



BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY
Wednesday, September 17, 2025
3:30pm in Tracy Hall
Draft minutes

BCA Members Present in Tracy Hall: Alix Manny (Chair), Fran DeGasta, Kimo Griggs, Dave Krimmel, Suzanne Leiter, Kristin Maffei, Lily Trajman, Priscilla Vincent

Listers: Ernie Ciccotelli, Cheryl Lindberg, Pamela Smith

Appellants: Jocelyne Barrett and Matthew Cole for Great River Hydro; Evan Cavanaugh and Kerin Riley; Caroline Flanagan Mielewski and Christopher Mielewski; Rui Guo and Dawn Zhang; Katie Kitchel.

For the Town: Austin Sansoucy of Sansoucy Associates (speaking on behalf of the Town for the Great River Hydro appeal).

Online: Kevin Leen of KRT Appraisals, speaking for the Town.

1. GREAT RIVER HYDRO – parcel # 70-006.000

- a. Manny called the hearing to order at 3:31pm.
- b. The Listers presented the property: 1334 acres as assessed by Sansoucy Associates, the firm hired to calculate the value of the flowage rights. Current valuation is \$2,109,900
- c. Barret and Cole outlined the Great River Hydro basis for appeal:
 - i. The acreage is different from the 2019 valuation, with an addition of 760.7 acres.
 - ii. Incorrect valuation of acreage because paired sales methodology was not used.
- d. The Listers and Sansoucy responded:
 - i. Sansoucy explained how the firm calculated value of acreage and defended their use of draft maps from the Wilder Dam project. He introduced four new pieces of evidence:
 1. Exhibit G from the Wilder Project: Project Area Maps. Flowage rights shown on the maps.
 2. The maps showing Dry and Wet land per the Wilder Project maps

3. Superior Court decision from TransCanada Hydro Northeast, Inc. v. Town of Newbury
 4. Vermont Supreme Court opinion on the above case.
 - e. BCA members were given an opportunity to ask questions.
 - i. GRH clarified that their acreage values came from the 2016 Newbury decision; no further market action would indicate a change of values.
 - ii. Wet and dry methodology have been used in other cases, including in the Newbury.
 - f. Leiter, Maffei and Trajman set the inspection date for 9/25 at 3:30pm. Trajman will reach out to Barrett to set up inspection logistics.
 - g. Manny recessed the hearing to 5pm on Monday, October 6, 2025 in the multipurpose room of Tracy Hall.
 2. **CAVANAUGH** – Parcel 05-146.200, 119 Barbara Lee Ln.
 - a. Manny called the hearing to order at 3:59pm.
 - b. The Listers presented the property as a residential dwelling currently valued at \$1,471,500 and containing 9.56 acres.
 - c. Cavanaugh and Riley outlined their basis for appeal. They built their home; finished in 2024.
 - i. House grade and grade factor are unreasonably high.
 - ii. Topography grade factor is not reflective of actual burden of grade.
 - iii. Assessment not reflective of Fair Market Value.
 - d. The Listers responded:
 - i. Listers noted that they're limited in the grade evaluation: wood floor is wood floor; they cannot distinguish between different grades of wood floor. Additionally, appliances are not part of the appraisal. Bathrooms are full, $\frac{3}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ - do not assess type of shower enclosure etc.
 - e. The BCA members were given an opportunity to ask questions:
 - i. Kevin explained how prices per square foot were calculated.
 - f. Leiter, Maffei and Trajman set the inspection date for September 26 at 4pm
 - g. Manny recessed the hearing to 5:30pm on Monday, October 6, 2025 in the multipurpose room of Tracy Hall.
 3. **FLANAGAN** – Parcel 14-021.100, 153 Delta Dr.
 - a. Manny called the hearing to order at 4:27pm.
 - b. The Listers presented the property as a residential dwelling currently valued at \$509,100 on 5.33 acres.
 - c. Flanagan and Mielewski outlined their basis for appeal.
 - i. They do not use municipal services – they rely on Hartford - and feel that the economic depreciation reduction should be reinstated for this reason. Was added after Flanagan grieved her 2017 assessment.
 - ii. Easement not taken into account.
 - d. The Listers responded:
 - i. No other properties on Delta Drive receive the economic depreciation factor, so it was removed to make assessments equitable.
 - ii. They are unaware of an easement.

- e. BCA members were given the opportunity to ask questions:
 - i. No major improvements were made.
 - ii. The economic reduction applies to both municipal AND education taxes, not just municipal taxes.
 - iii. Easement applies to their property; deed was requested.
 - f. Manny, Krimmel and Vincent set an inspection time for 9/25 at 3pm.
 - g. Manny recessed the hearing to Monday, October 6, 2025 at 6pm in the multipurpose room of Tracy Hall.
4. **GUO** – Parcel 12-006.110, 139 Hemlock Rd.
- a. Manny called the hearing to order at 4:57pm
 - b. The Listers presented the property as a residential dwelling currently valued at \$779,600 and containing 2.14 acres.
 - c. Guo and Zhang outlined their basis for appeal:
 - i. Owners dispute the finished vs. unfinished values of the three quarter story and the half story portions of their dwelling.
 - ii. Purchased for \$550k in July of 2024. Have since replaced the roof for \$28k.
 - d. The Listers responded:
 - i. Note that comparables are not accurate if no inspection has been done on those properties.
 - ii. The addition of a bedroom does not change the assessment of a property, but the addition of a bathroom does.
 - iii. Under Construction designation reminds the listers to check up on certain properties that have unfinished areas; no guarantee that an unfinished space won't later be finished.
 - e. BCA members were given the opportunity to ask questions.
 - i. Leen explained the economic location reduction (due to proximity to highway and associated noise).
 - ii. Definitions of “finished” and “unfinished” were questioned. Leen said that subfloor with roughed in electrical and plumbing are unfinished. Functional heat, finished flooring, ceiling and walls are a finished area. Only “in between” is percentage of completion with yearly inspection.
 - f. Manny, Krimmel and Vincent set an inspection time for 9/29 at 4pm.
 - g. Manny recessed the hearing to Monday, October 6th at 6:30pm in the multipurpose room of Tracy Hall.
5. **KITCHEL** – Parcel 14-026.000, 597 Sugartop Rd.
- a. Manny called the hearing to order at 5:26pm.
 - b. The Listers presented the property as a residential dwelling currently valued at \$1,580,100 and containing 109.2 acres.
 - c. Kitchel outlined her basis for appeal:
 - i. Assessment not equitable relative to the neighbors at 592 Sugartop, which had a 70% reduction in land value applied for their conservation easement. Kitchel submitted an easement document for 597 Sugartop into evidence showing about 24 acres under the conservation easement.

- ii. Kitchel also questioned the view grade and submitted pictures of front yard views from four different properties on Sugartop.
- d. The Listers responded:
 - i. The 70% reduction on 592 Sugartop did not have any mention on the Lister card. It was applied this year for the first time without being discussed with the Listers.
 - ii. The Listers explained that application of the conservation easement reductions are on a town by town basis – there is no state mandated reduction for a conservation easement. Some easements are more restrictive than others; this creates a difference in reductions.
- e. The BCA members were given the opportunity to ask questions.
 - i. Listers confirmed that they are “usually” given copies of easements. The burden of conveying this to the Listers is not on the landowner. Because they did not have the easement, they were unable consider what reductions would be appropriate.
 - ii. The listers clarified that there are different types of easements which can result in different reductions. Some are more restrictive than others.
- f. Manny, Krimmel and Vincent set up an inspection time for 9/25 at 3:45pm.
- g. Manny recessed the hearing to Monday, October 6th at 4:30pm.

Hearings will be continued on Tuesday, 9/23 at 4pm.