



TOWN OF NEWTOWN
Fairfield Hills Authority
MEETING MINUTES

The Fairfield Hills Authority held a Meeting on November 23, 2020

This meeting was held remotely due to COVID-19 mandates and precautions.

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

Present: Michael Holmes, Walt Motyka, Andrew Philbin, Terry Sagedy, Ross Carley (joined at 7:10 pm), Brook Clark (joined at 7:22),

Absent: Renata Adler, Melissa Beylouni

Public Attendance: Zachary Reilly – on behalf of the Boy Scouts

Also Present: Christal Preszler, Kim Chiappetta (clerk)

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m.

Public Participation: None

Acceptance of Minutes:

Chairman Ross Carley asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the meeting held September 28, 2020. Mike Holmes entertained. Walt Motyka seconded and all were in favor.

Approval of 2021 meeting calendar:

Ross asked the clerk to give an overview of the proposed 2021 calendar.

Ross asked for a motion to accept the 2021 meeting calendar. Andrew Philbin entertained. Walt Motyka second. All in favor.

Chairman's Report:

Residential on campus:

Chairman Carley reminded members that adding residential as an approved use on the campus was approved in the referendum by 54%. The town is in the processing of drafting how the process may proceed. Ross asked Walt if he had anything to add. Walt told members that he's received phone calls from former FHA members who are asking if the original ordinance will still be followed. One section of the ordinance relates to how the FHA is a key driver in this process. It is the responsibility of the FHA to review proposals ensuring they comply with the Master Plan. Walt noted that Mike Holmes was also involved in this process in the past. Contractors would do a presentation and then the FHA would document their findings. An impact statement and financial analysis would be included. Walt described to the group a block diagram outlining the process and asked the clerk to attach the document to the minutes. Ross added that the responsibilities of the FHA had been changed and that funds were transferred to both Parks & Rec and Public Works for the maintenance of the campus. He explained that the First Selectman has included the FHA in many discussions regarding the campus. The draft process to add residential as an approved use begins with Land Use and then moves to the Board of Selectmen. At the end of the process, Land Use will forward a recommendation to Planning & Zoning who will vote on amending the zoning. Ross continued to note that the First Selectman has put allot of thought into the process and has been working with everyone.

Member Updates:

Brook Clark told members how she and Kim Chiappetta walked the location of the brewery and discussed natural options for providing them privacy. Brook gave an example of a natural border in front the handicapped parking to block the view of the empty building (Stamford Hall). She continued to tell everyone that she and Kim also discussed having pocket parks where someone could donate a plant, tree, picnic bench, etc. There are a couple of possible locations on the campus where this concept can be considered. Native shrubs and plants would be offered for purchase and each spot can have its own flavor. Brook referred members to look at the High Line Park website (located in New York City). The High Line provides many donation options that fall into various price ranges making it more affordable. Brook told the group that she has friends and clients who like to donate because it is affordable, and all the small gestures make a big difference. Ross and Brook discussed the FHA setting aside funds and how to begin the pocket parks. Donations can be opened up to options other than memorials. Walt cautioned to ensure the pocket park locations selected will not be changed in the near future, and noted it is easy to move a bench, but not a tree. Ross thanked Brook and Kim for the time they have spent.

Staff Update:**Budget:**

Christal Preszler told everyone that it is budget season. Town departments have been asked to hold their budgets and the FHA budget will hold at \$0. There is currently around \$50,000 in funds remaining and an additional \$27,000 is anticipated to be coming in over the next period.

Events & Activities:

Christal then asked members if anyone had seen the scarecrows displayed on light posts around the campus. She explained that this was a contest held by Parks & Rec and was well received on campus providing a socially distanced way to enjoy the fall season. Economic and Community Development is now working with Parks & Rec to hold the *Shop Small Decoration Crawl* where businesses are encouraged to decorate their store windows with festive displays. Businesses and organizations that do not have a window to decorate will be provided the opportunity to decorate an element on the campus such as a bench or tree. There will be Decoration Crawl map on the Newtown.org website where people can follow the map helping to drive them to shops. Both Economic & Community Development and Parks & Rec will be sharing information about the event including promoting businesses and organizations on social media.

Kim told Authority members that the Community Center and Chamber will be holding the Newtown Holiday Lights event in which people will drive through the campus to view light displays and will stop on D.G. Beers Blvd to view a holiday laser light show.

Sanitary Sewer Replacement - EDA Grant:

Kim updated the group on the campus sanitary sewer replacement project, (half of which is funded by an EDA grant). The architecture and engineering contract documents have been forwarded to the EDA for approval. Once approved the design phase can begin.

Adjournment:

With no further business, Walt motioned to adjourn, Andrew seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Kimberly Chiappetta, Clerk.

A recording of the meeting is available by contacting Kimberly.Chiappetta@newtown-ct.gov.

