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TOWN OF NEWTOWN

Fairfield Hills Authority

Draft Minutes March 23, 2015 7:00 PM

Council Chambers, at the Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT 06470

In Attendance: Tom Connors (Chairman), Michael Holmes, James Bernardi, Ross Carley, Terry Sagedy and Andy Willie

Absent: Renata Adler, Curt Verdi

Also in Attendance: Ed Marks, Chairman of Newtown Parks & Recreation; Amy Mangold, Director Parks & Recreation; George Benson, Director of Planning, Newtown Land Use Agency; Randy Eigen, Real Estate Agent; Christal Preszler, Grants Coordinator, Planning Department, Fairfield Hills; Patricia Llodra, First Selectman.

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

Mr. Connors called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. Public Participation: None
2. Parks and Recreation Report for Fairfield Hills (Mangold/Marks): Ed Marks presented on the Fairfield Hills Recreational Master Plan from a historical perspective. Mr. Marks provided a written and power point presentation (attached hereto) on Park & Rec's management of the town's needs for fields, refinement of the plan in 2012 and future plans for executing the Master Plan.

Mr. Ross inquired about the number of existing fields. Mr. Marks indicated that there are approximately 40 fields, including those utilized by schools. School fields are getting more difficult to maintain due to schools limiting access during the day.

It is hard to estimate how many fields will be required in the future. Athletics that used to be one season are now playing multiple seasons. Most plans are long term. A discussion was had about priorities for demolition based upon community and athletic organizations' needs for fields, facilities, parking, and truck access for events, as well as the ability to charge fees for use of campus amenities if we establish power sources, bathrooms and adequate parking.

Amy Mangold presented on progress on the trail network. Parks & Rec presented to FHA on October 18, 2013 regarding a proposal for a trail system on the FFH campus. Pursuant to recommendations of the FHA and approval of the Board of Selectman, Board of Finance and Legislative Council, Park & Rec have secured CIP funding in the amount of \$300,000.00 LRM has submitted the lowest bid - \$291,000.00 to complete the project. Phase 2 of the project will be a great benefit to allow more people to enjoy the land by adding 4200 linear feet of a 10' wide concrete trail around the outer boundary of the campus, for pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorized wheeled traffic. The trail will curve inward approaching the entranceway to the

campus at Wasserman Way in order to avoid crossing at that major intersection. Phase 3 is included in the 2016/17 CIP. A discussion was had regarding other amenities on the trail including eventual fitness stations, donated benches and dog stations. Mrs. Mangold would like to plan an event to celebrate the trail's completion.

3. First Selectman's Report: Pat Llodra reported on the potential Community Center in the event the concept passes a referendum scheduled to be held with the budget vote. Mrs. Llodra shared a document entitled "Newtown Community Center- a multi-generational activity center" (attached hereto) that contains a Vision Statement and 3 phased approach to implementing the concept approved by Planning & Zoning on September 20, 2007. Mrs. Llodra explained that the potential community center would be 35,000 sq. ft. with 10,000 sq. ft. designated as space for seniors. The current space at the Senior Center is only 4000 sq. ft. and the poor design of the space makes it very difficult to program. The proposed aquatics component would include 2 pools: a zero entry pool and a lap pool. The building site would be at the site of Litchfield Hall to the right of NYA, permitting a connection in Phase 2 in the event a decision was made to proceed beyond Phase 1. No design decisions will be made until we know if we have a project. Mrs. Llodra pointed out that the proposal for a community center is consistent with the Master Plan's goal of establishing a recreational and creative outlet for all citizens. In response to Andy Willie's question about whether the facility was intended just for Newtown, Mrs. Llodra pointed out that many seniors belong to other senior centers because they have facilities that better meet their needs and they are willing to pay a higher fee. We could have a non-resident fee structure for the community center and pools.
4. **Approval of the Minutes from February 23, 2015 meeting: Michael Holmes moved for approval; Andy Willie seconded the motion. All in favor.**
5. Chairman's Report (Connors) FHA is on the cusp of a very exciting time in the development of our campus.
 - a. US HealthVest update - LOI regarding mental health and substance abuse treatment facility for a yearly rent of \$68,000.00 (discussion and action) . Randy Eigen - Real Estate Broker represents Dr. Richard Kresch who wishes to engage in a 99 year lease in area of the existing Norwalk Hall Mr. Connors inquired how the proposed rent was calculated. Mr. Eigen responded that after sharing the cost of remediation and demolition, the calculation was based upon what Dr. Kresch can afford to pay after his share of the improvements to the land. The proposed lease allows for 10% increase every 10 years. Pre-construction costs by TRC were deemed low and unrealistic by Dr. Kresch's appraiser who estimated the cost to be \$1.5 million. Mr. Connors commented that FHA has not been provided with the TRCs estimate. Even with approval of the LOI for consideration, all the issues remain negotiable. Christal Preszler spoke with Dr. Kresch regarding common charges that FHA assesses all tenants - he agreed that he was amenable to those common charges. The company is a for-profit, so potential revenue includes rent, cam charges and taxes.

The play area described in LOI would be small, enclosed within the building. Plan to build a one story building to make it less intrusive. If FHA accepts the LOI, negotiations will be referred to a subcommittee, including an advisor/consultant. The FHA can voter to recommend, not recommend or simply pass the lease on to the Board of Selectman for consideration. The Board of Selectman will reviews and hold a public hearing. A discussion ensued regarding the nature and security of the facility. The facility is

voluntary and any involuntary admissions would be temporary based upon emergency referrals. Many different programs; some outpatient, some inpatient; mental illness and drug and alcohol addiction problems. Wants to bring a specialty that focused on pediatric mental health as well. Pat Llodra commented that review of the proposal will be focused on ensuring the use is consistent with the needs of the community and the Master Plan.

Jim Bernardi moved to accept the LOI, Terry Sagedy seconded the motion. All in favor.

Dr. should call Crystal Preszler regarding next steps.

- b. Campus Priorities: List provided by Mr. Connors is a fluid document.
 - i. Demolition on campus once CIP approved:

Kent's demolition would allow area for community events and revenue opportunities; followed by Cochran or Shelton. Mrs. Preszler provided a map of active/proposed projects.
 - ii. Landscaping -

Entranceway and Streetscape enhancement.
 - iii. Trails.
 - iv. Development -A discussion was had about whether to hire a broker to take a pro-active approach to development. Mr. Connors thinks FHA has been too passive waiting for proposals to come its way. Mrs. Preszler agrees we need expertise. Per Pat Llodra it can be complicated as far as making sure that it is clear a broker works for the Town - providing a fee structure ensures clarity. Mike Holmes agrees with Pat and is not in favor of hiring a broker. Per Ross Carley-maybe a consultant with a flat fee is better. Ms. Preszler has spoken with some real estate attorneys regarding what we need to negotiate a lease - valuation can be based upon use of property.
6. Director of Planning's Report (Benson) Mr. Benson commented that a lot is going on as far as proposals and plans, but the trail is the only project currently in the works. We will need to look at all the issues and factors and work together going forward to prioritize projects and ensure we stay focused on the Plan.
7. FH / Grants Coordinator's Report (Preszler)
- a. Parent Connection update - pre-bid meeting, architect will be available tomorrow at 10:00 at council chambers. Drawings are final. Should have bids by April 14th.
 - b. Campus tree projects - Mrs. Preszler requests \$10,000.00 for tree planting and \$10,000.00 for tree pruning for safety reasons. FHA's budget is staying level.

Jim Bernardi moves to approve \$10, 000.00 for tree work, second by Andy Willie. All in favor.

Additional amount may be approved after bids obtained or Mike McCarthy, Tree Warden, provides estimate of actual cost to do all the work.

- c. Arts Museum update - none.
- d. Mixed Use Forum Final Report update - Rosa is putting together final report.
- e. Grants update -Fuss & O'Neill will be assessing Canaan and Shelton for remediation and demolition and will complete the assessment in 6 months. There may be funds in the grant to get reports on the two single family homes about whether they are clean and can be taken down

1. DECD – Brownfields Assessment Grant

Mrs. Preszler will be attending a workshop put on by The Conn. Dept. of Economic Development. This will provide information on grants available for different projects.

Mr. Connors asked if there was any unencumbered grant funds. There is not and Mrs. Preszler is waiting to hear about grant applications for remediation at Shelton and for the Streetscape project.

8. Municipal Building Strategic Plan Committee update (Verdi) Last time they met was 4 weeks ago. Per Pat Llodra they interviewed companies with RFP's for the space needs assessments at Town Hall South, Hook and Ladder and Multi-purpose building.

9. Nursing school update - none.

10. Permanent Memorial (Sagedy)

11. Member Items – Discussion and Action

a. Plymouth Hall preservation / mothballing update (Carley) Waiting for first thaw, need to pump, Fred Hurley working with him to hook directly to existing pump.

Adjournment: Andy Willie moved to adjourn, second by Ross Carley. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:08p.m.

Submitted,

Carolyn Signorelli, Clerk