

The Fairfield Hills Authority held a Regular Meeting on Monday, March 24, 2014 in the Council Chambers at the Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT 06470.

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

Present: Thomas Connors, Michael Holmes, Jim Bernardi, Andrew Willie, Renata Adler, Ross Carley and Terry Sagedy.

Absent: John Madzula.

Also Present: Elizabeth Stocker, Director of Economic and Community Development and two members of the press.

Thomas Connors called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

1) Public Participation:

None.

2) Review / Action on minutes – Renata Adler motioned to amend the minutes by changing any reference to a ‘planning committee’ to a ‘project review team’. **Jim Bernardi** seconded the motion and the amended minutes passed unanimously.

3) Chairman’s Report –

- a) **Opening Remarks** – There has been a lot of activity with the buildings in the past month including interest by the 12/14 Foundation in Plymouth Hall, a restaurant inquiry into Stratford Hall and the News Times to research an article. It was noted that **Ross Carley** has been a tremendous asset in showing the buildings. **Renata Adler** asked about the inquiries by the Chinese University. **Elizabeth Stocker** noted that it is not clear if the separate inquiries are related.
- b) **Statement of Support** – A letter to show some level of support to inquiries which meet the guidelines of the Master Plan should be drafted so interested parties can then take the letter to investors showing that they meet the requirements to be located on campus. Discussion took place as to what the appropriate wording should be. Two ideas were believed to be helpful in such a letter 1) the group’s idea meets the Master Plan requirements; 2) it is a proper use of the campus. **Renata Adler** suggested that the wording say ‘the idea was discussed and not rejected’. **Tom Connors** will speak with **David Grogins** regarding such a letter and will seek **Mr. Grogins’** advice as to what to name said document. **Mr. Connors** will also speak with **Mr. Grogins** regarding the proper way for the FHA to communicate outside of meetings so as to not violate any rules or laws.
- c) **Plymouth Hall feasibility study** – **Pat Llodra** had asked the FHA if they might fund a feasibility study to see if it is worth keeping the structure. Multiple parties are interested in the facility. Being a large building, it may make sense to have multiple occupants. It was already approved to put out an RFP to see what it would cost to have a feasibility study done. **Elizabeth Stocker** said that she thought it could cost \$20K to have a study done based on some grant information she had seen. Discussion ensued as to whether the FHA should fund a study. **Ross Carley** asked if town engineers could give an opinion as to whether the structure was sound. **Andrew Willie**

motioned to not fund a feasibility study. **Terry Sagedy** seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- d) **Salvage Process** – It was confirmed that if anyone has interest in salvage items, they should contact the FHA directly.
- e) **Current Projects** - no discussion
- f) **NYA / Ambulance / Parent Connection / Community Center**
 - a. **Ambulance Facility** – is moving along and could be completed by August.
 - b. **Parent Connection** – continues to move forward
 - c. **Community Center** – could end up at FH. **Ross Carley** asked if the GE funded building was intended to be a community center or a senior center. He noted that in the past, the seniors were not interested in sharing a facility with others. **Andrew Willie** noted that it may be a community center with a senior center in it.
- g) **Event Spreadsheet** – will be shared with local media and NYA for addition to their calendars.
- h) **Revenue Opportunities** – revenue generating opportunities may exist with holding events on campus. There was also recent interest from an ad agency for a photo shoot on campus. **Thomas Connors** noted that since the FHA is now a self-sustaining entity, revenue generating opportunities should be looked into.
- i) **FHA Q&A** – The opportunity to create a FHA Q&A, similar to other Q&A documents, exists. FHA members should communicate ideas for use in a published document.
- j) **Charter Revision** – A charter revision for the Town’s charter is being done. Suggestions for changes should be noted if any FHA member has any.
- k) **Ice Arena – Letter of Intent**- Any LOI regarding usage of FH should be addressed directly to the FHA and should be voted on by the FHA as to whether the letter should be accepted.
- l) **Special Revenue (salary)** – It was summarized that an incremental amount to be paid to the FHA Admin. was necessary and had been approved.
- m) **Heart911** – has interest in a duplex at FH. The group, formed after 9/11, has expressed interest in building a wellness center at FH for local first responders. A letter of intent is necessary from the group.

4) Director of Economic and Community Development report –

- a) **EPA Cleanup Grant - Danbury Hall and single family houses** – **Elizabeth Stocker** noted that she recently sent a letter to the Purchasing Authority to recommend the project be separated into two phases: 1) single family house abatement and burning of the single family houses by the fire department; 2) Danbury Hall abatement and demolition. This will allow the project to move forward while it is determined how the plaster from Danbury Hall will be disposed of. It is below level for hazardous waste, but final disposal method needs to be determined.
- b) **Proposals Update** –
 - 1. **Frank Navone** – has received cost estimates that are above what he expected. It is unlikely that he will move forward with the proposal to renovate Stratford Hall. Discussion took place as to whether the FHA provides a list of architects to parties interested in renovating buildings on campus, since Claris is often the company chosen by interested parties. Discussion ensued that Claris’ name may come up due to the prevalence in Google searches and that they have done much work for not for profit organizations. The FHA generally agreed that the Authority should not provide a list of possible vendors.
 - 2. **Microbrewery - Stratford Hall** – Discussion took place regarding the suitability of a microbrewery on campus. It was generally agreed that if it was tied to a restaurant, it was an acceptable use.

3. **CAM Charges – Ms. Stocker** stated that she was still waiting to receive information regarding expenses to maintain campus. It was noted that the NYA pays \$35,000 per year in CAM charges. It is expected to collect approximately an additional \$5000 a year when the Ambulance facility and Parent Connection gain their certificates of occupancy. **Ms. Stocker** noted that wording in leases should be such that it is clear how CAM charges will be charged.
4. **New items** – an application has been made to the CT DECD for a grant for a hazardous materials assessment for FH buildings. This will estimate what remediation costs will be for FH buildings.

5) Member Items – Discussion and Action

- a) **Campus tree – Elizabeth Stocker** reminded the FHA that the tree warden suggested that the FHA should budget approximately \$10K/ year for campus tree work.
- b) **Building drawings - Ross Carley** – reported that he continues to locate drawings of FH buildings and the scanning project remains under budget.
- c) **Cultural Arts Memorial Benches –**
 - 1) **Cultural Arts Bench** - Prices for alternate benches were reviewed. **Terry Sagedy** will take the information to the Cultural Arts Commission for discussion.
 - 2) **Howard Family Memorial Bench** – The family wishes for the bench to be in the area of Shelton House. **Jim Bernardi** motioned to approve placement of the bench in location 1) in the vicinity of Woodbury Hall or 2) In the vicinity of Plymouth Hall; based on a recommendation by Parks and Rec. **Terry Sagedy** seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- d) **Land Preservation** – Discussion took place as to open space designation on campus.
- e) **Trails – Andrew Willie** reported that he attended trails meeting regarding the next phase of trails on campus. **Elizabeth Stocker** stated that the \$5K estimate for plan revisions seems high. Specifics regarding making the area of the trail near Cochran an option based on available funding were discussed since this area will be under construction and any trail work could need to be redone in the future.
- f) **Memorial – Thomas Connors** noted that a committee has been formed to look at having a permanent memorial for the 12/14 tragedy. **Mr. Connors** noted that the FHA could at some point be asked if FH would be an appropriate location for such a memorial. **Terry Sagedy** will be the liaison from the FHA to the memorial committee.
- g) **New Business – Terry Sagedy** asked if it would be possible to incorporate Stratford Hall into the September Cultural Arts Festival to be used as a place for an exhibit. Discussion took place regarding the need for insurance and amenities. It was agreed that use of a building would be acceptable if adequate insurance could be obtained for the idea. **Elizabeth Stocker** suggested that a building inspector be contacted.

6) Adjournment – Andrew Willie motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Jim Bernardi** seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 8:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Christal Preszler