



MINUTES

August 20, 2019

Meeting Room 3 - 7:00pm

Present:

Wes Thompson, Nick Roussas, Cramer Owen, Barbara Snyder, Valerie Fallon, Al Roznicki, Matthew Mihalcik, Steve Gogliettino, Jeffrey Robinson, Christal Preszler – Deputy Director Economic and Community Development, Kim Chiappetta – Economic and Community Development & Fairfield Hills Coordinator (clerk)

Absent: None.

Public Attendance: None.

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

Public Participation: None.

Approval of Minutes:

Matt Mihalcik made a motion to accept the minutes from July 16, 2019. Al seconded. Motion passed with all in favor.

Chairman's and Vice Chairman's Reports:

6 Commerce:

Vice Chairman Cramer Owen told everyone the good news that the State DEEP approved the application for the driveway to the 6 Commerce Rd property. Director of Planning, George Benson said the Army Chore of Engineers may have to review the approval. The EDC can begin the evaluation and marketing process. The next step is to identify two qualified commercial appraisers to set a value. After that, the EDC will interview commercial sales people and determine who will represent the property. Barbara Snyder will be working with Cramer in reviewing responses. Cramer added that the committee will operate in an orderly and transparent process. The EDC will ensure there is an orderly process that will stand up to scrutiny of the Town's agencies, commissions and town residents. It will be an orderly and transparent process. Cramer added that the Hubbard Foundation will participate in the cost of the driveway which adds complexity to the process. The group then discussed the easement to the Hubbard property and the cost of the driveway.

Misc. cross commission activities:

Wes told members that he attended the Monday, August 19th Board of Selectman meeting where the Fairfield Hills Master Plan Review Committee (FHMPRC) presented their recommendations to update



the Master Plan. The presentation included the reasoning behind their recommendation to allow housing on the Fairfield Hills campus which came down to financials. A recommendation was made to allow for assisted living housing. Wes explained that from an economic perspective assisted living is dependent upon whether the business is for profit or not-for-profit. Wes encouraged everyone to vote in April. There will be multiple meetings held prior to the April vote to provide the public facts about the campus. Valerie Fallon asked if there is an analysis available on the condition of the buildings. Christal said there are assessments that were done via an assessment grant which documents hazardous materials and costs for demolition. Nick Roussas asked who would own the building and property. Wes gave an example of the brew pub where the town owns the building and land. There have been developments in other towns where the town retains ownership of the land and the developer owns the building. Christal added that the short answer is that we don't know. Wes explained to the group that the Fairfield Hills budget had been separated between other town departments so there is no specific known cost to maintain Fairfield Hills.

Project Review – South Main Street Commercial:

Wes began by providing an explanation of the project by reading the regulations that formed the EDC. Member Jeffrey Robinson worked with the Tax office to obtain real estate and personal property lists for South Main Street commercial properties. Jeffrey merged the data into a single spreadsheet which he also updated with additional information that he obtained. The group discussed the amount of work required to pull data into a workable format that provides quality data for analysis and reference. Wes noted that it may be necessary to focus on only major properties because of the amount of work required to create the spreadsheet. Jeffrey said that if the Tax department can create a report of addresses provided by the EDC, then they can identify properties that are vacant and available. Wes asked Jeffrey to follow-up with Tax to see if they could provide a consolidated report. Matt Mihalcik added that zoning can allow for varied businesses so EDC needs to consider all possibilities when focusing on an area. The group discussed various types of businesses and the taxes paid by each. Jeffrey ended by saying that he found the most valuable piece of the process was actually seeing what businesses exist and properties that are vacant.

Economic and Community Development - Staff Updates:

Municipal Table:

Christal Preszler began by telling the group that Chase Press is utilizing the Municipal Center table to display their business.

Branding:

Work continues on branding the Economic and Community Development department. Christal emailed RFPs to a small group for review, and the First Selectman and Technology Department Director are being kept in the loop.



Newtown – Sandy Hook Restaurant Week:

Newtown – Sandy Hook Restaurant week is scheduled for October 7th through 13th. Currently Kim Chiappetta is working on getting sponsors and artwork. Restaurant Week will be advertised in print and digital locally and in parts of southern Fairfield County, as well as the website and Facebook page. There had been talk at the Business Council meeting to capture where people are coming from, but this can only be done if time allows.

Grants & CIP:

Kim Chiappetta has applied for a grant with the EDA to replace the sanitary sewer system on the Fairfield Hills campus which is currently going through a review process at the EDA. Christal is working on wrapping up the CIP request. It was asked that amounts be kept the same for capital projects, but Christal will be asking for more funds as there are important projects pending. The Town received \$30,000 from the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) to perform some clean-up of the 28 Glen Road property. Christal will also be asking for available Town matching grant funds

Marketing:

The State Department of Tourism is asking towns for print information to stock at the re-opened welcome centers. Christal asked members to brainstorm and provide input as what they would like to see on a card that would be distributed at the welcome centers and the Big E in Massachusetts. Barbara mentioned that people driving through town have visited the dog park and this might be something to mention on the card. Valerie mentioned the town's breweries. Members discussed adding pictures of historic Main Street and Sandy Hook Village. Christal invited Commission members to be Volunteer Welcomers at the Big E CT Welcome Center and great people walking through the Connecticut building. Barbara recommended that the cards be available at restaurants during restaurant week.

New Business:

Christal ended her updates by telling everyone that Eye Care of Danbury – Dr. Sarah Baroody, moved to 164 Mt. Pleasant Road, and that having this comprehensive eye care clinic is a nice addition to the town.

Member Comments and Updates:

General Discussion:

No additional member comments or discussions.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by Valerie Fallon at 8:22 pm and was seconded by Matt Mihalcik.

Respectfully Submitted, Kimberly Chiappetta, Clerk