

MINUTES
TOWN OF MONTAGUE ASSESSING DEPARTMENT
1 Avenue A (2nd Floor) Turners Falls, MA
March 18, 2019

A meeting of the Montague Board of Assessors was held on Monday, March 18, 2019.

Assessors present: Chairman Paul Emery, Terry Miner, Ann Cenzano and Karen Tonelli, Director of Assessing. Robert Obear was also present. The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2019 meeting. The Board voted unanimously.

The Assessors reviewed correspondence received from Gerry Simons who stated that he no longer uses the residence at 11 Popular St as an office. Karen made the change to our records to remove the commercial use.

The Assessors also received notice of the Franklin County Assessors Association Annual Meeting which is to be held on May 23, 2019 at the GCC.

The Board members signed a monthly listing of MVE abatements issued in February, 2019. They also signed a list of monthly abatements and exemptions issued in February, 2019.

Bob Obear was present to discuss his assessments on properties he owns in Millers Falls. He had previously provided Karen Tonelli with a bank appraisal of the properties which had indicated lower values. As a result, he is seeking abatements. It was noted that the use of the appraisal was for bank financing purposes not for tax assessments. Karen stated that for income producing properties (which all of these buildings were) the most significant factor is the present value of the income expected to be derived from the properties. When looking at the income numbers and running a full I & E report, the assessments figures are supported. It was noted that expenses reported by Obear may have been too low and did not reflect a full year since he had begun to rent many apartments at the end of the year. Bob also suggested that the cap rate should be higher than normal given the risk associated with acquiring buildings in the Millers Falls area. There was some agreement that banks may not yet be willing to invest completely in that area. Bob stated that the area has been designated as a blighted area in terms of economic development. After some discussion, it was agreed to abate assessments on 26-28 Main Street. Additionally, the parcels for 34 and 34R should have not been assessed separately according to language the Town of Montague placed in the deed. Those parcels will be

merged and, as a result, the Board voted in favor of approving abatements on those 2 parcels.

Bob also explained the receivership process and stated that when he acquired 132 L Street, a \$75,000 mortgage was forgiven and other grants were given which were not reflected in the sales price. Karen had recently inspected two vacant apartments at 132 L and found the condition on the property card should be lowered. The Board voted to grant an abatement on that property as well.

Finally, the Assessors approved Obear's application for 15 Power Street, which he recently acquired from the Town. The property does not have access to water/sewer and cannot be developed until those utilities are connected. It was voted to grant an abatement to reflect this situation.

The Assessors reviewed and approved two (2) applications filed by Nova Real Estate LLC for properties they recently purchased at 141 and 145 Second Street. It was voted to approve. The Board voted to deny a third abatement request filed by Nova for vacant land located on First Street.

The Assessors reviewed and approved an abatement application filed by Karen Lovely for her condo located at 28 Walnut Street. A recent inspection indicated some water damage in the basement which would warrant a lower assessment.

The Assessors reviewed and approved an abatement application filed by William Doyle for property he purchased and is currently renovating at 75 Park Street. Previous attempts to inspect the house were ignored by the prior owners. A current inspection revealed that a major renovation was in process which made it difficult to determine the condition of the house as of the Fy2019 assessment data. The Board voted to approve an abatement to reflect the former condition of the house.

The Assessors meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved:_____

Karen M. Tonelli, M.A.A.
Director of Assessor

List of Documents

Correspondence dated 2/22/19 from G. Simons

FCAA Notice of Annual Meeting

Monthly summary of abatements February 2019

FY2019 Abatement Applications and documentation