



## **Economic Development Commission**

### **MINUTES**

April 18, 2023

Newtown Municipal Center  
Shared Meeting Room 3  
3 Primrose St

**Present:** Peter McLoughlin, Barbara Snyder, Jeffrey Robinson, Steve Matiatos, Nick Roussas

**Absent:** Valerie Fallon, Bruce Walczak, Tracey Pertoso, Fran Pennarola

**Also Present** Kim Chiappetta – Economic & Community Dev & Fairfield Hills Coordinator (clerk)

### **Public Attendance:**

None.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

### **Public Participation:**

None.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

Steve Matiatos made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from March 21, 2023. Barbara Snyder seconded. Motion passed with all in favor.

## **Economic and Community Development - Staff Updates**

### **7 Glen – Heritage Trail project:**

Kim informed the Commission that the final design of the 7 Glen Road – Heritage Trail project has been sent to the State for approval. Weekly checkpoint meetings have been scheduled. As soon as approvals have been received from the State, project activities can begin.

### **Placer AI:**

Kim told members about a meeting she had with a representative from Placer AI who demonstrated their data tool which provides foot traffic data from mobile data. Jeffrey asked what this data could be used for. Kim explained that data could be collected during restaurant week to better understand where people are coming from to determine if the marketing is working, and where the town may want to extend the marketing of this event. In addition, the tool can be used to determine the companies that would be the best fit for commercial property locations in town. Barbara explained the benefits of online ticketing and the data it provides. The group continued to discuss the uses of the data. In the end Kim explained that the annual cost could not be justified and she asked the representative to reach out to the town if Placer AI decides to provide package levels for their product.



**Website:**

Meetings with Park group have started again. There has been great progress. The Business Directory categories are in the process of being updated so that pages can pull in the appropriate businesses and the maps can be built. Park Group said that once the categories have been updated, the website will be ready for testing.

**Great Ring Farm visit:**

Kim reminded the group of Mr. Ahuja's attendance at the last EDC meeting where he invited members to visit Great Ring Farm. Kim said that Mr. Ahuja has recommended a Friday in May, and she will share with the EDC members once the date has been finalized.

**Kimball Midwest:**

Kim updated the group that Kimball Midwest has shared that they are planning to hold a celebration sometime in the fall and will reach out to the town with the final date. She reminded the group that a ribbon cutting was never held.

**Affinity Esports ribbon cutting:**

The ribbon cutting for Affinity Esports is scheduled Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.

**eBlast:**

Kim said that the department has resumed sending out eblasts, and thanked Helen Muro for putting it together.

**Better Homes & Gardens Real Estate ribbon cutting:**

Jeffrey added that Brian Atherton is holding a ribbon cutting on Thursday, April 20<sup>th</sup> for his new business Better Homes & Gardens Real Estate – Commercial (BHGRE Commercial), and members are invited to attend.

**Fairfield Hills Mixed Use project:**

Barbara asked for an update on the Fairfield Hills mixed use project. Kim explained to the Commission that the First Selectman is planning to bring the change in the historic designation application to the Legislative Council after they have completed their budget meetings. Members discussed the buildings currently listed on the State Historic Register and what has to be added to the application. Barbara asked if there was an understanding of what the local objection would be to adding buildings to the historic designation. Jeffrey said that this is a change to what was originally presented to the Legislative Council. Barbara noted that adding buildings to the historic designation does not appear to have any negative implications.

**Municipal Center employee passing:**

Kim informed the group that Newtown's Tax Collector, Donna Saputo, passed away and that she is missed by all in the Municipal Center.



### **Member Comments and Questions**

#### **6 Commerce Update:**

Jeffrey updated the group that there was great opposition to the project in the Inland Wetlands meetings. Most of the objections were concerns of the run-off of water into Deep Brook and the potential for negative impacts. Barbara added that this would be an issue for any developer interested in the property. The developer said they will make design changes to try and address the stated concerns.

#### **Member Project(s) Update:**

None

#### **Business additions resident feedback:**

None.

#### **Vacant commercial space and Business Zones Observations:**

None.

#### **Other Commissions Observations:**

None.

### **Chairman & Vice Chairman Report/Comments**

#### **Strategic Plan for Economic Development:**

Barbara asked if there were any discussions with the First Selectman regarding the plan. Jeffery said that both he and Bruce Walczak had conversations with Dan and came out with the same understanding that the Strategic Plan is owned by the Commission, however, it is beholden on the Commission to work with the staff to put together a plan of action. Jeffrey asked Commission members to read the current version of the plan so that they are ready to work on the document in the next meeting. Barbara proposed that the next meeting be designated as a working session. Members all agreed.

#### **Adjournment:**

Jeffrey asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Barbara made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m. and was seconded by Steve. All members in favor.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Kimberly Chiappetta, Clerk*