

Northbridge

Town makes money from tax lien auction

NORTHBRIDGE — The public auction of three properties in town raised \$215,000 — more than triple the amount of total taxes owed on those properties combined, according to the treasurer's office.

Sullivan & Sullivan Auctioneers, based in Sandwich, auctioned off the three properties on March 14 in a tax lien auction: a single-family home on 3.3 acres at 2094 Quaker St. that was condemned because of fire damage, a small store formerly known as Village Variety on 84 Border St., and a strip of storage units on C Street.

The Quaker Street home sold for \$171,000, the variety store for \$26,000 and the storage units for \$18,000, said Kimberly Yargeau, town treasurer.

According to assessor's records online, the town had owned the Quaker Street home since 2011, the store since 2010, and the storage units since 2003.

In 2013, the home was assessed at \$114,900, the store at \$94,400, and the storage units at

\$39,600.

This was the first public auction the town has held to recover back taxes.

"We redeemed all of the back taxes that were owed, plus made a little revenue for the town all at once, and returned these properties to the tax rolls," Ms. Yargeau said.

"Municipal tax liens are a rare opportunity for buyers to take advantage of low minimum bidding," said Marianne Sullivan, president of Sullivan & Sullivan Auctioneers, in announcing the auction results. "This is a win-win scenario with an opportunity for buyers to buy at a bargain, and ... the town recoups losses and can place the properties back on their tax rolls."

— Donna Boynton