



**Town of New Fairfield
4 Brush Hill Road
New Fairfield, Connecticut**



**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AMENDED
Monday, November 15, 2021**

Present: Myke Furhman
Greg Manning
Kathleen DiTullio
James Kloos
Michael Kiviat

Also Present: Pat Del Monaco, First Selectman
Evan White, Zoning Officer
Douglass Ridgeway
Danette Onofrio, SCORE

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Mr. Furhman.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Minutes – October 18, 2021 Regular Meeting

Mr. Furhman moved to approve the minutes of October 18th, seconded by Mr. Kloos and passed unanimously.

Aye: Kloos, DiTullio, Furhman, Manning, Kiviat

4. Opening Public Comment & Participation

There was none.

5. Correspondence & Announcements

Mr. Furhman noted the Town approved the purchase of 13 & 15 Route 37. First Selectman Del Monaco said the Town needs to get Zoning approval for the purchase but the plan is to create a Town Green with gathering spaces for the community, maybe a band shell, and picnic tables.

OLD BUSINESS

6. Beautification Project – Signs Update

Mr. Manning said he and Ms. DiTullio met with Zoning Officer Evan White and talked about alternative spaces for signage. Angiollotti Road has a small island that a sign might be located on. There is a flagpole on the island now, Mr. White is going to reach out to Danbury to determine how they regulate town signs.

Ms. DiTullio said Mr. White reached out to Halas and they are amenable to helping with holiday decor on the signs including the welcome sign and the directory sign downtown. Mr. Furhman asked what was to be donated and what would have to be paid for and Mr. White said Halas was going to donate items to the Town. Mr. Furhman wondered if there was power at either sign so that lights could be put up and Ms. Del Monaco said she would check to see if there was power at the sign in the center of Town.

Mr. Furhman asked if there was any issue with holiday lights on the center sign and Mr. White said not as far as Zoning is concerned. Mr. Furhman suggested blue and gold for Hanukkah and then maybe more colored lights after that.

Ms. DiTullio said volunteers helped clean up the bed in front of the shopping center. She wanted to publicly thank the volunteers - Susan Mitchell, George Cushing, Ants Johnson, Amelia McPartland, Cerulean Acevedo, and Claire Luks.

7. Small Business Grants/ARPA Funding

Ms. Del Monaco said the working group is still putting ideas together for the Board of Selectmen to consider. She said she would like to put together some kind of small business grant program. She said she would like to focus on economic development within the framework of ARPA. One thing they would like to do is a sewer study to put together a shovel ready project for potential funding.

Mr. Furhman asked if any member had any high level ideas. Ms. DiTullio said last meeting the EDC had discussed the idea of a seasonal hockey rink. Mr. Furhman said the idea was to get people to come downtown year round. Mr. Manning said this is kind of like Bryant Park. He also said the current gazebo makes it difficult to see a band perform because of the stairs and fence in front so he felt a band shell would be a good idea.

8. EDC Sponsored Carol Sing Update

Mr. Manning said he is all set with the items he was assigned. He said he only has one light stanchion but thought he could get two more from the soccer club if needed. He felt lights might be needed for the vendor area and the Town Hall walkway. He said the tree and gazebo will be lit so there will be ambient light. Mr. Kiviat asked if Christmas lights could be used for the pathway and Mr. Manning said all of the plugs will be used for the tree lights and the gazebo. Mr. White said he has a highway light power that he could loan for the event which has 12 outlets. Mr. Furhman said the vendor area should be lit and the path to the gazebo. Ms. Del Monaco said there are flood lights on the path.

Mr. Manning said Ms. Del Monaco had some people she has asked to lead a song including Jeff Mane and Senator Julie Kushner. She was going to call and ask others as well. Mr. Kloos said he reached out to Ken Gunker. Ms. Del Monaco said Lisa Tromaso and Jeff Juliano are part of a band called Split Decision. Mr. Manning said he knew some of the people in the band and he would reach out to them.

Ms. DiTullio said she reached out to Bruce Taylor about the Fire Police but has not heard back yet. She also has not heard back from Savings Bank of Danbury about the sponsorship check.

Mr. Furhman asked if anyone had reached out to vendors and Mr. Kiviat said Taco Road Trip will be there as well as his daughter who runs a craft business in town. They also have a friend who does yarn art work that is interested. He talked to the Goodie Shop but they are not interested. He also talked to the owner of Old 37 but he has limited helpers so he is not sure he can participate. Mr. Furhman said maybe Johnny's or Froggy's would participate. He also said Santa Claus might have some products to sell. Ms. Del Monaco suggested the White Feather Bakery should be contacted. Mr. Furhman said he would reach out.

Ms. DiTullio said she was not having much luck finding a different jingle bell bracelet that was inexpensive. Mr. Kiviat said he would order the lawn signs once the final design was done and they would be in in one week from the order. Mr. Furhman is working on the business card size handout for the tree lighting. Mr. Kiviat said I-95 might allow an on air interview about the event. Mr. Kloos said he spoke the Tribune about pricing and he is still waiting for pricing on color ads. Mr. Kiviat said the Tribune will do a front page article.

9. New Fairfield Town Postcard/Sticker Update

Mr. Ridgeway said he redesigned the postcard a bit but made no text changes. Ms. DiTullio said they had made the suggestion of changing the Hartford and New Haven to Stamford and Greenwich. She also suggested maybe adding White Plains as that is where many of the recent moves have come from. It was determined to go with New York, Stamford and Westchester or Westchester County. Mr. Manning asked if there was a need to site where the information was coming from and it was determined to put the information on the website and add the EDC website to the postcard. The sticker has been finalized.

10. EDC Commission Participation in upcoming New Fairfield Events

Mr. Furhman asked if there was anything other than the tree lighting and the holiday parade for upcoming events and Ms. Del Monaco said the Run for Turkeys is also coming up. Mr. Kloos said he could take the business card flyer to the run.

11. Signage at High School - DiTullio

Ms. DiTullio had sent the original sign she saw at the event she attended and the collage the Conservation Commission had put together. Mr. Manning and Ms. DiTullio spoke with Mr. White about placement. Ms. DiTullio asked if the Zoning Commission would need to approve it and Mr. White said municipal and educational signs are exempt but the spot this would go is an R-80 zone so it would require a variance. He would waive the fees and so this would just be a procedural process. Mr. Manning asked if Zoning would need the design and Mr. White said just the size and location.

12. EDC Newsletter

Mr. Kloos said he will send out the newsletter the first of each month. The next one will be focused on the sing along. He said the Tribune does not want to promote a new business from the newsletter but would rather have them advertise. They will print the newsletter with the information for the small businesses.

13. 2022 Meeting Dates/Times

Ms. DiTullio and Mr. Manning said they did not have a problem with the proposed dates. Mr. Kiviat said he might not be around in April. Mr. Furhman asked if members would be interested in changing the time to 7 pm.

*Mr. Furhman moved to accept the proposed 2022 meeting calendar and to change the time of the meetings to 7 pm, seconded by Mr. Kloos and passed unanimously.
Aye: Kloos, DiTullio, Furhman, Manning, Kiviat*

NEW BUSINESS

14. SCORE Presentation

Ms. Onofrio said the mission of SCORE is to foster a vibrant small business community through mentoring and education. The vision is to offer the support necessary to help the small business owner thrive. There are SCORE offices in 1500 communities with over 10,000 volunteers. SCORE values the success of the clients – clients success is SCOREs success. SCORE volunteers have given over 1,000,000 hours. They like to build community alliances and would like to build one with EDC. They provide free business advice and mentoring, low or no-cost business training and free business templates. Their clients include early stage entrepreneurs, start up businesses, established businesses and transitioning businesses. SCORE has offices in New Milford, Danbury, Ridgefield, Waterbury, Newtown and WestConn. This chapter of SCORE has facilitated 600 mentoring sessions annually and hosted 40 workshops with over 1200 attendees.

Sessions are confidential and include a review of the business idea, help applying for licenses, information on legal, accounting and internet services, detailed business plans, business negotiations and coaching through the pre finance prep.

SCORE has attorneys, CPAs, marketing specialists, etc.

Ms. DiTullio asked if they have any clients from New Fairfield and Ms. Onofrio said they have over the years but was not sure if they have clients right now.

Ms. Onofrio said there are volunteer opportunities available including mentoring clients, presenting workshops, subject matter experts, chapter operations and community ambassadors.

Ms. DiTullio asked what role EDC could play and Ms. Onofrio suggested co sponsoring workshops or events, for instance.

Mr. Kloos said small businesses are still hurting so he could email this information to them to help them.

Ms. Onofrio said the contact info for SCORE is score.org, westernconnecticutscore.org, westernconnecticutscore@scorevolunteer.org and 203-794-1404.

15. Discussion of Existing Consolidated School Building

Mr. Manning said the Consolidated School plan is to tear down the whole building and either turn it into a lot or a playground. He said there are two sides to the building, one being older with a roof issue. He suggested that side could be torn down and the other half of the building could be maintained for a school, office building or a community center. He asked that the EDC discuss this at the next months meeting.

16. New and Prospective Businesses

Mr. Kloos said the Smoke Shop in Heritage Plaza is new and they would like to do a grand opening. He suggested the EDC should have its own formal ribbon cutting ceremony.

Mr. Furhman said the EDC has talked about this before and should have a process for new businesses.

17. Closing Public Comment

Mr. Furhman said he got an answer back about how New Milford was looking to structure its small business ARPA funding - they will offer \$5,000 grants to businesses due to Covid losses with no stipulation on how to use the money.

Ms. Del Monaco said she would look into that formula for New Fairfield.

Mr. Manning said Zoning has banned cannabis sales for one year.

18. Adjournment

Mr. Manning moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 pm, seconded by Ms. DiTullio and passed unanimously.

Aye: DiTullio, Kloos, Kiviat, Manning, Furhman

Minutes recorded by:



Recording Secretary

Received by Email on 11/19/2021 @ 10:04 am
by Pamela J. Dohan, Town Clerk, New Fairfield