



MINUTES

October 16, 2018

Meeting Room 3 - 7:00pm

Present:

Wes Thompson, Cramer Owen, Al Roznicki, Nick Roussas, Amy Dent, Bob Rau, Matt Mihalcik (arrived 7:11), Christal Preszler – Deputy Director Economic and Community Development, Kim Chiappetta – Economic and Community Development & Fairfield Hills Coordinator (clerk)

Public Participation:

None

Absent: Steve Gogliettino, Scott Orlando

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Amy Dent made a motion to accept the minutes from September 18, 2018. Al Roznicki seconded.
Motion passed with all in favor.

Chairman's and Vice Chairman's Reports:

Wes began by reminded members the importance of conversation and that members should provide their input.

Covered Bridge Apartments:

Wes informed members that Cramer arrange for tour of the Covered Bridge apartments at exit 9. Owner Tony Lucera gave the tour. Cramer added that the apartments had a great attention to detail. There are big rooms that does not feel like an apartment. The kitchen and entry areas nicely appointed, with good quality appliances. The group discussed the varying rent rates and the additional cost for use of the garage. Cramer added that for economy of scale, next they will pour concrete for two units but build one for the time being as was originally planned.

Educational Playcare:

Wes asked if anyone has toured Educational Playcare. Amy Dent said that she had the opportunity to tour the facility and was impressed. Christal added that they provide special menus include vegetarian options.

Business Council:



Wes told members that he and Christal attended the 2nd meeting of the Business Council. Some members of the Business Council said there needs to be a marketing plan to advertise the benefits of Newtown. Some of the suggestions are items already captured on the Newtown.org website. Another Council member felt restaurant activities for restaurant week lacked leadership. Wes explained that Kim and Christal visited restaurants and had posters throughout town. Another Council member wants a consolidated event calendar. Christal noted that she points people to the Newtown Bee's calendar as it is the most complete calendar available. Amy said that she has discussed with the Community Center Director, Matt Ariniello, that a shared calendar is necessary to ensure events are well coordinated. Christal has been raising awareness that there needs to be a centralized calendar and informed members of Civil Lift and how it is visually pleasing. She added that at this time there is no opportunity for the EDC budget to cover this cost. It has been acknowledged that it would be beneficial to have a Communications department for the Town who would manage a community calendar.

Wes continued that a store owner on the Business Council said there was a need to assistance in finding labor, whereas another store owner expressed that there was no issue for them. A similar request came up in a Livable Communities meeting Wes had attended where it was asked if there could be a way for seniors or retirees to find available work. Al Roznicki added that there is already allot of information for seniors regarding job opportunities. Another participant asked what are overlay zones and design districts and what are the benefits. First Selectman, Dan Rosenthal, offered to have George Benson attend a meeting to answer zoning related questions. The group then discussed the objective of the business council, and that the First Selectman will continue to chair the meetings for the time being.

Library Seminars:

The EDC is funding some of the seminars held at the Cyrenius Booth Library. Due to the fact that the library cannot share mail lists, Christal has created a separate sign-in sheet that asks attendees if there are interested in receiving communications from the EDC. After much discussion around the many sign-in sheets, Christal recommended that there be a single sign-in sheet with check boxes that allows the attendee to check only the boxes that they have interest. Amy offered to talk to the new research librarian to see if she would be amenable to make this change. Christal offered an option a check box to allow for people to select what they are interested in.

6 Commerce Rd.:

Wes updated members that he is working on an RFP to invite realtors to participate in Deep Brook (6 Commerce Rd.). This is to go out and solicit realtors to represent the EDC on a bid basis, and when the bids come in the EDC will vote on best candidate. He reminded members in the last meeting the Director of Public Works, Fred Hurley, attended and agreed to provide a high-level estimate of bringing utilities onto the Deep Brook West property. In the last meeting, Fred explained that the standard for



installing utilities is \$200 / linear foot, and that the gas line would be a separate cost. The group then discussed what has been done so far. Matt and Cramer have been working to expedite the approvals from the Army Core of Engineers. The next step is for Cramer and Wes to move forward and discuss with the First Selectman the option of contacting elected officials for assistance. In addition, Wes wants to obtain estimated costs for utilities and road, to be used to then determine the value of the property. The group then discussed their thoughts on the value of the property.

Fairfield Hills Master Plan Review Committee:

Wes asked Bob Rau to provide an update of the Fairfield Hills Master Plan Review Committee. Bob explained that every 5 years a committee is formed to review and possibility update the Master Plan, and that the committee has only had a few meetings so far.

Fairfield County Commercial Brokers Network April Luncheon:

The Fairfield County Commercial Brokers luncheon is being hosted by the EDC in Town on April 26th. Wes noted that Amy has attended meetings. The group discussed the format used by other towns who have hosted these luncheons. The group then discussed the possibility of having a bus tour that would take commercial brokers to available properties. If the budget could not fund a bus tour, then the group discussed other ways to present the Town such as video. The group also discussed who to invite as speakers. Amy recommended an RFP for restaurants to cater the luncheon, or another option of contacting the High School culinary class who caters for not-for-profits. Wes said that volunteers are needed for this work. If there are not enough volunteers available to do this work, then need to determine what is achievable. Amy recommended that the EDC could contact WestCOG for input on what can be presented.

Economic and Community Development - Staff Updates:

Grants:

Christal informed members that she and Kim are working on a Small Cities grant with Social Services, and a DECD grant for the clean-up of 7 Glen.

New Businesses:

The brewery on Church Hill is still expected to open this fall. There is also a new store opening in Highland Plaza. Matt added that the owner was at Newtown Day and was a really nice guy.

Christal has received inquiries from Sandy Hill Plaza regarding South Main Street. The group then discussed the opportunity for drive-throughs at food establishments and the feels regarding this around town.

Newtown Municipal Center
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT
www.newtown.org



Stratford Hall:

Work continues on the Stratford Hall building on the Fairfield Hills campus, and they are close to a final lease.

Restaurant Week:

Christal informed members that some restaurant owners expressed they were very busy, some were not. Matt said one restaurant had such a good response early in the week that she is continuing early week specials. Nick added that Newtown restaurants have gotten such good reputation he has heard about them in Bridgeport. Christal added that breweries will be helpful as they do not have their own kitchens

The Village at Lexington Gardens:

Lexington close to getting it's CO.

Member Comments and General Discussion:

None

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by Amy at 8:36 pm and was seconded by Matt.

Respectfully Submitted, Kimberly Chiappetta, Clerk