

**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING: NOVEMBER 22, 2022**

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY: PUBLIC HEARING - LAND ACQ - NYE ROAD**

First Name	Last Name	Street Address	Written Testimony: Per Council rules & procedures, testimony at public hearings is limited to 5 minutes. Please limit your written testimony to what can be reasonably read to the record of the public hearing in 5 minutes.
David	O'Connor	1140 Main Street	<p>I'm very disappointed about the recent negative vote by the Board of Finance on the land acquisition at Nye Road for an affordable housing project. The Town Council and the TPZ both voted on a bipartisan basis to support the purchase – the TPZ vote was even unanimous. The town has completed an affordable housing plan and residents have repeatedly supported new projects at town meetings. Based on the town attorney's recommendation, the Board of Finance only had to acknowledge that the project was funded by ARPA, not from the town budget. Instead, they involved themselves in areas of policy. How many times have we heard people say - I support affordable housing BUT – but not here, but not there, but not now. Too many excuses keep coming up, delaying the issue and putting the town significantly behind its obligations. The town has a responsibility both statutorily and morally to provide an opportunity for families who seek affordable housing options to settle here. I applaud the Town Council for its vote a few weeks ago to move ahead with the purchase and I hope it can still be salvaged, despite the unfortunate vote by the Board of Finance to defeat it.</p>
Denise	Weeks	334 Hollister Way W	<p>The opportunity to purchase the Nye Road property is one that doesn't come around often: the parcel is ideally situated close to town and schools, on a bus line. It could accommodate upwards of 80 affordable housing(AH) units and help close our AH gap. In voting against the purchase, Republicans on the Board of Finance (BOF) demonstrated their inability to operate within the bounds of their responsibilities. According to the town attorney, the BOF role was to evaluate 1) are there sufficient ARPA monies for the appropriation and 2) does the purchase fall within the qualifying ARPA criteria? The Town Manager confirmed the answer to both questions is yes. Ignoring the questions at hand, Republicans based their opposition on concerns they could have voiced at Town Council hearings but questions that were irrelevant to the questions before them. They stepped outside their role to reject a policy decision they opposed and which is the rightful domain of Town Council members after public input. I urge you to take appropriate action to challenge the validity of their vote. The future policy-making role of the Town Council is at stake as well as the future of the Nye Road purchase.</p>

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CAROLYN WRAY

320 Hollister Way  
West

My name is Carolyn Wray and I live at 320 Hollister Way West I want to express my support for the town purchase of the Nye Road property and encourage the council to do whatever it can to challenge the actions of Republican members of the Board of Finance (BOF) who failed to vote on the merits of the questions before them but used their vote to register their displeasure with the project. The Town Council held two public hearings on this purchase and support for the purchase was overwhelming. The council rightly voted to go forward based on that voter support. The BOF role was to weigh in on the financial impact of the purchase only. Since ARPA money will be used, there is no financial impact on the town budget and the board vote should have been unanimous. The opinions and concerns expressed by the Republican members rightly should have been made at the town council public hearings and not used to justify a no vote in their role as members of the BOF. I believe the BOF members were out of line, and I urge the council to do whatever it can to challenge the BOF vote and ensure that the will of the voters is honored, and the purchase can go forward.

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Audrey Beatty

139 Williams St W

I would like to express my continued support for the proposed affordable housing development on Nye Rd. I was shocked to hear about the actions of the Board of Finance and implore the members of Council to do all that they can to ensure that the plan for affordable housing on Nye Rd moves forward. Meeting after meeting, there has been robust public support for this plan. Even the council, regardless of party lines, seems to generally support the idea of increasing affordable housing stock in Glastonbury. I very much hope that meaningful progress will be made this evening, demonstrating that the council believes affordable housing isn't just a "nice idea" that will receive attention and funding in the nebulous future, but something our town will make a specific, significant investment in today. Thank you for your time.

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Robyn	Guimont	62 Chimney Sweep Hill Road	I am writing to express my disappointment in the Republican members of the Board of Finance for their decision to vote no on the release of ARPA funds for the town's purchase of the property on Nye Road. This property would allow the town to access land it already owns for the purpose of pursuing the creation of additional affordable housing in our town. Seemed like a win-win to me, but for some arbitrary reason these Republican members of our Board of Finance decided to deny the town the ability to work towards increasing our current inadequate affordable housing stock. Given the recent outcry regarding the monstrosity that is being built at the corner of Hebron Ave and Manchester Road, people in town should be outraged. We will be forced to accept more of these types of eyesores if we don't make any effort to rectify our many years of affordable housing denial. When (not if) future inappropriate buildings are built in your neighborhood, please thank the Republican members of the Board of Finance for their unwarranted obstruction of this purchase. Shame on them for putting politics ahead of the people of the town.
David	Kuzmak	20 Tryon Farm Road	The Nye Road plan needs to be approved regardless of the lack of a positive recommendation from the Board of Finance.
gail	kuzmak	20 tryon farm road	Please vote yes to the purchase of Nye Road. Affordable housing is needed in Glastonbury and this is a good site for it.

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shawnee baldwin 57 nuthatch knob	<p>I support purchasing the Nye Road property for an affordable housing site. Thank you for your time to read this and your service to this town. I moved to Glastonbury 40 years ago, and was able to maintain the housing/ mortgage cost with one full time and one part time income. As my marital status changed that became less secure. If it were not for some financial assistance and a full-time job that took me away from my young kids, I would not have been able to stay in Glastonbury. In my retirement years I would have to look elsewhere to afford housing if I were a prospective home buyer today. I definitely could not afford my own home if it were to go on the market. Some of the homes in my neighborhood have sold over the asking price. I consider myself an asset to this town in the charitable work I have done over 40 years and as a current YMCA staff at an after-school program. I am currently involved with groups that focus on civil discourse, equality, inclusion, and social justice, and environmental sustainability always with an eye toward youth development and participation seven generations down the line. All that preamble to say if we want to attract high quality, engaged citizens of all ages, cultural or religious backgrounds who can contribute to our economy and stability or keep those with ties to the community with years of accumulated wisdom, we need to have affordable housing. And Nye Road is a good spot for affordable housing. For one thing it is within walking distance to the center of town for access to restaurants and food stores and near a bus route which is essential for anyone that doesn't have, can't afford, or is choosing to reduce their carbon footprint by not using their car. Nye road is a 10 minute walk, on a sidewalk, to a stop on Griswold and Prospect. Its also a 2-3 minute drive to the highway. For another it can be tucked into a neighborhood close to business on Western Boulevard attracting Medical and other sectors of workers.</p>
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Robyn Castano 147 Hollister Way N	<p>My name is Robyn Castano and I live at 147 Hollister Way North Following two public hearings on the Nye Road Purchase the Town Council and the Town Planning and Zoning board voted move forward with the purchase. The measure was then came before the Board of Finance whose role according to the town attorney was to confirm that there were ARPA funds available and that the project was an appropriate use of ARPA funds. The Town Manager confirmed at the meeting that both were the case. Ignoring the state and public mandate for Affordable Housing, the Town Council and TPZ votes, and the questions before them, Republicans on the Board of Finance used the vote to cancel the will of the people and the elected Council members to pursue the purchase. They stepped out of their narrow finance role into the policy making role reserved for the Council. I urge the Council to take any and all appropriate action to challenge the validity of their vote and move forward with the purchase of the Nye Road property. Thank you,</p>
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Barbara Massy

203 Hollister Way  
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My name is Barbara Massy and I live at 203 Hollister Way North. As a taxpaying Glastonbury resident for 60 years, I am strongly in favor of the purchase of the Nye Rd. property for purpose of building much-needed affordable housing. I am also outraged at the position taken by those on the Board of Finance opposing the Nye Road property purchase. None of the concerns they raised had anything to do with the two questions before them, which were whether there were ARPA funds available and whether the purchase an appropriate use of those funds. The Town Manager assured them that both criteria were met. Yet, instead of voting on the questions before them, those in opposition used the vote to effectively block a purchase because they disagreed with the public's and Town Council's position on the purchase. They overstepped their authority. I urge the Council to challenge the validity of the Board of Finance vote and defend their role as the town's policy-making body. This is a bad precedent. You must do whatever you can to continue to move forward with the purchase of the Nye Road property. We must begin to address our affordable housing shortfall. Thank you, Barbara Massy

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John P Wentland

348 Spring Street E

My name is John P. Wentland. I live at 348 Spring Street Extension, Glastonbury. I am disappointed in the partisan vote by the Board of Finance opposing the purchase of property on Nye Road. After two public hearings on the proposal to purchase the Nye Road property, the Town Council and the Town Planning and Zoning board had voted move forward with the purchase. According to the town attorney, the BOF role was to evaluate two questions: Are there sufficient ARPA monies for the appropriation? and Does the purpose of the appropriation fall within the qualifying ARPA criteria? The Town Manager confirmed the answer to both questions was yes. The members of the Board of Finance seem to have stepped outside their finance role to reject policy decisions they oppose but which are the rightful domain of Town Council members after input from citizens. A yes vote would be in the best interests of contributing to the solution of a town problem: making up what is lacking to the 10% affordable housing goal set by the state. Republicans on the Board of Finance used the vote to cancel the will of the people and the elected Council members to pursue the purchase. They stepped out of their narrow finance role into the policy making role reserved for the Council. I urge the members of the Town Council to take appropriate action to challenge the basis for and validity of the BOF vote on the purchase of the Nye Road property. The future policy-making role of the Town Council is at stake as well as the future of the Nye Road purchase. Please note that the Nye Road property under consideration is just a short distance from the site of 348 Spring Street Ext. I want to make my opinion heard since I live just a half block from the property under consideration. Thank you.

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Michelle Riordan-  
Nold 97 Brentwood Dr

The BOF role was to evaluate two questions before them. 1. Are there sufficient ARPA monies for the appropriation? and 2. Does the purpose of the appropriation fall within the qualifying ARPA criteria? The Town Manager agreed that the answer to both questions was yes. Instead of focusing on the questions at hand, Republicans raised questions and concerns that were irrelevant to the questions. We need to develop affordable housing in this town. First, because it's the right thing to do and second, the threat posed by 8-30g will continue until we seriously address the lack of affordable housing. We need to revisit this ill-advised and uninformed BOF decision and move forward with the Nye Road Purchase.