

The Fairfield Hills Authority Planning Committee held a Special Meeting on Wednesday, October 30, 2013 at the Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT 06470.

These Minutes are subject to the approval of the Fairfield Hills Authority.

Present: Michael Holmes, Thomas Connors, Ross Carley

Absent: John Madzula

Also Present: Renata Adler, Terry Sagedy and Elizabeth Stocker, Director of Economic and Community Development

Mike Holmes called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.

1) Public Participation: None

2) Newtown Parent Connection: Ms. Stocker reported that the Board of Selectmen reviewed the lease terms that were approved by the Fairfield Hills Authority on August 21, 2013. The Board was agreeable to the terms and encouraged the FHA to proceed with a lease for their approval. The Board received the financial impact statement (FIS) for the grant that will fund the renovation of Duplex #63. The FIS went to the Board of Finance and will go to the Legislative Council as well.

Ms. Stocker reported that the Town Attorney drafted a lease for Duplex #63 and it is under review. Once the Town Attorney completes the draft, it will be given to the Newtown Parent Connection's attorney and a lease will be forwarded to the Fairfield Hills Authority for approval and referral to the Board of Selectmen. A public hearing on the lease will be conducted by the BOS as required pursuant to State Statute.

3) Prospective Tenant Discussion: Mr. Holmes updated the committee on the various prospects that have approached the staff. A discussion followed.

A Chinese delegation expressed interest in using several buildings for a combination of schools. The main question that needs to be answered is whether or not the Town is open to having a teaching college on the campus.

The Committee discussed the following issues:

- Lease terms including the possibility of an initial term for 30 years at \$1 per year per building for those buildings identified by the FHA and EDC (Stratford, Newtown, Woodbury);
- The cost of demolition would likely be the starting point for a bond;
- Who would undertake the construction;
- Mass transit / private transportation is a likely need for a school versus private vehicles. This would reduce the need for parking lots;
- The economic impact (to community and region) in terms of a multiplier effect on jobs and business development;

- Evidence that there is further interest from Heroes Village for Stratford Hall. It was noted that the principals have not submitted the information that was requested by the FHA at their meeting of August 21, 2013 nor have they contacted the staff to further their interests.
- RFP under discussion involved three buildings.
- Other buildings are subject to additional negotiation.
- Stratford and the duplexes are readily available for renovation and it makes sense to prioritize them for reuse.

The Committee felt that the school idea has potential as there are likely to be many benefits to the local economy from such a use.

The Committee asked Ms. Stocker to invite the principals representing the private school / college to the November 20, 2013 FHA meeting to answer questions and to provide a better description of their vision for the project to the Authority. The investment team should provide them with examples from other projects they have done and to identify the specific requirements necessary for them to make a decision.

Ms. Stocker will follow up on the questions pertaining to infrastructure capacity and taxes to be collected from a private for profit school.

A second interest pertaining to **cultural arts** was discussed. **Ms. Stocker** noted that she attended the October 29, 2013 Newtown Cultural Arts Commission (NCAC) meeting. Dr. Michael Baroody also attended as the representative of the 12.14 Foundation. Dr. Baroody discussed his vision for a performing arts complex. The NCAC expressed a desire for a presence at the campus and approached the FHA in the past. **Ms. Stocker** discussed the beneficial aspects of a cultural arts presence on the campus.

Reuse of a duplex for a combination of cultural art uses such as an arts incubator, gallery or artist in residence have potential economic impacts and should be considered. It was noted that the NCAC expressed an interest in the reuse of Stratford Hall for a cultural arts center.

A motion to adjourn was made by **Thomas Connors**. It was seconded by **Ross Carley** and passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 9:45 AM.