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Carlson announces bid for North Stonington First Selectman



Robert Carlson, left, answers a question while fellow candidates, from left, Asa Palmer, Mike Urgo and Nita Kincaid listen Oct. 1, 2017, during the debate for selectman of North Stonington at Wheeler Library. (Dana Jensen/The Day)

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Melina Khan, Special to The Day

North Stonington — Selectman Bob Carlson has announced he will run for first selectman in November as a Republican candidate, with incumbent Mike Urgo not seeking reelection.

Carlson moved to town with his wife, Elizabeth "Bitsy" Carlson, and son Andrew in 2003. The family's community involvement started shortly thereafter, when Carlson began volunteering as a T-ball coach in 2004. He went on to direct the town's recreational basketball league for eight years and sat on the School Ad Hoc Committee as its first chairman for four years.

In 2013, Carlson was elected to the Board of Education as vice chairman, and served as chairman for more than three years.

Along with Urgo and Selectwoman Nita Kincaid, Carlson was elected to the Board of Selectmen in 2017. All three were reelected in 2019.

After a 44-year career in the lumber and building industry, Carlson, 67, retired in April. He said he always considered a bid for first selectman upon retirement.

"I like being involved," Carlson said. "First selectman is something that I have confidence in myself that I can do and do a good job at."

If elected, he plans to prioritize listening to the concerns and ideas of residents. He said listening and the ability to compromise are the best qualities that he can bring to the role.

"My job as the first selectman is to listen to what is said, to understand that the town decides what's best for the town," he said. "As first selectman, it's my job to administer and ensure that what the town wants is what happens."

Bringing his selectman experience from the past few years will be beneficial, Carlson said. He already has begun meeting with individuals who he said are important figures in the community.

"I understand that if I am elected, I'm an employee of the town of North Stonington, and therefore I work for the residents of North Stonington," he said. "I think it's important to realize that, to understand that we're in a democracy."

Though he does use social media, Carlson does not post or interact with political statements online, a standard he has stood by since entering the local political sphere.

If elected, he said he will stay in the position "as long as they want me." Currently the only candidate for the position, Carlson said he hopes someone will run against him so that residents have a choice of who will represent them as first selectman.

STORIES THAT MAY INTEREST YOU

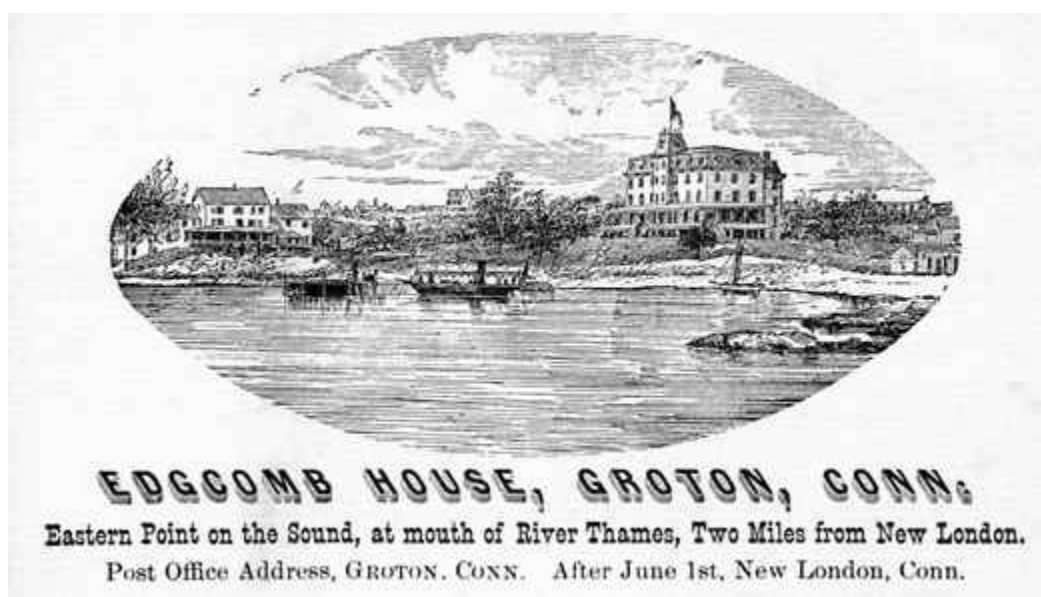
Ledyard voters approve school roofing projects (</local-news/20220223/ledyard-voters-approve-school-roofing-projects>)

As heavy rain fell during the late afternoon and evening, Ledyard voters Tuesday approved a \$6.725 million bond to replace leaking roofs at the Juliet W. Long and Gales Ferry Elementary Schools.



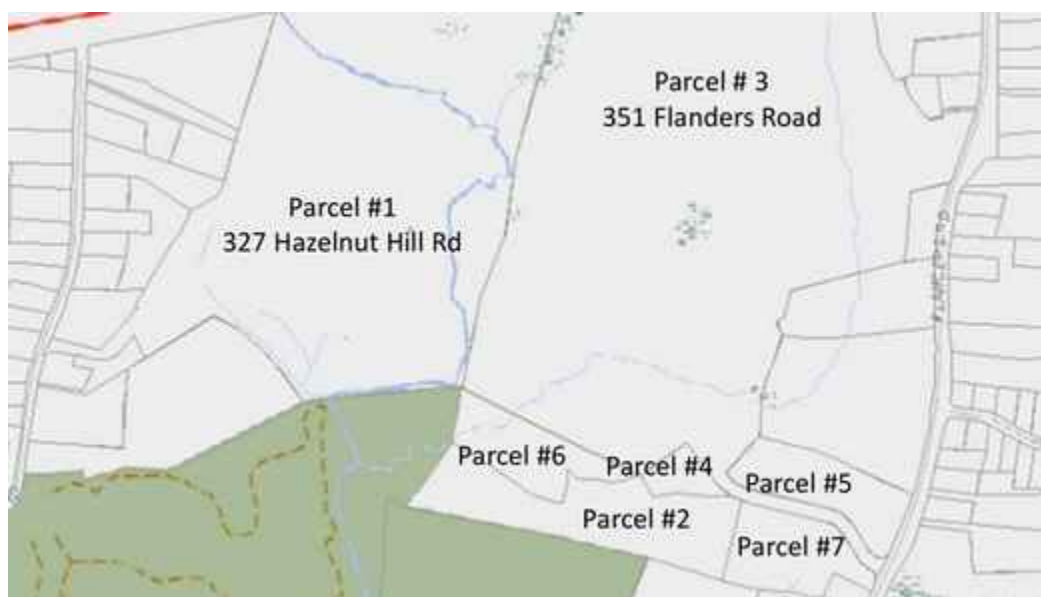
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This is the third of a three-part series.



Data center agreement proposed for land south of I-95 in Groton (</local-news/20220222/data-center-agreement-proposed-for-land-south-of-i-95-in-groton>)

A proposed data center agreement for land south of Interstate 95 between Hazelnut Hill and Flanders Roads will be presented to the public on Thursday.