

Town of North Canaan

Public Hearing for town ordinances

September 22, 2021

Selectman Allyn presented the Abandoned premises and Abandoned Motor Vehicle Ordinances to the public. He began by explaining the Abandoned Premises Ordinance.

Questions:

- How long after it is unoccupied (1 day, 30 days?) – Should probably have a time limit.
 - Selectman Allyn explained that these are bare bones ordinances – starting from the beginning as a living document and will continue to be changed and improved upon if it is passed.
- Any properties in mind when writing these?
 - There were no properties specifically, but there are some in town that most people know about. There are a couple that it will pertain to.
- Question of who will have jurisdiction? Most likely the building official will oversee these.
- Is it only written complaints or should it be observance OR written.
- Failure to make contact will then go to authorities for inspection.

Selectman Allyn read a letter of support into record from Mr. Ian Edwards

Selectman Allyn explained the Abandoned Motor Vehicle Ordinance

Questions:

- There were questions on could an individual have 3 vehicles being worked on and using parts from 3 other trucks for each truck or only 1 for each truck. There was a discussion regarding cannibalization of vehicles and limits. Also discussed keeping them in garages and covered. There is an issue of “if you can’t see it you can’t enforce it”.
- There are concerns of environmental issues if too many vehicles are on a property with the possibility of oils and other fluids ending up in the soil.
- Question arose of how someone would know if a business is a legitimate contracting business or not. Businesses are defined by taxes
- Where do the funds go that are collected by fines etc. Explained that money is put into the general fund.

Selectman Allyn added that there are 2 openings on the blight committee if anyone is interested.

Selectman Whiting presented the Food Truck Ordinance. The ordinance was written after a review of 27 other town ordinances. Currently there is only a \$25 peddlers fee per year. The ordinance requires food trucks to get approval at the Selectman's office after getting sign off from Torrington Area Health and paying the required fees.

There was a discussion regarding food trucks not being allowed to stay overnight in a spot, unless for a special event.

There was a question regarding signage on truck for approval of the Torrington Area Health. Agreed they can add to ordinance it needs to be displayed so public can see it.

The town attorney checked and approved the ordinance.

Selectman Whiting presented the Tax Incentive Plan. An email from the town Assessor was read to public. Selectman Whiting explained how the plan works. It can only be done a year at a time and has to be reviewed to decide if it will continue or change etc. This is for brick and mortar commercial properties only.

A discussion ensued on commercial vs industrial zones and businesses in residential/agriculture zones. Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Board suggested using the zoning map and talking to the town attorney to see which is the best way to categorize it.

There was a question regarding comparison to neighboring towns. Other towns use different approaches because of the differences in mill rates.

At the time of the writing of the ordinance there was no building official so some wording needs to be adjusted.

Suggestion that need to put in that it does not apply to personal property.

Suggestion that the assessor should have to notify the Board of Assessment Appeals when someone uses the plan as they can't hear a complaint then.

A question came up regarding the abandoned motor vehicle ordinance regarding limit to how long it takes to cannibalize a vehicle. This may have to be addressed in a future update. Selectman Allyn will look into it.

Ordinances will be reviewed, changes made, and reviewed by the town attorney and a second public hearing will be set at the next Selectman's Meeting.