

Minutes**Town of Marlboro Select Board Public Hearing on Declassification of Upper Houghton Road
Thursday, May 22, 2025**

Attendees: Molly Welch – SB Chair; Jeff Skramstad – SB Vice-Chair; Kate Kirkwood – SB Member; Nick Morgan – SB Assistant/Town Admin; Bob Fisher – Town Attorney; Leland Smith, Linda Barber, Tamara Stenn, David King, Sheila King, and Mary Sargent (as a resident) – Residents (on or bordering Upper Houghton Road).

Call Public Hearing on Declassification of Upper Houghton Road to Order @ 5:30p by Molly Welch

- Review request: Molly advised that there was a request to declassify Upper Houghton Road (2,361.2 feet), as specified by the recorded survey of the road and boarding properties, as a town road and return it to private ownership of Linda Barber.
- Hear Public Comments: Those residents present representing property owners on Upper Houghton Road all stated that they were in favor of this request and were happy to see this move forward.
- Discussion of the Board: The Board briefly discussed the declassification regarding how while the road was currently not maintained, it had be classified a town road in roughly 1908 and this declassification was necessary to officially (and legally) return it to a private (non-town) road. It was also clarified that while Linda Barber’s property encompasses the full road (both sides) but has granted other residents who live on the road continued access to the road.
- Advice from Town Attorney: Attorney Bob Fisher advised that the standard to apply is that such a declassification must be for the public good and concurred based on the site visit conducted prior to this hearing and the comments at this meeting that there is no public benefit to continue to keep the road “open”. Thus the converse applies, that it is to the public benefit to “close” the road so there is no future cost of upkeep and such. Bob further noted that as the Town Attorney, he would draw up the “finding” to declassify the road, which the Select Board will sign at their next meeting and appropriately file it in the town records.
- Decision and Vote: Molly presented the following motion: **To declassify Upper Houghton Road according to the distances listed in the request (and outline at this hearing), and have it revert to private ownership. (Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)**
- End of Public Hearing: Prior to adjourning there was a general discussion and confirmation that according to statute, that when a road is declassified, the boundaries revert to those boundaries prior to when the road was laid out, and it was reconfirmed that the entire road does fall within Linda Barber’s property lines. It was noted that Forrest Holzapfel (Town Clerk) would be asked for the land records (at the time of the sale to Linda Barber) to confirm the property lines and provided to Bob Fisher to ensure all was in order prior to his creation of the “finding”. There was general acknowledgement that all was in order.

The purpose of the hearing being concluded, the hearing was adjourned @ 5:40p. **(Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously)**

As the hearing went shorter than expected and the Board had executive session (included attorney Bob Fisher) scheduled for the regular meeting that was most likely going to last for quite a bit of time, the Board decided to use the time before the regular meeting to start the executive session discussions:

Executive Session

Motion: Fining that premature knowledge of the topic that we need to discuss now would be deleterious to the public & town the Select Board deems it necessary to hold an Executive Session. & Motion: That we move into executive session to discuss personnel issues according to Vermont Statute 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(a) – (Welch/Skramstad – Passed unanimously).