



**TOWN OF NEWTOWN**  
**Fairfield Hills Authority**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**The Fairfield Hills Authority held a Meeting on January 22, 2023  
in the Multipurpose Room at the Newtown Community Center, 8 Simpson St, Newtown, CT 06470**

*These minutes are subject to the approval of the FHA at their next meeting.*

**Present:** Ross Carley, Michael Holmes, Anthony Filiato, Justin Molito, Terry Sagedy, Brook Clark (arrived 7:33 pm)

**Absent:** Melissa Beylouni

**Public Attendance:**

Kinga Walsh – 21 Horseshoe Ridge Rd, Sandy Hook  
2 others were in attendance

**Also Present:** Kim Chiappetta – Economic & Community Development and Fairfield Hills Coordinator (clerk)

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

**Public Participation:**

Kinga Walsh, Chair of the Community Center Commission, began by explaining to the Authority that she was in attendance representing herself and not the Community Center Commission. She expressed her hope that the FHA would support the Community Center playscape. The Newtown Community Center has learned that there is a need for childcare programs. The playscape will provide a safe haven for kids enrolled in these programs as well as anyone else on the campus outside of Community Center program hours. Kinga closed by thanking the Authority for considering the playscape.

**Acceptance of Minutes**

Chair Ross Carley asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the meeting held on November 27, 2023. Mike Holmes entertained. Anthony Filiato seconded and all were in favor.

The Chairman thanked Authority members for volunteering.

**Chairman's Report**

Chairman Ross Carley thanked the FHA members for volunteering their time.

Ross reminded members of the project to create an overlay aerial view map of the campus to identify locations for future gardens and gathering spaces. In the future, the overlay will include a band shell that will serve an event space. The goal is to make the campus a park-like setting. Another future item is picnic tables near the Victory Garden. Ross noted that he has not seen any movement on the proposed little library Eagle Scout project and will be following up.

Ross asked Justin to provide an update. Justin reported that in last few Authority meetings they had discussed establishing a Facebook page, and he has now created the Friends of Fairfield Hills Facebook group. The intent of this page is for people to join and discuss what they would like to see on the campus. The page is not an

official site of the Authority. The hope is to use the page to gather information and later determine if there is interest in establishing a 501c3 which would serve as a fundraising arm for the campus. The hope is that the page will be a positive, nice space. Ross expressed that he would also like to use it to provide updates on FHA and campus activities. Ross thanked Justin for his work in establishing the page. Justin said it is an open forum for anyone to post, and he will bring information back to the Authority.

#### **New Business:**

##### **Newtown Community Center Playscape final plans – Matt Ariniello:**

Chairman Carley asked Newtown Community Center Director, Matt Ariniello, to approach the Authority. Matt began by telling the group of his excitement that the playscape design was approved by P & Z. Since Matt last presented to the Authority, he explained that there have been some updates to the initial drawings to provide handicapped accessibility and a maintenance entrance. The playscape location has been staked out to provide a visual of the space. The project budget includes plans for drainage because it tends to hold water due to the slope and pitch of the area. The project has a cost of \$245,000 leaving \$5,000 for any unforeseen issues and for signage. The cost of the fencing for the project will be covered by the Friends of the Community Center and is estimated to cost between \$10,000 and \$15,000. Ross asked if Public Works will be providing any assistance with the drainage. Matt said that he will be meeting with the Director of Public Works, Fred Hurley, and Assistant Director of Parks, Carl Samuelson, to discuss various aspects of the project including drainage. Ross asked if the project required any digging at the location and cautioned about the utilities and old building foundation underground. Matt said the current project plans do not call for digging far into the surface. The utility maps from Public works show all utilities run down the middle of the entire area, so space has been left in the plans to accommodate them. Once the plans are finalized they will be presented to Public Works for a final review. Matt highlighted that since the last presentation, ADA equipment has been added to the playground with handicapped accessibility. Matt presented the updated drawings. (Attachment A.) He pointed out that there will be two entrances for people and one for maintenance equipment. Matt also pointed out that the design calls for benches around the playscape that will complement the playscape equipment in style and color which is not the bench used throughout the campus from the Fairfield Hill Campus Landscape Guidelines. The group discussed the different benches, and Matt noted that everything in the playscape area is dependent upon what the certified playscape specialist says meets the State code. Ross expressed that he liked the project as it is well thought out and secure. Matt noted that the fencing around the area will follow the campus standard and will be 5 ft. as required by State code. Ross opened to the floor for questions. Justin asked if there were any parameters around who could access the playscape. Matt explained that use of the playscape will be seasonal with camps during the school breaks and before and after school programs. It will be available to the public outside of this times. A toddler feature was added to the playscape for parents visiting with non-school age children during the day. Mike Holmes expressed that he liked the idea and presentation. Matt told the Authority that he and Ross have had conversations about blocking the space between the playscape location and the road. There have been problems with people parking on this grass area when large events are held on the campus. The State is requiring a barrier between the road and playground. Being that this space does not belong to the Community Center he and Ross worked together to come up with the idea of shrubbery to block off the area. Ross spoke with the Town Finance Director, Bob Tait, regarding the funds for this project related requirement. Carl has been asked to make suggestions for the shrubs. Matt noted that the Community Center has spent \$8,000 to date to prep the area.

Ross asked for a motion to accept the proposal and go forward with the playscape project. Terry Sagedy entertained. Mike Holmes seconded and all were in favor.

##### **Landscape Architect for the Fairfield Hills Landscape Design plan:**

Authority member Brook Clark updated the group that she has been working with John Voket on the Fairfield Hills Landscape design project. She began with a general idea of existing bench locations and has overlaid with

proposed locations. Brook expressed that there are many opportunities for picnic tables and gathering locations. In addition, she is looking at selecting specimen tree placement for a couple of areas on the campus to tie-in a picnic area with benches. Another meeting is scheduled for Friday, to obtain information from a consultant on cost of maintenance. Ross asked about the status of tree replacements on the campus. Kim said, she had gone through with Public Works identifying trees that need to be removed and pruned. She will need to reach back out to Public Works. Kim recommended the Authority consider a separate landscaper be hired to maintain gathering spaces to ensure plantings are well taken care of. Brook said she recommends beginning with a specimen trees before garden planting to ensure tree maintenance can be handled. Justin asked about the existing gathering space and the process for creating an overall plan for the campus. Kim explained that historically the memorial bench program allowed donors to select the location resulting in benches installed all around the campus and many on the hill. Identifying areas for benches and plantings creates planned gathering spaces to beautify the campus. Authority member Brook Clark of Brook Clark Landscape Architects is donating her time to this project. Ross offered the support of the Authority for whatever she needs. Brook said the subcommittee should be ready to present in the next meeting.

**Duplex Roof:**

Kim said that she is asking the Authority for approval to obtain quotes for remediation and replacement of the roofs on the duplex buildings for the purpose of identifying and applying for grants. Ross informed the group that he personally saw what happened to the former doctors' houses where the roofs had leaks that quickly deteriorated the rest of the homes requiring them to be demolished.

Ross asked for a motion to allow Kim to obtain quotes for the duplex roof remediation and replacement. Justin entertained. Mike seconded and all were in favor.

**Member Updates:**

Anthony informed members that he has been appointed to the Parks & Rec Commission. He expressed that he feels the FHA and Parks & Rec Commission fit together and Ross agreed. Ross asked members to consider being a liaison and attend other meetings if something is pertinent to the campus. Justin offered to attend Conservation Commission meetings. The group discussed other opportunities.

**Staff Update:**

Kim Chiappetta reported to the group that she has been able to resume the grant application that will install a permeable flex space on the campus.

**Adjournment:**

With no further business, Terry Sagedy motioned to adjourn, Anthony Filiato seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted, Kimberly Chiappetta, Clerk.*

*A recording of the meeting is available by contacting [Kimberly.Chiappetta@newtown-ct.gov](mailto:Kimberly.Chiappetta@newtown-ct.gov).*

↑ ↑  
Community Center

Potential  
Pedestrian  
Gate #2

ADA path for  
Gate option #1

**Potential  
Pedestrian  
Gate #1**

**Potential  
Double Gate  
Location**

## Attachment A















