



MINUTES

December 18, 2018

Meeting Room 3 - 7:00pm

**Present:**

Wes Thompson, Cramer Owen, Bob Rau, Nick Roussas, Amy Dent, Steve Gogliettino, Kim Chiappetta – Economic and Community Development & Fairfield Hills Coordinator (clerk), Christal Preszler – Deputy Director Economic and Community Development

**Public Participation:**

None

**Absent:** Al Roznicki, Matthew Mihalcik, Barbara Snider

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.

Amy Dent made a motion to accept the minutes from October 16th, 2018. Cramer seconded. Motion passed with all in favor.

**Chairman's and Vice Chairman's Reports:**

**Review and approval 2019 meeting calendar:**

Wes Thompson explained to members that the 2109 meeting dates will remain as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month, and requested a motion to approve the 2019 meeting calendar.

Cramer made a motion to approve the meeting calendar for 2019. Amy seconded. Motion passed with all in favor.

**Nomination and Election of Officers for 2019:**

Wes informed members that the group had to elect officers for 2019. Wes requested a nomination for the Chair.

Bob Rau nominated Wes Thompson for Chairman of the EDC. Amy seconded. All in favor.

Wes then requested a nomination for the Vice Chair.

Amy Dent nominated Cramer Owen for Vice Chairman of the EDC. Steve Gogliettino seconded. All in favor.



As there were no other nominees for the open positions, all in favor of Wes Thompson for EDC Chairman, and all in favor of Cramer Owen for EDC Vice Chairman.

#### **SHOP Presentation – 7 Glen Road:**

Wes told Committee members that SHOP (Sandy Hook Organization for Prosperity) gave a presentation of their proposed Heritage Trail project to the Legislative Council in their November 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. (*See attachment in Legislative Council minutes dated 11/7/2018.*) This project includes the 7 Glen Rd property. Wes noted that Mike Burton and Chris Hottois did a tremendous job on the presentation which included artist renditions of an open pavilion containing the Museum in the Streets maps, a nicely landscaped parking area and seating areas which would connect to a trail system around both sides of the river. Wes reviewed with the Commission section of the proposal including an overview of SHOP, a concept for the 7 Glen Rd property and estimated costs which included a contribution from the Town. The Legislative Council did not take any action at their meeting, and noted that there was no money for this type of project. The discussion was tabled. The group then discussed if there were any opportunity for the Town to lease the property and the environmental issues. Wes clarified that he wanted members to be informed of this proposal in the event the EDC is asked to take a position on the project. Cramer noted that the Town has submitted a grant application for the property. Christal added that the Naugatuck Valley COG (Council of Governments) wrote the grant is the DECD Round 12 Brownfields grant application on behalf of the Town. She further explained that this DECD grant would require a full clean-up. The submitted grant request includes capping for the parking lot, clean-up and some ground water monitoring. Wes explained that it would be best to cap the area to ensure the soil is not disturbed being that it is so close to the water. Members discussed the option of leaving the property as is, and the Town's responsibility to maintain the property. Christal informed members that through a past CT Main Street grant a study had identified that one of the strengths of Sandy Hook is the river. The benefit to the entire area must be considered when reviewing this type of project. Nick noted that this would be a similar destination as the Fairfield Town Square which contains a gazebo in the middle and parking in the back. The group then discussed other private improvements in the area that are contributing to making Sandy Hook center a destination. Steve asked what the chances are that the Town is awarded the grant. Christal responded that she did not know and added that the COG did a great job on the application.

#### **Fairfield Hills – Economic Development:**

Wes began by letting members know that the Fairfield Hills Master Plan Review Commission has invited Christal and himself to a meeting on January 9<sup>th</sup> to express their opinions on the use of the Fairfield Hills campus for commercial and residential. Wes asked members for their input. He spoke of the current tenants and activity on campus, and the potential to generate some revenue for the Town. Amy



informed everyone that she was a member of the Fairfield Hills Authority (FHA) and a member of the commission who wrote the original Master Plan. She noted that everyone has forgotten that this property is the only viable parcel remaining in Town for a school building if one is needed in the future. The campus cannot be looked at in a vacuum; all potential future needs of the town must be considered. She agreed that commercial would be a good option, but residential was not an option at the time the property was purchased. Amy added that one thing which was very clear was that the Town did not want a construction that would scare the view. Large buildings, like ones that already exist on the campus, were acceptable but spread-out smaller buildings were not. Members discussed a compact footprint and impacts to the aquifer. Amy expressed that she would like to see the duplexes renovated due to the investment already made in that area. Nick asked if retail would really fit on the campus. Wes clarified that the town cannot afford the campus and that some type of development would generate tax revenue. Amy said that she did not believe retail would be viable, but service and restaurants would work. There is already scattered retail in town and there is not enough space to have a large enough variety on the campus without detracting from the other locations. Wes summarized that conceptually members would not object to housing, restaurants and light commercial. Wes noted that light manufacturing or a warehouse would not get approved. Amy asked that light industrial be defined as there had been scattered interest in Nano tech. Christal noted an option of a creative space in a duplex. The group then discussed the inability to sell portions of the property and that taxes cannot be collected. Wes asked if anyone would consider an educational center, and noted that although entities would not pay taxes they often donate to the communities where they reside. The group continued to discuss commercial options for the campus. Wes summarized that he will bring back to the FHMPRC that commercial is acceptable as long as it fits in with the campus design, and residential is acceptable as long as it's somewhat high-density.

#### **6 Commerce Road:**

Cramer explained to the group that the town was asked by the State DEEP for a tour of the property. Both DEEP employees were very concerned with water run-off. There was a pre-meeting where representatives of the State asked for documentation that had already been provided by the Town. Rob Sibley was able to provide all documentation to the state. Cramer explained that the tour went fine; however, the State was not able to say exactly what they were looking for and what needed to be done to obtain the final permits. Wes added that the people the Town had been working with in the State had retired, so these are two new people. Members then discussed access to the property.

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

##### **Fairfield County Commercial Brokers Network - Meeting Update:**

Christal told the group that Economic and Community Development has an intern from



the High School named Rohan who is interested in Marketing. Rohan has contacted the High School culinary group and confirmed they are available for the Fairfield County Commercial Brokers luncheon in April.

**Budget Request:**

Christal informed members that there are no major changes in the budget request from last year. One item that has been added is \$30,000 in brownfields for some clean-up of the 28 Glen Rd. This property contains barrels of contaminants. Efforts have been made over the years to obtain funds from different sources for the removal of barrels. The task will be to proactively remove barrels before they become an issues. Christal added that a common statement in many meetings note that the property owner must make efforts to keep properties safe and closed to prevent any foreseeable issues.

**Branding and Marketing:**

Christal told everyone that in January Economic & Community Development will begin working on updating marketing and consolidating websites so that things can be run more efficiently. First they will work with purchasing to create an RFP to get a marketing company to market the town more officially. The Fact sheet has been updated, along with the 6 Commerce Rd brochure. Christal highlighted that the Fairfield Hills campus has changed so updates are also necessary to the developer's package and maps. Update brandings, brochures. Efforts being made to create an environment where work can be done more efficiently.

**Member Comments and General Discussion:**

Amy noted that this was her last meeting, but she will continue to work on the video with Matt Mihalcik. She will be working on voiceover dialog that will play Steve offered to assist with dialog.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned by Amy at 8:38 pm and was seconded by Cramer.

*Respectfully Submitted,                      Kimberly Chiappetta, Clerk*