



## TOWN OF NEWTOWN

Fairfield Hills Authority Minutes  
February 23, 2015 2 7:00PM  
Council Chambers, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown

**In Attendance:** Thomas Connors (Chairman), Michael Holmes, Renata Adler, Andrew Willie, Ross Carley, Curt Verdi and James Bernardi

**Absent:** Terry Sagedy **Also Present:** Christal Preszler (Grants Coordinator), Paul Fadus (EDC) Lynn Kovack (Clerk)

**These minutes are subject to approval of the Fairfield Hills Authority**

**Mr. Connors called the meeting to order at 7:03pm**

Approval of Minutes from December 22, 2014 meeting: Andrew Willie (M) Michael Holmes (2nd) all in favor

### **FH/Grants Coordinator Report (Preszler)**

- **Parent Connection update:** An RFP is being drafted to send out for people to do the construction. She just received final drawings on her desk today. We will be having a professional estimate with Curt and Verdi Construction. This way we have a good feel on what the project should cost. So when a bid comes in we will feel comfortable with it. Curt wanted to make sure there was no conflict of interest and stated he will not be bidding on the project.
- **Sandy Ground Playground update:** Christal stated she spoke with them back in December and they had no interest in Newtown or the FH location at this time.
- **Preston/Norwich State Hospital:** At an EPA seminar Christal met representatives from a similar Hospital like FFH which is a State Hospital in Preston out across the river by Mohegan Sun. She met with the people who have been working on the property and they have had it 4 years and have demolished 1.3 Million sq ft already. Hopefully we can learn a lot from them like remediation, demo, potential funding, etc. They are very willing to work and talk with us. Christal, George, Curt and Thomas went up on Friday and met with them. They presented their process and the people they work with. They have a similar group like FHA. They have had approx 16 people on the Preston Redevelopment Agency and they have people that go out and get funding. They have a grant writer and an assistant to the grant writer. They think they learned a lot on Friday and they were very informative. Curt didn't know if we can operate even close to how they operate. It is a board consisting of 10 people. All or most are retired and put in at least 40 hours a week. Similarities were that it is a CT State Hospital, same vintage, same era and same types of buildings. Their approach is a little different from ours. We first got some tenants like NYA, walking trails, playing fields, etc.

Their approach is get it clean first and then they are going to be selling the property. Their approach was to clean it up first to make it more marketable. We have done a little bit of each. Tom stated they have established a good relationship with the State in terms of obtaining money for a similar property. Preston had to buy the property. They have approx 62 structures to demolish and have done about 50 with the help from the State. So we went through the idea of how do we learn from them how to help us knock down some buildings. A structure to them can be a tunnel, oil tank, etc. So every structure is not a building. Very similar square footage thought and similar types of challenges we face like asbestos, remediation, etc. It as an economic development zone. Question is How do we improve a lot of goals and we can learn a lot from them. At the end of the day they want to sell to a developer. How do we knock down buildings and tap into the revenue to do so. We found them as great resources.

- **Grants update- DECD- Brownfields Assessment Grant:** Christal stated it has been awarded and letter is out and work can be started in weeks. 10 different structures have been looked at. The biggest buildings will be worked on first. 5 weeks from 1st building being looked at a report should be in. Things are moving along
- **Parks & Recreation update:** Christal stated they would like to present their Master Plan at the March Meeting. She stated after reading some of their notes she noticed another ball field will be going up around Glander Field by other fields. It will have to sit for a year to grow grass, etc. It will ready to play on in 2017. That was only other update

**Municipal Building Strategic Plan Committee update:** Curt has had no contact with them. Christal will get Curt contact information to move along

**Nursing School update:** Christal has not heard back from them at this time

**Permanent Memorial update:** Terry Sagedy will update at next meeting

**Member Items- Discussion and Action- Plymouth Hall preservation/mothballing update:** Ross stated that Highway has not facilitated the drainage and have not done the electric yet. So it looks like we are now looking at the Spring.

**Director of Planning Report- zoning amendment status:** Tom Connors said Housing is a dead issue at this time. This is not on the P & Z agenda nor is there a plan to put it on the P & Z agenda and something we do not need to consider. It would have allowed for 38 units and that P & Z would have to vote on and then we would have had to consider. With no true support for it and as a group we don't think we would be for but would have considered if they came forward. We can say from a FHA standpoint. We acknowledged P & Z has chosen not to take it up as an amendment, therefore we have nothing to do at this point. Bruce Walczak of Glover Avenue asked about the master plan and what the Commissions role is in it. After very long discussion and questions from Bruce our Commissioner Michael Holmes asked him to write a letter to the Commission and that the Commission will forward onto the Town Attorney for interpretation. There are a few things need to be clarified.

1. What is the binding element of the Master Plan and what is the Commissions role in it?
2. Clarification of Housing on Campus

Kelley from Johnson Drive spoke regarding what she thinks FH should be. She is glad the mixed use issue is not on the table at this time. She believes the Town pushed for the \$5000 report on housing. She has heard complaints about nothing being done at FH. She has worked in a Strategy

Fortune 500 company for many years. If a lot has been done she stated the Commission should take credit for it. A company will go to where creative talent is she stated. You offer tax incentives and spawn creativity. You need things to draw people to the site. People are social animals. There is a lot of data saying when you meet people you create that drive of bringing people together. You need things like the Cultural Arts and Parks and Rec to push for events(daily) to bring the people together up here. It is all about the Messaging she said!!!!

Paul Fadius of Sunset Hill stated he is on the EDC Commission. He stated the EDC would love to work with the FHA. FHA has CIP funds for \$10,500,000 to remediate & demolish buildings. He stated that Pat Llodra will be coming to the March meeting and think the Commissioners should come to the meeting.

### **Chairman's Report**

Tom wanted to outline what we should be as an Authority. We are a volunteer group. We spent lots of time listening and making decisions about how it should be and his feeling is the commission should try to be proactive in our endorsements and how this Campus should be used and no longer be a reactive body. We should say to citizens and along with the elected body what we feel this Campus is all about. It is not easy and should not be taken lightly. We decided to be part of this, we were not chosen. We have heard over years from every faction of our community on how it should be used and to say we believe as a body at this point what we think campus should be and that can be an evolving thought. We should endorse a planning working document stating here is what we want and what we believe and it can be changed. Tom broke down for Commissioners (see Attachment)

**a. Health Vest update:** Thomas spoke to Richard Kresh (CEO) and is putting in proposal. Should hear something in a couple of weeks.

**b. Community Center:** Going to hold open forums for Community Center update and Thomas Connors will be the liason for the Center

Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm Motion(Connors) Bernardi (2nd) all in favor

Attachment

Kindly submitted by Lynn Kovack

Working Document  
Fairfield Hills Authority  
Planning Endorsements

- *Campus Remediation and Maintenance*
  - *Demolition*
    - *Prioritize Buildings*
  - *Enhancement of existing structures/uses*
    - *Duplexes*
  - *Remediation*
    - *Economic Zone*
- *Community Support*
  - *Infrastructure*
    - *Electricity/Restrooms/Parking*
  - *Marketing*
- *Economic Development*
  - *Existing Offers*
    - *HealthVest*
  - *Proactive Marketing*
    - *Restaurant*
  - *Revenue Opportunities*
    - *Venue*
  -