

The Fairfield Hills Authority held a Regular Meeting on Monday, February 24, 2014 in Meeting Room #3 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, Andrew Willie, Renata Adler, Ross Carley and Terry Sagedy.

**Absent:** Jim Bernardi and John Madzula.

**Also Present:** Several members of the public and two members of the press.

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

**1) Public Participation:**

- a) **Kristin Chiriatti, Everwonder (everw?nder) Children's Museum** – noted that the fundraising feasibility study is continuing and is expected to be complete in the beginning or middle of April. **Ms. Chiriatti** is aware that the town is interested in understanding if Plymouth Hall would also be a good place for an arts venue and noted that while she is willing to share the facility and do what is best for the town, any changes in the original plans of the museum would impact the layout and financing of the venture. **Thomas Connors** noted that the FHA needs to decide if funds should be spent on a feasibility study for the use of Plymouth as an arts venue. Ms. Chiriatti noted that the feasibility study for the museum was done by an architect and was property of that firm.
- b) **Art Museum – Terry Sagedy** gave an update regarding interest by an art group in town for Plymouth Hall, Stratford Halls and possibly a duplex. A group will tour the buildings on Thursday.
- c) **Newtown Ice Arena – Paul Esposito, head coach NHS ice hockey team** – noted that a group has had a goal of building an ice arena in Newtown for many years. **Mr. Esposito** discussed the many benefits of having an arena in town, including reduced transportation costs for the high school team (approx. \$700 / day) and activities that would interest most segments of Newtown's population. The plan is for the facility to apply for 501 ( c)3 status and the organizers are confident that the ice time can be filled. The arena would be approx. 85,000 square feet. Drawings were shared with the FHA. **Kris Kenny, 6 Concord Ridge Road, Newtown** stated that the group needs a location in order to go after funding for the arena. He also noted that technology exists that allows pools and ice rinks to work together for heating and cooling and may reduce annual costs by \$100,000 - something to be considered if the Community Center were to be housed at FH. **Mr. Kenny** noted that curling, hockey, figure skating, recreational hockey teams as well as hockey specifically for disabled players were some of the activities that could take place in the arena. **Phil Clark, Claris Construction** noted that the facility could use shared parking and would need approximately 150 spots.

**Thomas Connors** and the FHA noted that this seems to be in line with the FH Master Plan and that they see no objections to the arena locating at FH, and that it would be a good addition to the campus. Discussion took place regarding the best way to show support for the project without specifically reserving the area of Norwalk Hall and the single family

houses for this project. **Mr. Connors** will follow up, perhaps with the town attorney, to see what the best way is to show the FHA support. The FHA gave permission to **Mr. Clark** to use the drawings for marketing purposes of the arena, so long as no specific spot was named on the materials. **Terry Sagedy** suggested that a feasibility study be done on the project as it would assist the group with fundraising efforts. **Andrew Willie** asked the group to return with updates on the project. **Ross Carley** asked the group to send updates to **Christal Preszler** for distribution to the FHA.

**2) Review / Action on minutes - Michael Holmes** motioned to approve the minutes from the January 27, 2014 meeting. **Andrew Willie** seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**3) Chairman's Report –**

- a) **Opening Remarks**
- b) **Master Plan / Mission Description** – a link to the FH Master Plan will be sent to **Renata Adler**
- c) **F'14-'15 Operating Budget** – **Thomas Connors** reiterated that there will be no budget for the FHA. Expenses will be paid through the Special Revenue Fund.
- d) **Plymouth Hall Feasibility Study** – **Thomas Connors** stated that an RFP may be sent out to find the cost of doing a feasibility study on the reuse of Plymouth Hall. However, the study done by Everwonder (everw?nder) museum, if shared with the town, could eliminate the need for another study.
- e) **Salvage Process / Auction** – **Thomas Connors** noted that since funds raised by selling items within Fairfield Hills would go to the town's general revenue fund, that perhaps the FHA isn't the group that should be responsible for the sale of the items. The FHA would like to retain oversight of the process, and all requests for salvage of items at Fairfield Hills should come through the FHA.
- f) **Current projects / Update / Action** – **Ross Carley** gave an update on the document scanning project being done by the FHA. Floor plans continue to be scanned and are being shared with parties interested in various buildings on campus.
- g) **NYA / NVAA / Parent Connection/Community Center** – No update
- h) **Events** – Links are now available on the town website as well as FairfieldHills.org, listing upcoming events on campus, as well as linking to the event or sponsoring organization's website.
- i) **Revenue Generation** – Events on campus could generate revenue for the FHA especially if the FHA focused on being a high class venue. Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of having more facilities and a dedicated location on campus for events.
- j) **FHA Q&A** – no update
- k) **Appointment of clerk** – **Ross Carley** motioned to nominate **Christal Preszler** as the clerk of the FHA. **Michael Holmes** seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**4) Director of Economic and Community Development report – given by Thomas Connors**

- a) **EPA Cleanup Grant - Danbury Hall and single family houses** – The project is moving forward. Bids received may have been higher than anticipated.
- b) **Proposals Update** –
  - 1. **Chinese University** – The group is still interested in FH. A recent email noted that the project was planning to house grades 7-12 on campus. This proposal differs from the original proposal. **Andrew Willie** asked if boarding was feasible for this project as mass transit doesn't exist in town, as well as potential congestion with so many students and projects that are happening on campus. Discussion ensued regarding the project, and

the difference in focus from the original proposal. **Michael Holmes** suggested that the FHA planning committee should come together to vet the proposal and discuss with **Elizabeth Stocker**.

2. **Frank Navone** – is still working on a proposal for Stratford Hall.

c) **CAM Charges** – no discussion

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

a) **Campus tree** – Work is complete

b) **Building drawings - Ross Carley** – noted that the FHA should determine what to charge for printed copies of building drawings.

c) **Meeting recording – Renata Adler** was pleased to hear that meetings in Council Chambers can be recorded if there is a particular reason to do so and advance notice is given. **Ms. Adler** wants meetings recorded for archive purposes.

d) **Cultural Arts Memorial Benches – Andrew Willie** said that a lot of time was spent developing a plan for FH and that a second bench should not be introduced. There was general agreement with this idea. **Christal Preszler** will research a smaller version of the current bench. Discussion ensued as to whether Parks and Rec would have funds available for helping to pay for the benches.

e) **Land Preservation** - no discussion

f) **Trails** – There is a trail meeting on March 5 that **Andrew Willie** will attend.

g) **Memorial** – No discussion

h) **New Business – Ross Carley** noted that Plymouth Hall has always had sump pumps in the basement to control water infiltration. It may be worthwhile in the spring to pump the basement and see what is required to run sump pumps again to help preserve the building.

**6) Adjournment – Michael Holmes** motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Andrew Willie** seconded the motion, it passed unanimously and the meeting ended at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Christal Preszler