

**Business Advisory Committee
Special Meeting, October 22, 2018
Newtown Municipal Center, Council Chamber
3 Primrose Street, Newtown**

***MINUTES ARE NOT FINALIZED UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BUSINESS ADVISORY
COMMITTEE***

Present: Chris Hottois, Flint Ridge Development; Sue Shortt, Shortt's Farm & Garden; Dan Sorrentino, Newtown Hardware; Erica Sullivan, Castle Hill Chocolate; Bruce Walczak, Relocation Consultants
Unable to Attend: Don Drapo, Jr., Curtis Packaging; Michele Hanson, Farmhouse Restaurant; Adam Richichi, Dental Associates, Carrie Swan, Black Swan Hearth & Gift Shop
Also Present: First Selectman Daniel Rosenthal, George Benson, Christal Preszler, Wes Thompson, and Helen Brickfield

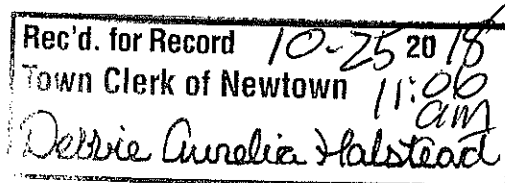
First Selectman Rosenthal called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

Acceptance of Minutes: Bruce Walczak moved to accept the meeting minutes of Sept. 24, 2018. Dan Sorrentino seconded. All in favor.

First Selectman Rosenthal shared a memo with the committee, from George Benson, relative to the Design Districts/Overlay Zones/Text Amendments (att.)

Restaurant Week Recap/Feedback: Christal Preszler said restaurants were encouraged to have specials during restaurant week. Advertising included banners, postcards, print media and a social media video, which received 8,000 actual views with 120 shares. The video was a sponsored and focused on Fairfield County towns, persons 23 years old and older. Erica Sullivan said the analytics can be drilled down further, saying it would be good to know which towns responded and could allow for capitalization on that information. Wes Thompson said clicks on the video only tells part of the story; it would be interesting to see how many clicks converted to a sale. Further discussion included restaurants collecting zip codes, either during reservation or at check out. Wes Thompson said tracking conversions are difficult without having patrons fill something out at the restaurant. Erica Sullivan said that credit card companies have clearing houses that will not allow for collecting credit card data but businesses can compare revenue year over year. Helen Brickfield said that Chamber member Sal e Pepe was very pleased with Restaurant Week this year, saying it was up from last year. First Selectman Rosenthal said it's important to know if the initiative is having an impact and how we can make it better. Wes Thompson said that the Economic Development can create a card to pass out to each restaurant. Chris Hottois said that what will help Restaurant Week is to have the restaurateurs take ownership of it. First Selectman Rosenthal will speak with Michele Hanson from Farmhouse. Bruce Walczak asked how long the town cultivates the idea before the restaurants take it over. He sees the towns role as seeding the idea and if the involved group doesn't express a larger interest then move on to another group. Helen Brickfield thinks Restaurant Week is very powerful across the state. The town can serve a role in promoting it but there needs to be restaurant buy in. Wes Thompson suggested looking in to ways to make it more of a multiplier for other businesses.

Community Calendar Discussion: Helen Brickfield said that Matt Ariniello applied for a community calendar grant; it was denied because it is believed to be something that the town should pay for. Christal Preszler has scheduled a meeting at the Municipal Center with Civic Lift to learn more about effective ways to communicate with the community. There is a merit in connecting government, business and civic communities. Helen Brickfield said there are anchor events that the community looks forward to each year and draw people to town. This could be a great way to market and advertise the town. First Selectman Rosenthal welcomed the business advisory committee to get involved.



Fairfield Hill Master Plan Review Discussion: First Selectman Rosenthal said that Fairfield Hills is governed ultimately by Planning and Zonings. The Master Plan gets reviewed every five years. Currently the group appointed to review is doing research and taking a look at infrastructure. There is a component of the campus that allows commercial use. George Benson said it is a planning document. The Review Committee is seeking input from the community; First Selectman Rosenthal encouraged the Business Advisory Committee to go to the Master Plan Review meetings to share thoughts and ideas.

Ideas/Suggestions: Helen Brickfield reported 4,000 people attended Newtown Day. There were 117,000 views on the Newtown Day Facebook page. There was a wait list of 10+ vendors and food trucks and there is already a wait list for next year. BD Provisions, a new business in town, gave out 600 samples and interacted with a lot of people. Roost Candles sold double at Newtown Day vs. the Newtown Arts Festival weekend. Demographics were late 20's, early 30's with strollers and early 40's with kids in sports uniforms. Feedback was that people were happy there was something going on in town, there were no parking issues, there were two shuttles, used more from Middle School than the high school.

There was discussion about whether it was an advantage or a disadvantage having so much go on in town on the same weekend. Helen Brickfield feels the variety was good and people liked being able to go from one event to another.

There was further discussion on a bus loop, shuttling residents from the Senior Center or the Middle School to shop or go to events around town.

Next Meeting Date: The next meeting is November 26

Adjournment: Having no further business report of Business Advisory Committee adjourned their meeting at 2:33 p.m.

Att: Design Districts/Overlay Zones/Text Amendments

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Marcinek, Clerk pro-tem

3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470
Tel. (203) 270-4276
Fax (203) 270-4278

George Benson



George Benson
Director of Planning

TOWN OF NEWTOWN
Planning Department

Date: 10/22/18

To: Dan Rosenthal, First Selectman

From: George Benson, Director of Planning

Re: Design Districts/Overlay Zones/Text Amendments

The Town of Newtown currently has three Design Districts; Sandy Hook, Hawleyville Center and South Main Village. Sandy Hook and Hawleyville parcels are zoned and developed according to regulations specific to the Districts and do not retain their original zone. South Main Village Design is a design district and also an overlay zone. In an Overlay zone the parcels retain their original zone and if approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission, the overlay zone can be applied to a specific parcel to facilitate development. For example the Exit Ten Overlay Zone was created to address a specific area and uses directly off the Interstate.

The Town also has the Fairfield Hills Adaptive Reuse Zone which is unique and was created to encourage re-development of the campus. This zone only applies to the Fairfield Hills Campus and was originally instituted to demolish some of the buildings and re-use others. The Master Plan for the campus has evolved due to escalating costs of remediation of the buildings for re-use and the lack of feasible uses for the larger buildings. The Master Plan is a planning document, not regulations and is separate from the Fairfield Hills Adaptive Reuse Zoning Regulations.

A Text Amendment to the Zoning Regulations changes the specific zoning requirements in an entire existing zone. For example the recent zoning amendment allows residential above commercial in the entire B-2 Zone. Amendments are made for various reasons including; correction of a previous text error, update the regulations to comply with State Statutes, update the regulations to comply with recent court decisions, add new uses that were not contemplated in the original zoning regulations and remove regulations that are outdated.