

**The Fairfield Hills Authority held a Regular Meeting on Monday, January 27, 2014 in the Council Chambers at the Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT 06470.**

**These Motions are subject to the approval of the Fairfield Hills Authority.**

**Present:** Michael Holmes, Thomas Connors, Andrew Willie, Ross Carley and Terry Sagedy.

**Absent:** Jim Bernardi, John Madzula and Renata Adler.

**Also Present:** Pat Llodra, First Selectman; Elizabeth Stocker, Director Economic and Community Development, several members of the public and one member of the press.

**Thomas Connors** called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**1) Public Participation:**

• **Donna Monteleone, 4 Erin Lane, Sandy Hook, CT (Cultural Arts Commission)** – spoke, saying that two benches were sold as part of a fundraiser at the 2012 Cultural Arts Festival. In order to receive funds from the sponsored benches, a style of bench, different from the one usually used at Fairfield Hills, was chosen to be offered. **Mary Jane McNamara** (FHA Admin. Asst.) worked with Peter O'Brien and Sons to pick a less expensive bench. This bench is shorter in length than the usual bench, and does not have arms, but could be ordered in grey, similar to the usual benches. Costs were quoted for two 88-40PL benches as \$842 each for bench, shipping and plaque. **Ms. Monteleone** noted that Parks and Rec will install the benches at no cost. **Terry Sagedy** said he was willing to look at the benches as potential for the campus but noted that two styles of bench in the same area may not be appropriate. **Ross Carley** noted that a bench along the walkway to the Municipal Center may not be a suitable location for the benches. **Pat Llodra** said she had no concerns with the bench style, but to check with Land Use as to the suitability of the bench, and that if the bench was approved, that the Landscape Guidelines for FH would need to be changed. **Ms. Monteleone** noted that she had had a conversation with George Benson regarding the bench, saying that he said the bench could be ok if the FHA approves it.

**Thomas Connors** said the bench situation was now on the radar of the FHA and that the FHA will speak with **George Benson** and the FHA will need to decide if multiple bench styles should be offered.

**2) Andy Willie** motioned to approve the minutes from the December 10, 2013 meeting. **Ross Carley** seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**3) Chairman's Report –**

- a) **Opening Remarks - Thomas Connors** said it was a privilege for him to serve as the next Chairman of the FHA and congratulated **Jim Bernardi** on his work at the previous Chairman. **Mr. Connors** noted that the FHA was beginning a new chapter and it is clear from the activity on campus, that past efforts are beginning to bear fruit and the FHA was toward the latter phase of its existence. It is time to guide the FHA as a self-sustaining entity for the budget.
- b) **Master Plan / Mission Description** – one significant change to the updated Master Plan is that housing on campus can now be considered. This does not mean that it is agreed that housing should be allowed on campus, but that it can now be discussed. **Debra Zukowski (Master Plan Update Committee member), 4 Cornfield Ridge Road, Newtown** – said that community input

reinforced the vision for FH and reiterated **Mr. Connors'** point regarding housing on campus, and that it could be discussed in a publicized arena. Another point she made was regarding protection of High and East Meadow. **Ms. Zukowski** called for a definition of passive use for the properties. **Marge Kramer, 38 Huntingtown Road, Newtown (Conservation Commission)** – said that there had been damage from a 2013 bicycle race in High Meadow. She is concerned with the habitat for nesting birds. **Ms. Kramer** gave kudos to the groups who were marking the trails. **Pat Llodra** noted that the committee did an extraordinary job on the update, emphasizing FH as an integral place for social, civil and economic uses. **Mrs. Llodra** encouraged everyone to read the update. **Michael Holmes** thanked the committee for clarifying the uses of FH.

- c) **F'14-'15 Operating Budget – Thomas Connors, Pat Llodra and Elizabeth Stocker** met a while ago to discuss additional hours for the FHA Admin. Asst. They were in agreement that the increased hours were justified and decided to pay the additional salary from the FH Special Revenue Fund. **Mr. Connors** noted that the same fund would be used to pay for repairs and maintenance, incidentals, secure buildings, tree maintenance, invasive removal, etc on campus in the future, as the budget for FH maintenance would not continue into F'14-'15. FH will pay its own way via Common Area Maintenance charges from tenants. The CAM revenue goes to the Special Revenue Fund and will maintain the campus in the future. The FH budget is solely for the salary of the Admin. Asst. (\$20K). **Mr. Connors** noted that since the FH fund paid the salary of the additional hours, he would prefer to not share the hours with other departments, but understands that this may need to be the case. **Mrs. Llodra** noted that any revenue from permitted activities on campus would go to the general fund and that other town depts. maintain parts of campus and are paid through other departments. She also noted that **Elizabeth Stocker** has been very effective in obtaining grants for the campus. **Michael Holmes** asked if the special revenue fund still falls under the municipal ordinance for bids, etc. It was concluded that this is the case.
- d) **Plymouth Hall Feasibility Study – Thomas Connors** noted that the First Selectman would like to see a study done on Plymouth to see if it is a viable location for use as a Cultural Arts Center. He noted that Everwonder (everw?nder) has the location reserved until the April FHA meeting. After touring the facility and speaking informally with people, he feels that the structure is sound, but may require removing much of the interior of the structure. **Pat Llodra** said that a feasibility study would be two part: 1) is the reuse of Plymouth feasible? 2) what would it cost to mothball the structure for later use? She noted that perhaps a similar study for Newtown Hall could be done. **Mr. Connors** thought that the museum was doing a more demographic based study vs. a building feasibility study.

**Thomas Connors** motioned to approve an RFP for a feasibility study on the reuse of Plymouth Hall. **Andy Willie** seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- e) **Salvage Process – Thomas Connors** noted a request from **Mary Fellows** for use of items from Danbury Hall in ETH. He noted that a formal salvage process should be instituted as there are items in the buildings that could be sold. **Elizabeth Stocker** said that the timeframe for salvage of Danbury Hall items has passed as they are part of the bid package for work on the building. **Christal Preszler** will notify **Mary Fellows** of this information. **Pat Llodra** noted that if any of the contents were purchased with town funds, they need to be disposed of in a specific way and the money will most likely go to the general fund.
- f) **Current projects – tabled**
- g) **NYA / NVAA / Parent Connection/Community Center – Mr. Connors** noted that there is currently no formal interaction with tenants of FH and that relationships should be cultivated.

**Ross Carley** asked when it would be known if the Community Center would be located at FH. **Pat Llodra** said that it needs to be decided if what they want to do can be achieved at FH based on capacity and NYA relationship. A committee exists to review such items. The possible location would be on the site of the old Yale and Litchfield Halls. The Community Center will serve the needs of the town such as a senior center and pool. GE has not defined the specifics of the center.

- h) **Events** – A list of events for 2014 and was handed out, as well as a spreadsheet listing contact people for Town departments to be used in planning events on campus. Both will be available on the fairfieldhills.org website.
- i) **Revenue Opportunities** – Fees could be collected in the future for Land Use permitting of events on campus. This will be discussed further in the future.

#### 4) Director of Economic and Community Development report –

- a) **Mitigation Report – Danbury Hall and single family houses** – The State Historic Preservation requested that a report be completed with the history and uses of Fairfield Hills. A comprehensive report with pictures is complete and has been submitted. The project for Danbury Hall has been approved by the State to move ahead.
- b) **EPA Cleanup grant** – Nine bids were received for the abatement and demolition of Danbury Hall and eight houses. The bid amounts showed a wide range of prices, and were higher than was hoped for. The low bidder has been met with. The project may begin at the end of February or beginning of March 2014. A list of salvage items for Danbury Hall exists. The salvage process is a burden to the bidders. The fire department will burn the single family houses as part of a training exercise.
- c) **Proposals Update** –
  - a. **Frank Navone**, who wishes to build a bakery at Stratford Hall, plans on submitting a LOI in a matter of weeks.
  - b. **Chinese school** – no update since the time they presented to the FHA.
  - c. **Ice Rink – George Benson and Liz Stocker** met with some residents interested in building a rink at FH which would house a curling rink and regulation size hockey rink. They are working on non-profit status for the 85,000 sq. ft. facility which could cost \$10 million.

**Thomas Connors** noted that there are many good ideas, but not as much money to fund them all. Communication should be made by the FHA to clarify their role in bringing businesses to FH, as they are not here to fund ideas. **Ms. Stocker** noted that a committee of the FHA could help **Mr. Benson** and **Ms. Stocker** review ideas.

#### 5) Member Items – Discussion and Action

- a) **Campus tree** – Work is complete and an invoice is expected.
- b) **Building drawings** - **Ross Carley** reported that Plymouth Hall drawings (115) have been scanned. Many of the drawings are in poor shape. He is working to locate drawings for Newtown, Woodbury and Stratford. **John Poeltl** found many drawings in Canaan and the basement of the Muni Center. 1/10 of the budgeted money has been spent so far. **Pat Llodra** noted that the drawings could be helpful for Plymouth Hall.
- c) **Meeting recording** – If the selectman’s office is notified prior to a meeting in Council Chambers, a meeting can be recorded. This might be good for documenting specific proposals. The Town pays for such recording.
- d) **Land Preservation** – **Pat Llodra** said the FHA should understand the full use of West Meadow prior to approving it as open space. It was noted that wetlands will not be used in development. **Marge Kramer** noted that the original recommendation says that West and High Meadow are to be open space.

**f) Trails** – The second phase of FH trails are in the CIP for f'14-'15 and P&R volunteered to oversee the trail project.

**g) Memorial** – Nothing specific has been decided upon. FHA should have a relationship with the committee headed up by Kyle Lyddy. Fairfield Hills could be a possible location for a permanent memorial.

**h) New Business** – **Mrs. Llodra** noted that the utility poles on campus are coming down shortly as the utilities are being buried.

**Michael Holmes** motioned to move \$8,000 to the appropriate account for the administrative assistant's additional hours. **Andy Willie** seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**6) Adjournment** – **Michael Holmes** motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Terry Sagedy** seconded the motion, it passed unanimously and the meeting ended at 8:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Christal Preszler