

The Fairfield Hills Authority held a Regular Meeting on Monday, September 22, 2014 in 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, Ross Carley and Terry Sagedy

Absent: Renata Adler and Andrew Willie

Also Present: Bruce Herring, Newtown Volunteer Ambulance; Richard Kresch, MD, President and CEO US HealthVest; Randy Eigen, 1st VP CBRE; George Benson, Director of Planning; Jean Leonard, EDC Chairwoman (part of meeting); and Christal Preszler, Planning Dept. Grants and FH.

Tom Connors called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

1. Public Participation :

a. Newtown Volunteer Ambulance – Bruce Herring:

- i. presented the final landscape map for the facility. It includes two new trees to replace the three that were removed from near the entrance of the facility. Another tree on the property was struck by lightning. The Certificate of Occupancy is pending. They will fully move in in a couple weeks. The communication equipment has been tested.
- ii. also presented a picture of the sign /wording that they would like to place above the entrance of the facility. These bronze cast letters would be approximately 15 square feet which is above the 12 sq ft that is in the FH regulations. Jim Bernardi motioned to endorse having the NVA move forward to the ZBA to amend the sign allowance for this instance. Michael Holmes seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- iii. invited the FHA to the grand opening for Town Boards and Commissions that is taking place on October 18.

- b. HealthVest facility proposal – Richard Kresch** discussed plans for a psychiatric hospital at Fairfield Hills. His company (hospitals in Georgia, Washington, Illinois and other locations) acquires distressed facilities or develops new ones. Locations are chosen based on areas underserved with ratio of current #beds(<29) / 100,000 people, with high utilization (65%+) of current beds; areas with patients travelling out of area or not receiving care. They apply for a Certificate of Need from the State. In addition to the general population, they serve children, adolescents, active duty armed services; have a one faith based program in Texas; holistic program at another facility that supplement the traditional treatments. Facilities have ICUs. All insurance accepted, as well as uninsured. The majority of patients stay approx. 8 days and 98% are voluntary patients. Services at FH could be geriatric and youth as well as ICU in addition to others. Limited outpatient services. 100-125 beds, 60K-70K square feet – with a single story facility preferred. They are looking for 4-5 acres in the area of the single family house / Norwalk Hall area.

The first proposal is to lease the property, the second is to purchase the property. It was noted that the second proposal (purchasing) is not an option at FH.

Jim Bernardi asked about the security of the facility and if patients would come directly from courts. It was discussed that the facility is secure, including the outdoor area for patients. **Dr. Kresch** noted that most of their patients do not intend harm to others and are not violent and that this is not planned to provide correctional psychiatry – but would be similar to Yale NH, Waterbury Hospital or Silver Hill.

Dr. Kresch likes the Fairfield Hills location, the setting, central location, easy access and beauty of Fairfield Hills. The application is site specific due to the certificate of need. A site is necessary to calculate bed needs in the area. He also noted that there would be a feel for if the certificate of need would be received and they would begin design and engineering in advance of the certificate. Construction would take 12-18 months – with the whole process taking 2-2.5 years. Traffic impact would be light, 150-180 employees over three shifts, peak employee shift being during the day (50-60 people). Some patients would arrive by ambulance, but no siren. 250 admissions per month, 24 hours a day. Some day outpatient programs would be available. There are supervised visits mainly in the evening. Schooling for children could be on site.

Terry Sagedy noted that the NYA has approximately the same footprint as the proposed facility.

George Benson asked why they requested 200 parking spots when there would be fewer people at a time there. **Dr. Kresch** stated that these points are discussion points and municipalities have differing requirements for parking. This is the only site in CT that they are looking at currently. **Dr. Kresch** noted that the lease would be contingent on receiving the certificate of need from the State. There would be some community involvement, providing programs the community needs as well as a local board of directors. The company's current facilities are often the safest areas of town in the towns they are in.

George Benson asked how the lease rates were decided. It was determined that they are based on land values. **Terry Sagedy** asked if HealthVest was willing to consider looking at a piece of property that currently has a building on it. Discussion ensued and while reusing a current building is not likely to accommodate the needs of the buildings HVAC system requirements, and the load bearing walls would be problematic, they are open to discussing options where current buildings could be taken down and the facility could be built on that property. Further discussion needs to take place regarding the possibility of removing a building and who would be responsible for taking the building down. **Dr. Kresch** noted that by placing the facility along Mile Hill South, less traffic would enter FH campus. **Ross Carley** noted that by taking Norwalk Hall down as the next building on campus, it would open up that area for either this proposal or another economic development opportunity.

Mr. Carley asked if there would be taxes received from the facility. **Dr. Kresch** noted that this is a for profit facility.

Tom Connors noted that the next steps would be for HealthVest representatives to meet with **George Benson** and **Christal Preszler** to further discuss details of the proposal.

2. Review /Action on minutes:

- a. **August 25 regular meeting:** Jim Bernardi motioned to accept the minutes. Ross Carley seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- b. **June 23 regular meeting:** Ross Carley motioned to accept the minutes. Terry Sagedy seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- c. **August 28 special meeting:** Jim Bernardi motioned to accept the minutes. Terry Sagedy seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Chairman's Report:

- a. **Zoning amendment** – mixed use at FH. No update.
- b. **Discussion and Action – FHA – Christal Preszler** noted that there is need for an additional \$20,000 for the Danbury Hall project in addition to the EPA Grant, CIP and special appropriation funds. Jim Bernardi motioned to approve \$20,000 from the FH Special Revenue account to fund the project. Michael Holmes seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- c. **CIP** – no update

4. Director of Planning Report (Benson):

- a. **FHA lease terms update** – the terms are being updated to address different scenarios of development on campus (building renovation, removal or building on empty land). This is no longer being called an RFP.
- b. **EPA Cleanup of Danbury Hall – Christal Preszler** noted that the abatement of Danbury Hall is complete and that the demolition permit is in progress. Demolition is slated to begin on 9/24 with the removal of wood from the structure. The entire demolition process should take approximately one month.
- c. **Parent Connection** – Grant paperwork has been received from the State. Results of TRC testing of the roof, windows and porch will be available in approximately a week.
- d. **DECD Brownfields Assessment Grant – Russell Bartley** has sent a scope of work to the DECD for approval. If approval is granted, a vendor can be chosen from the DAS list and work on the project can proceed.
- e. **Streetscape planning** – The funds from the FH infrastructure grant have been spent. This is a phased project with Washington Circle paving being priority. Next is the area from the entrance of FH to the four way stop – including sidewalks, lighting and landscaping. The last phase would be additional sidewalks down Keating Farm Road and curbing by the soccer field.

5. Grants / Fairfield Hills (Preszler):

- a. **Engineer House update** – the interior of the engineer's house will be painted shortly. It is priority to get it done as it is peeling and the lease term is short, so the tenants will benefit from the work.
- b. **Everwonder (everw?nder) Museum update** – Kristin Chiriatti was contacted and the group is no longer actively pursuing Plymouth Hall as a location.

6. Member items:

- a. **Plymouth Hall preservation** – Ross Carley noted that the basement is ready to be pumped once electricity is available to the building.
- b. **Sandy Ground Playground update** – no update.

- c. **2014 Newtown Cultural Arts Festival review – Terry Sagedy** stated that the event was fantastic and thanked the Town for its assistance in setting it up. The wine and beer garden made money for the festival.
- 7. **Adjournment – Ross Carley** motioned to adjourn. **Jim Bernardi** seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with the meeting ending at 9:20.

Respectfully submitted by Christal Preszler.