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TOWN OF NEWTOWN

Fairfield Hills Authority Minutes June 22, 2015

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

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

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

Absent: Terry Sagedy, Curt Verdi

Also in Attendance: Christal Preszler, Grants Coordinator, Planning Department, Fairfield Hills; George Benson, Director of Planning, Newtown Land Use Agency ; Betsy Paynter, EDC; Kathy Quinn, Chair Newtown Energy Task Force Committee.

Mr. Connors called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Mr. Connors asked for acceptance of the May 2015 minutes, seconded by Jim Bernardi and unanimously approved;

1. **Public Participation** - None
2. **Electric Car Charging Station Proposal** - Betsy Paynter and Kathy Quinn presented on proposal for 2 car electric charging station at FFH, including the details of the DEP grant requirements, the benefits to the Town and FFH, and the desirability of the location near Exit 11. A discussion was had about the appropriateness of the use under the Master Plan and the potential draw backs.

Jim Bernardi moved that the FHA approve the proposal to install an Electric Car Charging Station at FFH. Ross Carley Seconded the motion. The motion failed by a vote of 4 "No" to 2 "Yes." Renata Adler, Andy Willie, Tom Connor, and Mike Holmes voted No" and Jim Bernardi and Ross Carley voted "Yes."

Andrew Willie began a discussion about the need for the FHA to vote on whether to recommend or disapprove proposals brought to the Authority before they are passed on to the Board of Selectman. Since the issue was not on the agenda it was passed until the next meeting.

3. **Parent Connection Lease:** PC was scheduled to provide an update regarding the lease for its planned tenancy at FFH. There were no representatives from the PC, but George Benson and Christal Preszler provided information regarding the plan for a general 10 year lease pursuant to a \$500,000.00 grant to remediate a facility for a not-for-profit organization at FFH. The request of FHA is to approve the language of the lease. A discussion followed about the viability of Parent Connection for 10 years and the potential financial risk to the town. George Benson was confident that the State would not require repayment of the grant

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if PC did not continue operating for 10 years and Ms. Preszler thought it was important to move forward given the good faith negotiations that had gone on with the State and the risk of losing the grant if progress was not made.

Tom Connors moved to approve the proposed lease as it exists for PC. Andrew Willie seconded the motion. The motion passed with one "No" vote: Renata Adler.

The lease and project will require approval by additional boards.

4. **Chairman's Report** (Connors)

a. Fairfield Hills CIP Fund Request Status- Tom Connors requested a staw poll regarding the Authority's priority for building demolition. Bernardi, Carley, Andrew and Mike thought Kent should be first; Renata had no preference.

Christal Preszler provide an update regarding plans for the \$5,000,000.00 of CIP funding for demolition and remediation on the campus. Given the goal of the Town hopefully moving forward on the long awaited Community Center being made possible by the \$10,000,000.00 donation from GE, the plan is to demolish Canaan House first, the single family homes that are becoming a real eyesore, and the Greenhouse and remediation of the duplex for the Parent Connection.

Tom Connors moved that although the Authority expressed a preference for Kent to be taken down first, it agreed as a result of Christal Preszler's presentation and the plans for a Community Center that Canaan House become the priority. Andrew Willie seconded that motion. The motion passed with one No vote: Ross Carley.

b. Healthvest Update: FHA has accepted Dr. Kresch's letter of intent for US Health Vest to occupy the space where Norwalk Hall is located. In the interim, Dr. Kresch, Tom Connors and others went before Board of Selectman where he was vetted regarding the project's viability. Next: another meeting - Tom Connors, Christal Preszler & George Benson suggested an alternative property for Dr. Kresch to consider. Dr. Krisch seemed interested. The town wants US HV being a viable member of Newtown business community. Dr. Kresch agreed that FFH is not critical to his choice of Newtown for his business. A discussion followed regarding why the FHA was not embracing the proposal that HV be located on the FFH campus. James Bernardi expressed that while a behavioral health facility would be welcome in Newtown and provide a valuable service, the FFH campus is not the ideal location because of its proximity to a school and the evolving vision for the campus to be a recreational, athletic and community center. Tom Connors through his several discussion with Dr. Kresch is confident the facility would not pose a security risk, but the perceptions of families to the contrary could dissuade the community from utilizing the campus. James Bernardi complimented Dr. Kresch for his proposal and desire to provide healing services in our town. HV is to be applauded and admired for what they do for the mentally ill. The issue is not whether they should be in Newtown, simply where the best place would. Tom Connors agrees and hopes Newtown can find a spot for them.

d. Water Fountains: Tom wants there to be a water fountain on the property, including a pet faucet. Amy Mangold has done a great job with trails but we need water for people and pets. Cost is \$10,000.00. The issue of funding the project was tabled.

5. **Report of Christal Preszler**

Ms. Preszler requested approval of use of donated benches outside tax office.

Andrew Willie moved to approve the design of arched backed bench to be used on campus. Ross Carley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

James Bernardi moved to approve the installation of the benches per the referenced map provided by Ms. Preszler. Andrew Willie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The funding approved for the streetscape is enough to provide a sidewalk and lighting from the traffic light to the first stop sign **on the right side of Trades Lane when entering campus.**

Andy Willie moved for adjournment; Michael Holmes seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carolyn Signorelli, Clerk