive, said that this is a surprise to see this motion. We were aware of the motion for \$250,000. He said that this would be a premature vote.

28:19

Thank you, Jeff Grove 16 Robbins drive.

28:24

This is the first that many people have seen of this resolution and this request. Beforehand, there was a motion for \$250,000 that most people were

28:36

familiar with. So this is a surprise to many people. I was in communication with Steve Permian Oh, the chairman of the COA while he's traveling today. And I asked him if it would be alright if I

28:50

communicated his his comments and and he said yes. So let me just tell you that what he said is that allowing the town to purchase the property without a better idea of use is premature. It may be a good idea but so might several million several multi million dollar homes paying full taxes, voters need time to weigh options. Although there would be a cost this could be decided at a special meeting when more info is available.

29:21

Since this was

29:25

most people have not had enough time to process this nor has a plan for this been presented to the townspeople. I think it's premature to vote on this at this point. Thank you. Thank you Mr. Grove.

29:50

Okay, Mr. Carroll, would you like to respond to that made by Miss pirate, thank you. That's that's a fair point that we that your first hearing about this. So let me give you as much

President Carroll explained the process that had taken place these last few weeks. He said that the Town Council had discussed it in Executive Session. President Carroll explained the bid process and that you would not want to announce your bid and lose the opportunity for the community to have senior housing and other amenities for the town. He said that the bid has been tentatively accepted and this evening you will have the opportunity to vote to acquire and preserve this property.

30:00

information as we have out a month ago, we found out that the Carmelite monastery was gonna go up for sale. People had heard earlier in the year that the Carmelite nuns were leaving. But we didn't know it was up for sale.

30:16

Maybe a little over three weeks ago, we found out there would be we there would be accepting bids on that.

30:25

About the lover maybe two weeks ago, we held a meeting, it was about three weeks ago, we held a meeting, we held that meeting in Executive Session. Why would we do that? Well, for a few reasons, one,

30:39

when we decide to bid on a piece of property, we don't want to tell everybody else what we're willing to pay. Open Meetings Act, in a lot of cases requires us to discuss our business in public.

And that's fine, except if you're negotiating, you don't want to say, well, we're going to offer this but we'll go as high as that. Because the seller will take the highest possible bid, we also didn't want to disclose what we were going to bid for the property because then the next available person could come along and say three point \$5,000,001 And beat our bid. So there are a lot of reasons not to do that, including, we don't necessarily want others to know that there is interest in the property from the town.

31:28

So the important thing to note is that we didn't vote to decide to buy this property. We can't do that. That's what you're going to do tonight. We voted to give you the chance to buy this property. And what do we suggest that it's for we have a desperate need a desperate need in this town for senior housing. We've been looking at the Zion property for a long time hoping that we can put senior housing there, we want our seniors not to move out of town when they decide to downsize. This is a fantastic opportunity to have senior housing, that parking lots already there. The building is there need a lot of work. But this is a great opportunity for us to have senior housing. And so we decided it's a once in a lifetime opportunity. And so the town council unanimously voted to make a bid on this property. I can also tell you that the bid has been tentatively accepted for \$3.5 million. So tonight, you will decide if we go forward.

32:40

I see someone over here to my left.

32:44

Please.

[Carla DeStefano, 23 Pine Avenue, said that she would have liked to have seen more information but would like to see senior affordable housing.](#)

32:47

So I did take off your mask when you speak. So thank you. My name is [Karla-Carla Destefanode Stefano](#), 23 Pine Avenue. I did I did oh, both of the comments by the first speaker. And by the chair of the town council, I would just like to say that it would have been nice to see in this information that there was a proposed use, and it is if it is senior housing, I'd like to add that it'd be senior housing that also include affordable senior housing as part of it. So I'm reluctant to vote for just an open purchase without the use being part of it. And maybe some of the town residents sort of agree with that. Thank you.

33:33

Thank you, Mr. Stefano.

33:35

And I see a hand up here on the [Dyessdjas](#).

William DeWitt, COA member, said that he was confused. Is this preserving or developing? He said sitting as a member of the Committee on Appropriations there was no mention of buying the property.

His discussed trust and transparency regarding the Town Council.

33:39

I guess I'm confused. In the

33:43

resolution, it talks about preserving the monastery. So is it to preserve the monastery or is it to develop the monastery, Sidney here on the committee on appropriations, process matters. And so does trust. Now throughout the process, through meetings in the fall through meetings in the winter meetings in the spring, there was no discussion of the town wanting to buy property to develop. In fact, what they said was given the fact that the payments are going down, this would be a great idea that we should perhaps fund the \$500,000 as a test.

34:24

Okay. Throughout the spring, they kept saying, Let's do 500,000 as a test, because this is the year because the payments are going down. And then surprise. We're hit with a request for \$3.5 million.

34:43

The process ends tonight. But the trust that I have with our town council or the lack thereof, will endure. We need to be forthright for this process to work. We need people to be honest and transparent and that did not have

35:00

happen. And you deserve that. You deserve that, and you didn't get it. So now we're going to be forced to make a decision without a real sense of where your dollars are going to go. And if we really want to keep seniors in town, let's stop raising their taxes and let them enjoy the homes that they raise their kids in.

35:25

Mr. Carroll, thank you, Mr. Moderator.

President Carroll said that we did not know that this property would go up for sale, but this is a once in a while opportunity. He said that there will be public hearings to decide what we will do with the property in the future.

35:30

I want to respond to that.

35:32

I would have disclosed this earlier. But it wasn't available earlier. It wasn't we didn't know about it in the winter, we didn't know about in the fall. So the COA would never have found out about this, because we're not clairvoyant. We didn't know this property was going up for sale. I don't think that there's any reason to to make those kinds of allegations. But putting that aside, let's be clear about this. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity that came up about a month ago, you can decide that you want to pet take a pass on it. If you do, you're giving up the opportunity to have seen your housing. Now, what is going to how is that property going to be developed, we're not going to ~~raise~~raze the building, we're not going to knock it down, it's going to need a lot of work inside. It's already got a parking lot. It's already got a structure. We can work with that. But I'll tell you specifically, that whatever we do with the property, it will be through public hearings throughout the process. And so that's when you'll have your opportunity to talk about what will happen there. We found out about this about a month before you did. And we couldn't say anything because we didn't win the bid. But this is your opportunity to decide if we did a good thing. And if we gave you the chance to buy this property. Thanks.

36:48

Thank you, Mr. Carroll.

36:50

Others wishing to speak?

37:01

I believe people don't understand that they can get in line at the microphone. Oh, yes. You gotta line at the microphone. If you wish to speak, please. Yes, you can come down just your available space be all we'd ask.

37:13

Go ahead.

37:17

[Debra Nyser, 30 Adelaide Avenue, said that she was shocked to learn of this. She asked what is the plan? What is the impact with the schools?](#)

Can you Okay, thank you. Thank you so much. My name is Deborah ~~nizer~~Nyser. I live at 30 Adelaide Avenue. Nothing floored me more. Because I didn't know about this until Monday. I think my my neighbors and I actually knocked on doors of people who bought the property. And were they were shocked that they did not even know about this. I hope tonight you're here. I'm Can I turn this put this down? So I can? Sure. Oh, okay. Thank you so much.

37:46

Ladies and gentlemen, is this senior housing? Is this affordable housing. The thing about this is I don't see a plan up here. All I see is nothing. I see a lot of talk. So if you think tonight is yes. Oh, yeah. If you think tonight, that you're here to vote for senior housing,

38:09

and you don't get it, you've kind of been lied to. If you're here tonight to vote that you think that it's going to be affordable housing, and it doesn't become senior housing, then you've been lied to, once you vote on something, it's going to become permanent 3.5 million in an amendment that was given five days prior to this meeting is is a horrible, horrible thing. In fact, what's interesting is that this wasn't even in last week's Barrington times, or yesterday's Barrington times. So the poor people, and I have a feeling that if they had known about this, this, not only would this auditorium be overflowing, but I think the cafeteria, the hallways, etc, would be overflowing. You can't sit there and ask for people to to fund something you have absolutely no idea, no plan, no nothing other than to say, well, you know, we want it No, no impact of what the neighborhood would be no impact of what the schools would be nothing at all. Let a developer I found it interesting that in Mr. niece's article today, that was quoted with Mr. Hakuna in there, I'm sorry,

39:20

was the fact that they're eyeing the property as a place to build new affordable or senior housing. Whereas he said a private developer would likely use it to build seven or eight large beachfront Type homes instead. What the hell's wrong with owning a home? I don't get that. You all live in homes that are values of a million or more what is wrong with having a home and living in a neighborhood? When did that become a sin in this town? Enough is enough. Please vote no. Thank you.

[Sam Chase, 95 Nayatt Road, questioned why place affordable housing there? He said that even with a month, you could have conducted an impact study.](#)

40:00

My name is Sam Chase, and I live on the road. I'd your address are 95. Great, thank you. First, I want to compliment the town on how well they notified town residents of the COVID problem and how you could get shots. If you could do that, so well, why couldn't you notify the town about what you're going to discuss today? To Mr. [Carroll](#)?

40:28

To Mr. Carroll?

40:30

Have you heard of an impact study? I'm sure you have for those in the audience and impact study is basically they look at what the what the program is being offered. And they see how it will affect the town, how will affect taxes, schooling, traffic, and all other aspects of the town.

And that is usually done before anything is passed. If you had a month, Mr. Carroll, you certainly could have done an impact study on this. Even for your own committee, if not for the town.

41:03

Why you want to put affordable housing in one of the most expensive areas in town is beyond me.

41:12

The I think that this this is is is poorly planned. And I'm ashamed that you came to the town to present it this way.

41:31

Slowing down the applause will speed the process up. Thank you. Go ahead.

[Christine Squatrito, 25 Appian Way, said that to hand this to us at the last minutes is hard to trust and spend this amount of money. She questioned, what are the other options?](#)

Christina ~~squatter~~ Squatrito. I live at 25 Appian- Way,

41:40

thank you to bill for bringing that to our point, I think all of you for being here and the things that you do for our town. But as a resident and of the town.

41:51

I think it's extremely valuable to inform all of the residents of what's happening. And the options that are in front of us. And having this immense opportunity handed to us on a last minute basis

42:11

is really uncalled for. And at three and a half million dollars. It's not it's a large sum of money. And without a plan and without a goal. And to just ask us to vote yes. And to trust that you're just going to do what's best for all of us, is hard to trust. And I think knowing that there are other people out there that want to participate in the growth of this town, whether they personally purchase it and use it for access from the schools, maybe somebody who wants to purchase it and keep it as open space. Maybe someone's willing to purchase it and keep it for the value of the nature, you don't know you haven't explored those options. And I think the townspeople deserve the opportunity to know who else wants this property and what their goals are for it other than you're willing to pay the asking price, and just hope that we will trust that you make the right decision for us.

43:09

Thank you, Mr. Carroll.

President Carroll discussed that they were told we were not the only bidder. He discussed that if the property is developed with more than two (2) homes a portion of the land must contain two (2) affordable homes.

43:12

Thank you, I should be clear that we weren't, as we're told we weren't the only bidder on this property. By law, if whoever buys it decides to put more than two houses on this property. There will be affordable housing on the property, not 100% affordable, but it's required that if they put more than two houses on this property, it would have to be some portion that would be affordable. Now we've talked about senior housing that's distinct from affordable housing, some portion of it would be affordable housing, no doubt. But that doesn't mean 100% of it would be affordable. So we should be clear that this isn't a choice between leaving the property as it is and nobody touches it. Because the Carmelite nuns are gone. It's a question of whether we as a town control what gets developed on there, or someone else does.

44:15

Tip it down. Go ahead, please.

Beverly Migliori, 51 Chachacasset Road, said that everyone knew that the land was for sale. It is not just the \$3.5 million but now you must need funds to develop it. She said even from an environmental standpoint, the parking lot is not correct. She urged all to vote NO.

My name is Beverly ~~migliori~~Migliori. I live at 51 ~~Cheshmeh Castle~~Chachacasset Road for a very long time. And I was very familiar with a lot of the nuns that lived in the Carmelite monastery. And so there's a lot of people in the neighborhood and the town. Everybody knew that the land was going to be for sale. In fact, it was listed on Zillow in early spring, I believe, and

44:43

well knowing the property, it's not going to be 3.5 million that's to buy the property. That piece of property is very, very rundown. And so it may double, triple. So we're not just asking for 3.5 We're asking once we get involved in it

45:00

were involved.

45:01

I don't believe that that's the right space for, you know, having SR or that type of thing. But I think it's most ingenuous for you to put preservation into the name of this, because that is by no means preservation. Removal, the best thing for that property would be removed, you know, the parking lot and all that it's very out of place where it is now, from an environmental

standpoint, that's subject to runoff and everything else to the bay, it's right on the water, I think the town could be very could do very better, very much better job putting affordable housing in another area of town, I live in an area of town that has some, some affordable housing now, and I don't believe that the Affordable Housing has to go on that same location just has to be built somewhere in town. So I think that, you know, I would urge you to vote no, thank you.

46:03

Yes, sir. We over here. Sorry, that mics come out of my field of vision. So that's where you go, Hey, and I went over your way. Go ahead.

Mark Hanchar, 25 Frederick Road, said that there needs to be a finish plan regarding this project. This resolution needs to be WITHDRAWN.

46:12

Mark, ~~and char~~ Hanchar from 25, Frederick ~~drive~~Drive, Barrington. And I sat on appropriations as much as you have. And I agree with you, that there needs to be a process.

46:25

And the process includes a financial plan, as this lady was just talking about the exposure, the town is more than \$3.5 million.

46:36

There's environmental issues of asbestos, and other things in that building that need to be addressed. If we're going to take ownership of that building. And then you have the cost of getting it ready for sale or us being asked to fix it up ourselves. I would recommend that this resolution be withdrawn and that a financial plan B come up with something for this property. If we lose the property, we lose the property but we can control how it's developed through the normal process. invariant. Thank you.

47:18

I'd like to have a quick point where Mr. Russo.

47:41

By Michael Strahan shark, if you wish to do it, you may in fact make a motion to withdraw the motion. If it oh,

47:53

oh, okay, nevermind, I worded it poorly. But I'm new at this. So please forgive me. All right.

48:02

But it's nice to see you up there. Again. Thank you.

John Conte, 2 Donald Ross Road, questioned the Town Council, how did you know that this was going to be accepted. He discussed that we need an environmental impact study, what costs are involved and questioned open space.

48:05

All right over to this side, back on track here. Good evening. My name is John Conte. I live in to Donald Ross road.

48:13

I just like to support those in opposition to this proposal for the

48:20

reasons aforementioned stated, including environmental impact, and also much likely overrun costs, that will be

48:31

necessitated by the condition of the property. And because there were always overruns and any project

48:37

I would like to see this perhaps devoted to open space.

48:43

However, that might come about in the future. But that is May I think it is. It's interesting that the council was prescient, maybe and if they knew that this bid was going to be accepted. How did that happen? Was there negotiations happening before this proposal?

49:02

The other so therefore, I am opposed to this. Thank you.

49:07

Mr. ~~Keller~~Carroll, any response to that?

49:14

specific way to open space, if you will, to to open space.

President Carroll discussed if tonight's vote is a no, the opportunity will be lost, and it will go to a developer. Mr. Carroll discussed his concerns for the seniors of Barrington.

49:18

Certainly, it's theoretically possible that someone, some private bidder might spend \$3.5 million to create a park. I think it's unlikely and my guess is that most people who are bidding on it, bid

on it planning to develop the property in a way that's different than we're talking about, which could include some open space in addition to that building.

49:43

Probably most people want to tear down that building and that's kind of what we heard from the real estate agent. We would prefer to keep it that way and renovate the interior.

49:54

Thank you.

49:56

Okay, nobody on that side. So we'll go to you okay, Chris, more than 50

50:00

Before you drop your mask, FDA points out.

50:04

So people realize that if you vote no today that your opportunity is more likely going to be lost for the town to buy the property and have an opportunity to develop it. And it will go to a private developer.

50:17

I also,

50:19

here hearing people say a lot of other that you've been lied to, and this didn't come up from what I understand from what was said before is that during real good real estate negotiations, use your public and they didn't No tower did not know about the acceptance of the offer until recently, I assume.

50:39

And so I think that all this talk about being lied to and stuff is a little ridiculous.

50:45

Also, looking at the budget, I see how little goes to our seniors in Barrington. And it concerns me that we are not putting seniors welfare in their ability to stay in the town, and so forth.

50:58

As important as we should. And I think that's something we really need to look at is how we, we don't respect our seniors as much as we should. And we put in if you look at the budget, you know, we respect our students, which we should.

51:13

And I think it's really important that we give a seniors opportunity to stay in Barrington. So thank you.

51:20

Thank you.

51:23

I see your way over there. Thank you. Good evening. Oh,

[Elizabeth Grieser, 42 Watson Avenue asked what do you mean by “preserve”? She asked who is responsible for disseminating this information. She asked where is the plan?](#)

51:28

Elizabeth ~~greaser~~Grieser, 42 Watson Avenue. And I think everyone in this room knows that I live right across the street from this proposed site.

51:38

I would like to hear you clarify what preserve means, when you put Preserve? And that's what people think that they're voting for? Does that mean that it's going to stay beautiful green space, and you're just going to renovate that building? Or are you going to divvy up all the rest and make that into lots of little houses? What does that mean to preserve the monastery, I also would like to express my disappointment with whoever is responsible for disseminating this information. Because I myself only heard about it within the last few days. And talking with my neighbors, none of them made the connection between town financial meeting is tonight, and are we going to buy the monastery decision is tonight, which is why we only have 200 people here and not a higher percent of Barrington residents, nobody knew that this was one in the same meeting. So I don't think that's a great dissemination of information. This seems like an 11th hour deal trying to slide it in with as few people as as knowing about it.

52:45

And of course, it's given fodder to a great number of rumors, plans, some sound great, some sound not so great.

52:55

And the people who are tucked into it or getting the great version. As a realist, I have to assume the worst case scenario when I hear anybody's plans because nothing like like everyone has said there is no actual plan being presented tonight, which means it could change 100 different ways before anything actually happens to that land. It's a lot of money.

53:18

And so I just asked for some clarification on what what does preserve me and when it's written in in the

53:25

handout tonight, thank you. Mr. [Kerem Carroll](#).

[President Carroll said that we do not plan to tear down the building. We would like to preserve and renovate the structure. We \(actually\) found out today that we have an agreement.](#)

53:31

Preserved means that we don't intend to tear the building down to put up multiple

53:38

McMansions. We,

53:41

we want to keep it essentially as it has been for many years that is as senior housing it will be a little bit more luxurious senior housing than the sisters were were living in because I'll tell you having toured that building, they lived very simply. So it would be

53:59

people would not have to hang their clothes on the lines that were in the basement, they could use a dryer and that sort of thing. But we're looking at this for senior housing and preserving the structure but obviously renovating the interior to make it more

54:14

so there isn't a

54:17

group bathroom for example, rather than individual bathrooms in individual apartments.

54:23

As to the other questions about

54:26

distrust, I can only tell you that we found out today that we have a tentative deal we have to work out the language but the dollar amount was accepted by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence. So

54:42

tentatively we have a deal on that but we only found that out today.

54:47

Thank you.

Ann Strong, 55 Teed Avenue, spoke of trust and questioned how the town will move forward. She questioned President Carroll's employment with the diocese.

54:49

Yes. And Ann Strong, 55 Teed Avenue.

54:55

for him back is every most of us have to Bill's point of trust, which I think

55:00

He

55:02

made a very good point. My concern, since you have gone forward with negotiation with the Diocese of Providence, I am concerned, what's going to happen if this is not approved? I'm assuming and Executive Session, you've discussed taking that 3.5 ~~billion~~ million out of your \$20 million surplus fund. And I'd like somebody to talk about that.

55:33

Carroll?

President Carroll discussed that the agreement was contingent on approval at the FTM.

55:35

No, it's the motion says, the motion really says that we're going to borrow it either through bonding, or through borrowing as a triple A rated town, we get extraordinarily good rates. And that's a good way for us to do business. In terms of if this FTM doesn't approve it, it was contingent on that. We made it contingent on that. So they would have to go out to bid again, if this FTM rejected this opportunity.

56:06

And it is my understanding. I know I have to address you. But my question is for Mr. Carroll.

56:12

That Mr. Carroll has done legal work for the diocese in the past. And if that is true, which I believe it to be, I think he should recuse himself. Thank you.

56:25

Mr. Carroll.

56:27

Thank you. That's false.

56:36

Yes,

David Butera, 275 Nayatt Road, said that he likes the idea of developing the building for the elderly but is concerned with cluster building. He said that this is a big unknown. He suggested keeping it as open space for townspeople.

56:38

hello, ~~you Tara~~ David Butera, local builder. I live in 275. Near my backyard is the monastery.

56:47

I liked the idea of developing the building for elderly housing.

57:20

Jeopardy theme song you know why you're?

57:25

Okay. Here we go. Okay. Can you hear me now? Thank you.

57:29

All right, so So I back up to the monastery. And I liked the idea of developing the building, restoring the building as elderly housing. My worry is that the rest of the property could become close to developments. And I like the way it is now, of course, I would because of the trees, and it's it's a beautiful scenery.

57:50

I think if there were, there was something in this that

57:55

that stated that the property would be restored and there wouldn't be building on the rest of it, I could see myself voting for it. It's just the fact that, that it's the big unknown is probably stopping a lot of people because that ~~mosque~~ monastery has been there for a long time, I don't think anyone rejects the idea of that.

58:13

The other thing is, it could be developed as open space, you could knock the building down. And that could be a beautiful place for the townspeople of [Harrington-Barrington](#) to go and enjoy. It's near the water.

58:23

It's a great spot. So that's something you know, instead of restoring the building, thank you. All right.

58:31

Mr. Carroll on a comment.

[President Carroll said the positive here would be if we own it, we decide and would hold many hearings to showcase our plans.](#)

58:34

So thank you. So the only opportunity to decide to take part in what will be developed there is if we own it, if somebody else owns it, then they have the power to decide what goes there. How will we decide what goes there, there'll be if this passes tonight, there'll be a lot of hearings on this. We'll be talking a lot about how we can do this, what the plans are, what we should do with it.

59:06

You know, is it how much is worth.

59:10

And by the way, I should point out, we don't really want to be owners of the property. Ultimately, what we would intend to do and at least what we talked about doing is we would work with developers to renovate that building for senior housing, and that property in some form, using some open space so that it was an attractive place for seniors to go.

59:37

But then we would sell the property contingent on the buyer developing it as we've described. So would we get the 3.5 back? I don't know what the market is going to be like. I can't tell you that. But we would certainly try to get most of it back.

59:54

And frankly, in this market, we didn't. I shouldn't speak for myself.

1:00:00

I didn't think we had much of a chance, we thought we'd ask for asking price. Nothing's going for asking price. So we thought we'd been fortunate to be able to get it for this. And

1:00:10

I don't think we're gonna have much of a problem selling it even as we decide how it's developed.

1:00:18

Let's see, we're, well, he Mr. BUTCHER switched. So

1:00:23

I think we'll go back over here. Thank you.

Steve Venuti, 17 Stanhope Drive said that he is in favor. He discussed that he was on the zoning board and had conducted a zoning update. He said that we need affordable and senior housing. He believes that this is a golden opportunity.

1:00:28

Stephen Venuti 17, Stanhope drive

1:00:33

going to give voice to what seems to be a minority in this room. That is that I am very much in favor of this.

1:00:43

I spent a number of years working on the zoning board. I also spend

1:00:49

part of that time working on a zoning update committee subcommittee was an ad hoc committee of people from planning and people from zoning. And the one thing we were looking at very closely was the need for not only affordable housing, but senior housing in the town. I know that my wife and I would very much like to stay in Barrington, but we looked around, and we don't see a whole lot of opportunities for seniors to stay in this town. Earlier, there was nobody who spoke about and asked the question, well, what's wrong with more housing? Well, we've got plenty of high end housing in this town. What we don't have is plenty of housing for seniors. I want to applaud the town council for recognizing the timeliness of this and being quick and taking the action. Because the housing market is such and property properties, particularly in places like Barrington, they go quick, and a moment of hesitation, and we would have lost this. I honestly believe that this is a golden opportunity. It was simply no other choice. If we are actually going to live up to our obligation to provide senior housing for those of us who want to stay in the town. This is it. Don't blow it down.

TR Rimoshytus, 1 Howard Street said that the Committee on Appropriations has done a great job. He said that he agrees with Mr. DeWitt that the seniors need a better break. Mr.

Rimoshytus said that this project will be costing us millions (maintenance of the grounds etc.). He questioned is this affordable housing or senior housing?

1:02:29

Thank you for yielding your turn. Now. I Tom ~~remonstrate~~ Rimoshytus, is 1 one Howard Street. First of all, I'd like to thank the committee on appropriations for doing such a wonderful job over the last couple of years, you guys are really stuck it out, looked out for the townspeople that she had more than any, I really like to appreciate that for you guys. I also agree with Mr. DeWitt, on the housing for the seniors.

1:02:54

I know a lot of seniors that get some type of a break, but they have to go to the town hall and flight for that break. So I think we need to come up with a better system for our seniors and more of an aggressive tax reduction for them. I don't believe this \$3.5 million project would be anything except Money, money, money, money, money. So you're looking at 3.5 million to buy the property. We're gonna knock it down, or whatever, rehab it millions.

1:03:26

You got to form a committee, you want to be in the building business. Now the housing business. Now you need a

1:03:33

maintenance team. Now you need a grounds team. Money, money, money, money, money. We don't have money, money, money, money. So at this point, I urge you to vote no. I would also like to find out what affordable housing is. We take a million dollar house and you reduce it by 20%. That's 800,000. So at affordable, I know it's not for me. But is that how it works? Or is there a set value? Because I know North Kingstown or South Kingstown has a set value of affordable housing from like one point for

1:04:14

140,000 to 365. Give or take. So is that something that can be adjusted here and explained? You know, and then the other thing was in the paper or on the news? We went from senior housing to affordable housing.

1:04:34

Is it one or the other?

1:04:36

So I want to know, Mr. Carroll.

President Carroll discussed that it is both (senior and affordable) but the Town Council has not yet discussed.

1:04:40

It's both. It's not 100%.

1:04:44

The council hasn't voted on this, but there's no reason that it would have to be 100%. But there's every likelihood that there would be affordable housing unless Unless somebody wants it if this FTM rejects the

1:05:00

A chance, then what will happen is somebody else would develop it, they could build one house on there. And if that's the case, there wouldn't have to be affordable housing. If they want to build more than two, there would be affordable housing and to answer the one four, it's possible that they could find it somewhere else in town, we do allow someone to provide affordable housing somewhere else in town. If and that's happened, if they happen to own another property in town. That's theoretically possible. But to answer your other question, there's a formula that's done based on the area median income. And it's more complicated than that I understand. But the short answer is that, depending on your family size, a house of \$400,000 might be affordable. I think it's a family of six or something that would be considered affordable. So two things would happen be the size of the family, I should say, three sides of the family, the family's income, and the house itself would be limited to that dollar amount. It's more complicated than that. Because if we're selling condos, I don't know what the formula works out to for that. So we have no set value for affordable housing. No, there is it's it's adjusts every year based on the area median income and a number of other factors in there. So

1:06:22

if you have a family of seven, or six, I think I think, I'm not sure I'm right on this, that the maximum housing price is about \$400,000.

1:06:33

If you have a smaller family that value, that maximum value goes down. And there are other ways of calculating it based on the number of bedrooms and things like that. So in this proposal for the 3.5. Was there any thought of how much it's going to cost us in the long run to get into the housing business? Oh,

1:06:55

if I if

1:06:57

that's my last question. Okay. Thank you.

1:07:01

You raised some very good points. And I certainly don't want to be in the housing business. But I would like to control what happens there. We have a choice about what's going to happen

there tonight. We have we don't have a choice. If somebody else owns the property, they can do what they want with their property. Within Limits. We know that under state law, they wouldn't be able to if they provided

1:07:26

a certain minimum amount of affordable housing, they wouldn't be able to

1:07:32

essentially ignore a lot of our zoning regs. We've seen that happen before.

1:07:37

So state law would allow them to build a denser community. If if they wanted to, as long as some portion of it was affordable. It's our vision that this be senior housing, we want to preserve the building

1:07:53

and make that happen.

1:07:55

Thank you, Mr. [GirCarroll](#).

[Jamie Hingham, Watson Avenue questioned if preservation would have any binding effects.](#)

1:08:04

James [Eagan-Hingham](#), 50- Watson Avenue.

1:08:09

My question is about the only time the word preserve preservation appears in the title. I wondered if that had any binding effect.

1:08:22

Maybe the town solicitor can answer that. And if that word has any legal definition. And then thirdly,

1:08:32

if it's past whether, if preservation does have any binding effect, whether the anybody in the town can has any recourse against the town, if it's not preserved.

[Solicitor Mike Ursillo explained that to preserve the building you would need to vote yes, and the building will stay in place with refurbishment. Mr. Ursillo continued to discuss R-40 zone, the comprehensive plan, if town does not follow FTM mandates the town could be sued.](#)

1:08:47

The term as explained here this evening, is to not tear it down to preserve the building. That's all it means. There's no special legal effect. It means if you approve this, the town or a subsequent developer would not be able to tear the building down and in fact, would have to preserve the building. That doesn't mean that it can't be upgraded, inside change, etc, that the building would have to stay in place. That's That's all. You just said it has to stay in place. The building has to stay in place. If the vote that's correct, the building would have to stay where it is. And then the surrounding five acres or whatever it is, does that have to be?

1:09:34

That is not included in this? Not at all.

1:09:38

It's just the building would have to remain. Are there any zoning restrictions on what can be placed in the surrounding five acres or so? Right now? I think it's

1:09:51

our 40 Is that the term 40 acres of 40 square feet. Is that true? I'm just being told by the town man

1:10:00

digits in off 40 zone. I mean, there's zoning issues you have to comply with. But as Mr. Carroll mentioned, if there's a comprehensive permit, then then those zoning regulations would be subject to whatever's in that comp permit. A comprehensive permit is the process whereby someone comes in puts in affordable housing, they can increase the density. That's that's really what that's all about. So So you're saying then if the vote is yes, it's passed, and the town takes possession, and they don't preserve it. And we can fight about what that means that residents can sue the town for violating this resolution? Or

1:10:44

if if the town does not follow,

1:10:48

if it does not,

1:10:51

do what the FTM mandates in a resolution? Yes, someone can absolutely sue in superior court. That is correct.

1:11:02

Thank you.

1:11:05

Over to the side.

Laura Young, 14 Manning Drive said that this is a great opportunity to bring in senior housing.

1:11:08

Laura Young, 14 Mana Manor roadRoad.

1:11:12

I just wanted to say that I'm I'm really pleased that we may have this opportunity if the town supports it. I'm an advocate for seniors in this town and have spoken to many of them. The need for senior housing is apparent and spoken about often. And although the tax exemption is an enormous help, for people to be able to afford to stay in their homes, the homes themselves are not always the best situation as people get older, and mobility needs change. When it comes to trust, I feel after our experience with Zion and our experience with Nakum Hill, that I really trust the town to do a great job with this. And I'm appreciative. I hope that everyone will support it. Thank you.

Irene Inouye, 18 Chachapacassett Road, is in favor of additional affordable housing.

1:12:05

Good evening. I'm here because compelled because the there was a gentleman earlier saying your name. Sorry, my name is Irene. You know, I live at 18 ChachapacassettChattarpur.Cassatt. Thank you. Welcome. So as I was saying, there's a gentleman earlier who said, why do we need affordable housing. So I will say it's not an abstract concept, because it's for people like me, because I live in an affordable house on Chachapacassett eating chashmaCassatt and I'm your new neighbor. So I just have to say, I'm really grateful for the opportunity that I've had to live in this beautiful town and.

1:12:57

Sorry.

1:13:07

My son just graduated from high school. And we have been given this amazing opportunity, and I suppose, say and give a face to what affordable housing is. So thank you. Thank you.

Jaime Treibwasser, Nayatt Road, thanked the COA. She questioned the process and said, is this a scare tactic. She asked, what is wrong with having a development with seven (7) houses which would give us significant taxes. She said that she is concerned with the cost of this project.

1:13:33

Hi, Jamie [Triebwasser tree, Blosser, -139 Night-Nayatt Road](#).

1:13:37

I want to thank the committee on appropriations, and for all of you guys for what you do. But my thing is, is that there is a process, and it has to be followed. i

1:13:49

We just found out about this yesterday, and trying to spread the word around town. We all knew that the monastery was for sale long ago, more than a month ago.

1:14:00

So I find that hard to believe that you guys just found out about it a few weeks ago. The other thing is is that you you don't have a plan.

1:14:10

And you also we're making it sound like the scare tactic that if we don't get it, it's gonna be horrible, you know, somebody else might buy it and put up seven houses or five houses and Okay, some might be affordable housing, that's great. Have a plan. The other thing is, is what is wrong with having seven houses, the amount of taxes that get collected yearly, believe me, I know, is significant. And I think this town could use some more money. So that's another issue. And the other thing is, is you talk about preserving the building. I don't know if anybody has looked I think a lot of people have because, you know during COVID Everybody wanted to fix up their houses.

1:14:55

Because to put a cost of plywood when I check out

1:15:00

but a while ago was \$80 a sheet, it's gone way up higher than that a two by four was \$10 \$12 is crazy expensive right now. So 3.5 million. Let's keep going. Because it's gonna it's going to be snowballing one after the other. And then the last thing, my last point is, is that you keep saying there's going to be no control if somebody else buys it. Well, in this town, there are a lot of controls. There's a planning board, there is a building official, and there's a zoning board. You also have to answer to coastal resources. So you make it sound like there are no checks and balances in place. But there are so I urge you to vote no.

1:15:49

Have you settled? Who's gonna go? No. Okay, go ahead.

Cal Ziwurski said that he is in favor that you have taken the initiative for affordable and senior housing.

1:15:52

I Kelvin ~~Misiurski Mazursky~~ 221- Promenade Street. I appreciate the effort from the council by taking the initiative to look at this property and see what's best for our community. I think affordable housing and senior housing

1:16:10

would be ideal. Thank you.

1:16:21

Back over here, are we.

Mary Kay Talbot, Fales Avenue is in favor since she lives in a smaller home. She discussed how smaller homes are now being torn down and built twice the size. She said that she would be happy with additional elderly housing. She thanked everyone to give us this opportunity. Do not let this be a PAWSOX situation.

1:16:24

So go ahead. Hi, I'm Mary Kay Talbot and I live at 37 ~~fields~~ Fales Avenue.

1:16:30

I'm not a building official, I don't have a lot of experience in real estate. But I can give some observations that I would just like to have noted, I live on ~~faile~~ Fales Avenue, which is, as you may know, a lot of small bungalows and cottages, which are fastly are quickly disappearing. My own house is 1000 square feet. And in the past five years, three of the houses within two doors for me have doubled in size. There, there aren't many affordable housing opportunities available. There's no place for seniors. And as one of the previous speakers said, I do a lot of work in elderly housing as a public relations consultant that I am aware of the fact that a lot of these houses aren't equipped for seniors. And we've all lived through COVID. And we know that a lot of people have senior seniors in their family.

1:17:30

And we've seen the fact that isolation really hinders mental health and seniors. If we have elderly housing here in town that's very close together. The isolation that we saw during COVID doesn't have to happen. And socialization leads to better quality of life for seniors. And that's a proven fact. I'd like to thank Mr. Carroll for taking this opportunity, seizing it. And

1:18:00

being opportunistic, I don't think that he thinks that this is the ideal situation. But he's trying to seize the opportunity and to do something right for Barrington. And finally, I'd like to say don't let this be another Pawsox situation where we lose an opportunity, because we ponder it. And we look at it too much. And don't jump on the opportunity when it presents itself. Thank you.

[Joan Warren, 19 Adams Point Road, asked why the building must be preserved.](#)

1:18:31

Yes, good evening. Hi, ~~John~~ [Joan](#) Warren, 19 Adams Point Road. I'm just wondering about the preservation of the monastery building itself. What is so significant about this building that it needs to be preserved? What year was it built? What is the condition of the building other than its significance? Its religious signification. You know, there's a chapel there. I don't see what it is about this building that is so important that it must be preserved.

1:19:00

Mr. Carroll.

[President Carroll discussed how this property is part of our community and for some they do not want to see it torn down. Joan Warren asked if there is a historical significance? Discussion ensued.](#)

1:19:02

Thank you. So it was built in 1957. Why is it important? A lot of people lived here their whole life have been used to the Carmelite monastery. It's where I used to go, my mother used to go to get ~~MasterCards~~ [mass cards](#). From the Carmelite nuns, lots of folks have gone there for just a quiet place to, to meditate. It's sort of part of our community. And so the idea of tearing it down, for some of us.

1:19:30

Doesn't sound like a great idea. Others may disagree, but And certainly, what we've heard from the real estate agent is that other folks looking at it.

1:19:41

Would want to tear it down. Yes, I understand. I just I feel personally that if there was some historical significance, or if it was in an area of town that was more visible. A lot of people don't even know that the monastery exists. Unfortunately, because it is a beautiful place.

1:20:00

Tonight, my son was baptized there. So I have a

1:20:04

very strong feeling about it myself. But I don't think that that building just because of our sentimental value is a justification for preserving it.

Pam Lauria, 56 Martin Avenue discuss that there is no senior housing and not enough affordable housing. She said there are not many opportunities. She said, please do not accuse the Town Council of being dishonest.

1:20:18

Go ahead. Hi, Pamela Lauria, 56 Martin Avenue. I just wanted to make the point that we don't have senior housing in Barrington. We don't have nearly enough affordable housing in Barrington.

1:20:33

And the opportunities to do this are very small, there are not big swaths of land that are going to come up for us to have an affordable housing complex anytime soon. Where are they? So I think that, and we all know that right now, then, housing and properties have been going crazy and fast. And the presumption that somehow somebody's trying to pull the wool over your eyes, I think is unfortunate. I think that there's a whole row of people, not just the COA, or the town council, or the school committee, that are up there to serve the town for the best of their abilities, nobody's making any money doing it, or barely any money doing it. So they're trying to look out for the talent, you can agree or not agree, but to accuse them of some malfeasance or dishonesty, I think is unfair.

1:21:34

You're probably gonna hear me again, when we actually talk about the 500,000, because I'm on the Barrington housing board. And I think strongly that we need to take our opportunities to do that. But for senior housing, there's nothing, there's nothing. And the opportunity to do this is significant. And I think it's a significant opportunity to lose. Thank you.

1:22:06

Go ahead, Julia.

Julia Califano, 151 Mathewson Road, said that this is a beautiful piece of property, but we do have senior housing and we have affordable housing. Ms. Califano discussed the Zion property and how it is just sitting there because it is not affordable for the developer to create senior/affordable housing. She strongly urged the town to do their due diligence.

1:22:09

Julia ~~Califano, California~~, 151, Matheson ~~Roadwrote~~, I couldn't waste this opportunity to speak up. Are you speaking to me?

1:22:21

This is a moment. I think this is a beautiful piece of property, and certainly a wonderful opportunity. But the reality is that we do have senior housing that was developed by private developers, and by not for profit developers. And we do have affordable housing, also mostly developed by not for profits. And the town really doesn't have the experience or the expertise to go into this line of

1:22:53

work. It's expensive. The Carmelite monastery is actually quite small, it wouldn't allow for very many apartments. And we have the example at the moment of design Bible property, which has been sitting, and the town has tried desperately to find someone.

1:23:14

And in fact, we've talked about elderly housing, and affordable housing there and it hasn't happened and it hasn't happened. Because it isn't affordable, it isn't affordable for for a private developer, and therefore it would be probably unaffordable for the town. And as tempting as this piece of property is, I think the town has to do more due diligence before we would go forward.

William DeWitt, COA member, discussed how the COA is tasked to present the town with a budget, and we were not given the opportunity.

1:23:52

I just wanted, you all elect us to present you with a budget.

1:23:57

And we can't present you with a budget. If we don't have all the information. And whether it was six months ago, six weeks ago, four weeks ago, three weeks ago, it would have been appropriate for the committee on appropriations to be communicated with so that we could understand the ramifications. And so we could talk to the town council about it. We were not given that opportunity on your behalf to vet it. I'm not accusing them of any malfeasance but there is a process and process matters. And when you violate process that breaks down trust and that's too bad

1:24:42

Yes,

Mary Alice Gasbarro, 14 Robbins Drive discussed the history of the town's development for senior living and discussed how the price point was discouraging to some because of the expense. She said that she does not think she would be in favor.

1:24:45

Mary Alice ~~guests barrel~~Gasbarro, 14 Robbins ~~drive~~Drive.

1:24:50

I know what it's like to sit at this table and get yelled at

1:24:55

my last town meeting in 2000. I was very glad it was my last town meeting.

1:25:00

You know,

1:25:01

but you're a legend. Well, really, as I looked at the table, what I don't see is history, because we've been down this road of a senior housing for years. I remember being at a meeting at the middle school maybe 40 years ago when Barrington college, was looking to make some money and wanted to partner with Ferland out of pocket to build apartments on what is now Lions Gate and the property going down to Riverside.

1:25:34

They were screened out of town, nobody wanted apartments. Then came look de Stefano, who bought the Lighthouse Point property off Washington Road, wanted to build high end condos.

1:25:47

And people yelled him out, and there's now million dollar homes there. And most people are living over an Oyster Point that evening, Polina

1:25:58

because we all don't want to stay here. Mr. DeWitt brought up the problems of old age and I'm old town, I was 30 years old when I came to Barrington. That was 45 years ago.

1:26:12

And maintaining a house the size that we asked up, getting people to do the work is tough. It's not always about affordability, I can afford the taxes. I'd rather spend the money on something else. But in the early 90s, this discussion came down the road again, and the town decided they didn't want to be in the bill business of maintaining elderly housing. And I was on the council when the filling chain building opened. And I went with Sharon Brinkworth, who was the president at the time.

1:26:49

I don't know how many units there were there, but it was affordable senior housing, one and two bedroom apartments. On the day we went in, it was only one quarter full.

1:27:02

No other applications, no waiting list.

1:27:07

And it was for people over 55 with certain incomes, if you were over income, you paid a little higher rent. And it took them quite some time to fill up that building. And most of the more Barrington residents, so

1:27:22

I don't know that I would support this because of the lack of information. It's a beautiful spot. It's very valuable.

1:27:29

But I don't think you can do what needs to be done in a building that size without adding on and moving out into the lot. Thank you. Thank you, Mario's

1:27:42

after [eDaft](#)

[VP Lisa Daft, COA member said that the COA had a meeting as recent as last week.](#)

1:27:45

I just like to comment on back with Bill that the COA had a meeting as recent as last week. Thank you.

1:27:54

Yes, sir.

1:27:56

[Michael Squatrito, 25 Appian Way asked what the maximum capacity of the existing building.](#)

Good evening, Mr. Moderator. Michael [Squatrito, ~~score Fredo~~ 25 Appian- \[W\]\(#\)way](#). I have a couple of questions.

1:28:04

Number one, do we have any idea what the maximum capacity of the existing building is? In as it relates to residency? Mr. Carroll?

[President Carroll said that he did not have this information. Mr. Squatrito asked if there is interest from someone who would want to purchase but not develop. President Carroll said that he is not aware of anyone who would want to purchase and just hold it.](#)

1:28:18

I don't have a maximum occupancy number. I can't remember how many nuns were there at the height of it. But it would depend on how it was developed. So

1:28:32

that I hear did I hear 2020?

1:28:41

You can come up in my opinion.

1:28:46

Would you like to ask your second question while you're up there? My second question is do we have any idea as to whether or not there is interest from any person or organization within the community that would want to purchase the property and not develop it?

1:29:04

Mr. Carroll?

1:29:07

I'm not aware of anyone who wants to purchase the property and just hold it.

1:29:13

Thank you. Thank you.

1:29:17

Yes.

1:29:21

Okay.

1:29:25

Oh, good.

1:29:26

Thank you all right ahead.

[Kathy Larriviere, 25 Rosedale Drive discussed the history of the Carmelite Monastery and the vows of poverty in which they took.](#)

1:29:33

Okay, Kathy ~~Lariviere Larbey are~~, 29 Rosedale Avenue, that you just drop your mask to speak because Sarika for 29 Roseville Avenue. The Carmelite nuns moved into that property in 1957. Previously to that, it was still own it was always owned, and still to this day owned by the Diocese of Rhode Island of Providence, and they actually had a camp i

1:30:00

in that area, so that area has been mostly open space except for the building. The nuns came to Barrington when they ran out of room in Newport, this Calots Carmelite does callous nuns take a vow of poverty. And they are

1:30:19

contemplatives, who pray for the world who pray for everybody. And the people in this town knew a quiet presence for the last 57 years, have a group of women that open their doors, their hearts, their phones, to anyone that came there had nothing to do with religion. They were there to listen, and to pray for the world's ills to be solved in a peaceful manner. Now, they weren't as high as 20 members, at some point, they were reduced down to the last 10 or 15 years 12. And then most recently, nine, several had to be placed in nursing homes. The reason that they did not renovate the building themselves, to be able to stay there or ask for anybody is because of their vows of poverty. So they give up everything when they go in there. They live off of donations, and they made incense that was supplied to some other monasteries someplace else.

1:31:30

These women that gave their lives to God in this community, we'd be more than thrilled to find out that this is an opportunity for senior housing, on that property. So I urge you to all stop and think, of course, nobody wants another thing next to their house. I live in a little tiny house and someone built a giant house next to me. And of course, I don't like it, because I want things to stay the same. But as we've learned through the pandemic, and everything that's happened in the last year, things are changing, and people need to move forward and have changed for the better.

[Debra Nyser, 30 Adelaide Avenue continued the discussion of the history of the Carmelite Monastery.](#)

1:32:18

Actually, she answered quite a few. There are a few more when we moved into our home 40 years ago, it was an extremely active Carmelite monastery, actually, they also would have nuns from all over the world come and be part of their retreats. Actually, to the nuns, when we first moved there, we're just actually able to start walking outside and they were allowed to walk around the block. And they many of them would come and sit at my doorstep and tell us the stories of how mother they called her mother the head would they were kept under lock and key. So mother every night would the nuns would go to bed, the the gates would close and the key would lock them in for the evening. And in the morning mother would then let them out.

1:33:09

The stories of these wonderful women just touched my heart. So it was an extremely active Carmelite monastery. And also, besides living off of donations, they also paid for everything themselves through their social security. So you're right. They talk very much about poverty. They did not go out into the

1:33:33

neighborhood or into the town. They were cloistered nuns, and I believe, right now there might only be two Carmelite cloistered monasteries left in the world.

1:33:45

Thank you very interesting.

1:33:50

Okay, the microphones are empty.

1:33:54

This is your town meeting at work. And thank you very much for everyone who took the time to come up and state your point of view about this motion.

1:34:04

It's time now to make the vote happen.

1:34:09

And we'll start as we always do with a voice vote.

1:34:14

All in favor of this motion, please signify by saying aye.

1:34:20

All those opposed nay?

1:34:27

Well, there's great exercise of vocal cords on both sides. But I think out of an abundance of caution here, I think we will do a standing vote, which will take a little bit of time, but I think there were so many points of view expressed tonight. I think we owe it to all those who expressed an opinion and those of you who chose to come tonight to know the vote by account. So if I could have the board of canvassers and the tellers prepare with the way this is going to work, is we're going to ask first of all that you all stay seated, because that's very important.

1:35:00

Are the standing vote process and we are going to ask first that those of you who are in favor of the motion to stand if your seat and the and the tellers are going to go up the rows are both in

the center section and the outside section and count you please remain standing until we get done with the count. And then we'll do the nays after we do the eyes

1:35:27

that makes sense to everybody.

1:35:30

Fellas up to the front

1:35:33

we're mustering the troops here

1:35:38

a month

1:35:40

we were

1:35:55

so unique

1:35:58

and those of you add the AV board in the back is it possible to bring the house lights up a little bit for this

1:36:09

no just

1:36:11

to get these lights up.

1:36:13

Oh, there's nobody in the cafeteria either right

1:36:19

everyone's in the auditorium there's no one in the cafeteria

1:36:26

Thank you

1:36:47

Okay, we're ready

1:36:51

all right. All those in favor of the motion

1:36:56

to appropriate Yep, go ahead.

1:36:59

All right. All right. We have a counter for the front two all those in favor the motion appropriating \$3,500,000 to fund the acquisition and preservation of the former Carmelite monastery and the financing of that through the issuance of general obligation bonds and or notes and an amount not to exceed \$3,500,000 Please stand and stay standing

1:37:36

I'm Ben

1:37:56

I'm standing Yes.

1:39:08

Let me know when you're finished counting so these nice people can sit back down but don't sit down here.

1:40:00

I'm

1:40:08

Richard

1:41:07

Right

1:42:07

You

1:42:25

right

1:43:01

Right

1:43:37

Right

1:43:55

Right

1:44:22

tellers can we let the folks sit down Are we still needing to stand

1:44:49

I tell you have all sit down, I'm making an executive decision

1:44:55

also Mr. Cooney would like to remind me to remind you that we do require

1:45:00

masks so if your mask has slipped off your face please put it back on Thank you

1:45:22

are

1:45:31

we ready for the nays

1:45:48

back

1:45:54

to that

1:46:01

let me know when you're ready

1:46:04

okay those are opposed to the motion

1:46:08

please stand and remain standing

1:47:25

right

1:48:19

Right

1:48:37

right

1:48:55

Right

1:50:00

All

1:50:19

right

1:50:37

right

1:50:45

okay

1:50:57

everybody can sit down

1:51:01

Thank you very much for your patience.

1:51:05

And thank you very much to the tellers for taking the time and going through the auditorium to count your votes. I've received the results of the vote.

1:51:16

The votes are 150 in favor of the motion 148 opposed.

1:51:29

Motion passes

1:51:40

Okay, on to the next item

1:51:53

somebody moves

1:51:57

the podium or to the mic please.

1:52:05

What's our count?

1:52:07

I think

1:52:09

Mr. Moderator, sorry to make this longer but I move that we do a paper ballot.

1:52:18

Is there a second for the motion?

1:52:26

Okay, so here's how this works. By town charter 20% of those present and voting must approve the motion to require a vote by paper ballot. We have an in attendance tonight 305.

1:52:42

Residents wishing means 20% which is

1:52:47

at the at wealth. That's the count I have. I don't know of any other count other than this. So 20% of 305

1:52:56

is

1:52:57

61 I think?

1:53:02

I don't know I have to do the math. But we need at least 60 votes to go to a paper ballot. If the motion passes, then the sheet of numbers you are given when you come in come into play.

1:53:17

The number one ballot sheet if this passes would then be used in exchange for a ballot. The ballots will be handed to you you go to the privacy booth and you drop your ballot and in the ballot machine.

1:53:29

So but the first thing we have to do is the vote again we're going to do it by standing vote.

1:53:35

And it's it there's no two votes here it's 20% of the total present

1:53:42

need to vote yes to go to a paper ballot so that would be 60 people

1:53:48

so all the tellers ready.

1:53:52

Okay, all those in favor of going to a paper ballot which I would remind the audience will be about a one hour process to complete please stand.

1:54:15

The opinion of those of the Dyess here is that we do have 60 So we will go to a paper ballot Thank you very much you could sit down Thank you tellers.

1:54:33

I've been assured this will take an hour so part of that is up to you about being quick and thankfully all of us are here at the auditorium so we can deal with it here in the auditorium.

1:54:50

Those handling the ballots need to come forward

1:54:55

for handing out ballots

1:55:03

When you're ready folks let me know

1:55:18

Fortunately, we have privacy booths on both sides of the auditorium and two voting machines. So we will be able to do this in tandem if we have enough people on hand to do that.

1:55:55

Right bye

1:55:59

Okay, so we we need your number one. So terrier number one out of your little packet of little sheet of numbers. And we're actually going to give the honor of the first vote to our town clerk marriage to Cisco. Because as Julia Califano pointed out to me when she forwarded her script to me, if anyone knows how to do this, it would be Meredith. So Meredith, please go down.

1:56:22

Take your place of honor at the head of the line and cast your ballot. After that, we will go through the rest of the Dyess up here on the stage, and then the tellers will begin calling you up by rows to come down and do your

1:56:38

voting duty Thank you.

1:56:51

Okay, watch how Mira is doing this year. Right? You're turning in your number right Meredith?

1:56:56

Turns in her number one, they give her a balance sheet.

1:57:02

She goes to the privacy booth.

1:57:06

She marks the ballot which I assume just has yes or no on it.

1:57:11

I haven't had the privilege of seeing it yet.

1:57:15

And then when she's done she slips the ballot into the voting machine

1:57:24

Okay, give her a round of applause everybody

1:57:31

okay, tellers. We're ready to do up front here first.

1:57:38

Yes, yes. Yes. A yes vote. Thank you Mr. Konya. Yes vote means that you're in favor of the resolution a no vote means you're opposed to the revolute resolution thank you

1:58:31

the following

1:58:37

video

1:58:55

right

1:59:13

did nothing

1:59:17

broken up to 30 but it

1:59:23

was definitely a good

1:59:28

review I really don't

1:59:30

even get

1:59:40

up every time

1:59:59

thank you

2:00:00

Have you heard the record or any

2:00:17

other NO NO

2:00:19

NO

2:00:32

right

2:00:45

how to be the mask police but we have had a couple of comments from citizens who would prefer and feel more comfortable if those persons around them wearing masks there is a mask mandate but we did ask everyone to try to be here in the auditorium to make the process a little more streamlined than having people in a different location and we had to do a duplicate of process so please out of consideration for those people who may be a little stressed by this please do wear your mask when you're sitting unless you're at a microphone speaking thank you

2:01:49

right

2:02:07

why last call for the vote on the resolution if you're going to vote and you have a number one on your ballot card sheet please come down and tear it off give it to the teller and get your ballot.

2:03:23

All right voting is now closed. Thank you everyone for your patience and for taking the time to vote.

2:03:29

It'll take a few minutes for the tellers to hold the numbers off the machines tally them and hand me the result. So keep your masks on and

2:03:42

be happy

2:04:17

that's what

2:04:26

we're here

2:04:31

for

2:04:34

you ever had a piece of?

2:04:49

Meat.

2:04:51

Good evening.

2:05:00

For

2:05:02

over

2:05:05

a

2:05:06

year

2:05:10

now I have a

2:05:18

look around labor mobility

2:05:46

business

2:05:58

probably about

2:06:13

a year?

2:07:25

Right

2:08:02

I'm sorry for the delay there seems to be an issue with getting the numbers out of the voting machine. So right now there's a hand count going on. We apologize for the delay. Hopefully we'll have numbers

2:08:20

I'll take that let me check on that

2:08:44

okay, whoever made that suggestion to move on, that was a good suggestion. Thank you this be my first year I'm always open to good suggestions. So we are going to move on to a couple of other resolutions. While this issue gets resolved, there are a couple of what I would describe as pretty much hopefully pretty much pro forma resolutions.

...

2:17:06

Thank you. Any other comments or questions?

2:17:13

Hearing none, it's time to go back and talk about the vote or the resolution regarding

2:17:19

purchase of the Carmelite monastery.

2:17:23

And how it was done to the votes because of an issue with the voting machines. And the yes votes are 176 and the no votes are 175.

2:17:50

Okay, we're gonna go back now to the

Ann Strong, 55 Teed Avenue said that she is concerned with the vote. She said, it was too close to call with the standing vote (Yeas: 150 Nays: 148 = 298) and then conducted a paper ballot (Yeas: 176 Nays: 175= 351). She questioned; how we had an additional 53 people voting. She said she believes that this was an illegal vote and asked for the solicitor to weigh in on this matter. She said that she will ask the Attorney General to do so tomorrow morning.

2:18:02

~~in n strong~~ Ann Strong, 55 Teed Avenue. I am concerned that we did a standing count. And we had 148 150. Yes, 148. No, we got to that standing vote, because we did a voice vote and which was inconsistent. So we did a recount.

2:18:29

A recount with this is with the same cohort. So we did a standing vote.

2:18:39

And that was too close to call.

2:18:43

It was inconsistent.

2:18:45

The tally people were getting different votes for the st different amounts for the same section. So now you've moved to a machine vote, which malfunctioned.

2:18:58

And we have

2:19:02

two 351 votes. So we have an additional 53 people who were summoned here. But that's not the original cohort. So that can't be a recount. So in my mind, it's an illegal vote. And I would like

the solicitor to weigh in on this and I'm also going to ask the attorney general to do so tomorrow morning.

2:19:30

Mr. ~~Zillow~~Ursillo.

Solicitor Mike Ursillo explained the statute regarding voting under the Town Charter. He said that the secret ballot vote will stand. He said that as long as the voting booths were open people do not have to be in attendance at the very beginning, voters are allowed to enter at any time – there is nothing in the Charter preventing voters coming and voting even in the last five minutes as long as voting is still in progress. Solicitor Ursillo said that we have followed the proper procedures. He said that the vote is proper and will stand.

2:19:33

Under the town charter following either a voice vote or a vote by standing on the charter provides that if 20% of those present in the room request a secret paper ballot. That is the way the financial Tom meeting proceeds. That is what you you did and the vote that stands this evening is the one from the secret finding this

2:20:00

equally paper ballot. And as long as the voting booths were open, individuals are allowed to come to the financial town meeting, they do not have to be here at the very beginning they can, they can enter it at any time. There's nothing in the charter that prevents individuals from coming here and voting on items. In the last five minutes of the meeting, if that's the case, as long as the voting is ongoing, a person who comes in way can vote. Now, once the voting has stopped, that person can't vote. And I can give you an example that happened this evening, a gentleman came down here after the voting machines were closed and was told he could not vote. So we followed all the proper procedures. And it is my opinion that the vote is proper and will stand.

2:20:57

Okay,

2:20:59

thank you, Mr. So

2:21:02

you're making for a very interesting First Financial town meeting for me. Thank you very much.

2:21:07

Okay, so let's go.

2:21:10

Yes, I'm sorry.

2:21:14

You go over the mic, sir. Thank you.

Jim Jackson, 8 Fireside Drive, said that under the circumstances he made a **motion** to have a recount. **There was a second from the floor.**

2:21:20

Under these circumstances, I would recommend that there be a recount. People shuffling back and forth. The counting going on, under pressure with all of the people talking, shuffling back and forth. There should be a recount. And I would make a motion that they recount be conducted.

2:21:49

Okay, we have a motion that there is a recount of the vote that was just completed by secret paper ballot. We have a second. Any discussion on this motion?

President Mike Carroll said that we could have recount after recount and asked when there will be a finality of the vote.

2:21:59

point point of order? Yes. It sounds like this is something that could be infinite. We could have a question to recount after the recount after the recount. At a certain point. Is there a finality of the vote?

Jim Jackson said that there will always be a question on this vote if there is not a recount.

2:22:16

I think there will always be a question on this vote if it has not re-counted where they were the balance has by one vote.

2:22:39

Excuse me, excuse me, if you have a comment you wish to make. Please come to the microphone address the comment to the moderator.

Deb Nyser, 30 Adelaide Avenue demanded a recount because she said that she does feel that it was a balanced party (a person from one party and a person from another party). We have the most divisive Town Council and now we have a divisive town meeting.

2:22:46

My belief there was always supposed to state your name I apologize. Deborah ~~nizer~~ Nyser, 30- Adelaide. My understanding is there should always be two people, one from each party doing the count you.

2:23:00

You know what? I don't know that. I just saw somebody over here counting ballots alone. And I saw a bunch of people over there counting ballots. I don't think it was a balanced. Listen, if it is what it is. I think that's great. But I think for anybody tonight to leave here with a question in their mind. It is unfair. I think this whole thing sawed stunk with the fact that your counts were off. People were dialing dialing people in to vote who walked in here. There is no plan. There is nothing but a bunch of empty promises. Let's make it right. We have the most divisive town council that I've ever seen in this town. And now tonight, we now have a divisive

2:23:43

financial town meeting. And we need to put a stop to it. All.

2:23:48

Right, we have a comment over here on the side

2:23:56

from the machine

2:23:59

right there,

2:24:02

right there.

2:24:10

You would just

2:24:15

if I may, just before you speak.

2:24:18

So the machine the machine was I think the issue here, if I remember if I heard it right. Claire Claire Boys Boyes, the Chair of the Board of canvassers was there was a concern that if the machines were shut down to do the count on this ballot, that it was possible we could not bring

them back up again, technologically to do a future ballot. So they did the hand so they did the hand counting.

2:24:44

However, in the interest of trying to confirm the hit the count, the board of canvassers made the decision to shut the machines down and confirm the count as to what was in the machine, and the count stands.

2:24:57

In other words, that the numbers that have come out on the sheet

Chair of the Board of Canvassers Claire Boyes showed proof by presenting the receipt from the DS-200 (voting machine). Mr. Staples stated that the Board of Canvassers did a hand count of the ballots as well as produced the count receipt. Mr. Staples said that the vote stands. He asked if (Mr. Jackson) he would like to withdraw his motion.

2:25:00

You know on the tally sheets are in fact 176 to 175

2:25:06

now that that we have a motion on the floor and a second to do a recount, but I want to make sure the group the audience here was aware of the fact that I do have in my hand the counts from the machine and they confirmed what the tellers had done by hand.

2:25:25

Well, thank you did you want to go forward either comment

2:25:29

any other comment on this motion

2:25:43

you can make you can make a motion after we're complete with this motion.

Frank Iannarilli, 59 Brook Street, said that this recount stands and asked the Moderator to state this motion is out of order.

2:25:48

Yes, sir. Frank ~~Iannarilli get a really~~ Frank Iannarilli, 59 Brook Street I would like you moderator to consult with the counselor and determine whether you should declare myself and all the speakers have just come forward with this motion to recount is out of order

2:26:14

I'm sorry that the recount request for recount is out of order.

2:26:19

That is correct. Okay, I will thank you

2:26:47

because

2:27:02

why I'm learning lots of new things tonight.

Mr. Staples consulted with the Solicitor Ursillo and since we have done a hand count and we have the receipt from the ballot machine he declared that **this motion is out of order.**

2:27:05

So after consulting with the town solicitor, the feeling is that because we had a hand verification of the tally of the votes confirmed by the machine vote that we have, in fact, done a recount. Really we have the machine vote tally, we have the Hancock tally, and therefore the motion that was made is out of order.