

BOARD OF ABATEMENT MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 5, 2009
GIFFORD MEDICAL CENTER
MAPLE LEAF CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: **Justices of the Peace:** Pat Meyer, Ellen Baker, Barbara Angell, John Jackson, William Brigham, Jack Cowdrey, Elaine Soule, Ruth Lutz, and Richard Burstein
Selectboard: Stephen Webster, Larry Townsend, Dennis Brown and Carol Flint
Board of Listers: Donald Sweetser and Polly Frankenburg
Town Clerk & Treasurer: Joyce Mazzucco
Others: Patrick French, Town Assessor; Alex Schiller; Nathan Schiller, Peter Chase, and Nancy Osgood

Richard Burstein called the Board of Abatement meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. The first order of business was to consider the abatement request of Nathan and Victoria Schiller, parcel #105033-000, property located at 1401 Hebard Hill Road.

Stephen Webster asked if this was an appeal on the property value or a request for an abatement of taxes. Patrick French, Town Assessor, told the board the property value changed because Mr. Schiller subdivided the property into four (4) lots. The four lots were not appraised at full value but did raise the overall value of the property. Nathan Schiller and his son, Alex Schiller, were present to answer questions and provide information to support the abatement request.

Alex spoke on behalf of his father and told the board that because of various health issues this past summer, his father missed the deadline to grieve the assessment to the Board of Listers. The property value jumped from \$370,000 last year to \$508,600 this year. Mr. Schiller said his father had bought the property a number of years ago with the intention to retire here. His father sold his home and business in Boston and had planned to move to Randolph, but his wife fell ill and their plans changed. Mr. Schiller told the board his parents now rent an apartment in Boston so they can be near the medical facilities that provide their medical care. Their gross rental income is \$28,000, with gross expenditures of \$23,000, leaving a net rental income of \$5,000. With the increased property assessment, the property taxes this year increased by over \$3,000. Their only other income is Social Security. Mr. Schiller asked the board to consider abating the property taxes to last year's amount.

A discussion followed with the following people participating: Alex Schiller, Patrick French, Richard Burstein, Peter Chase, John Jackson, Nathan Schiller, Pat Meyer, Stephen Webster, Joyce Mazzucco, Larry Townsend, Don Sweetser, Barbara Angell, Jack Cowdrey, Nancy Osgood, Ruth Lutz, and Dennis Brown. The discussion centered on how much each apartment is rented for, if the rents are in line with comparable apartments in town, listed values of the four lots, what other income the Schillers receive (Social Security or SSI), the Listers' process for errors and omissions, if there are state permits for the lots, and if the municipal portion of the taxes can be deferred.

Discussion ceased. Dennis Brown made a motion to abate \$2304.58 in taxes due to financial hardship under 24 V.S.A. §1535(a)(c). Larry Townsend seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried by majority vote, with one abstention. The Schillers FY 2010 property taxes will be reduced by \$2,304.58. A written decision will be sent to the Schillers.

There was no further business to consider. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Attest: _____
Joyce L. Mazzucco, Town Clerk