



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



**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AMENDED
Tuesday, January 18, 2022**

Present: Myke Furhman (arrived at 7:16 pm)
Greg Manning
Kathleen DiTullio
James Kloos
Michael Kiviat
Andrew Balbus

Also Present: Evan White, Zoning Officer

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm by Mr. Kloos.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

**3. Approval of Minutes – November 15, 2021 Regular Meeting
November 3, 10, 17, 2021 Special Meeting
December 1, 8 2021 Special Meeting**

Ms. DiTullio moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 15, 2021 and the special meeting minutes of November 3, 10 and 17 and December 1 and 8, 2021, seconded by Mr. Kiviat and passed unanimously.

Aye: Kloos, DiTullio, Furhman, Manning, Kiviat, Balbus

4. Opening Public Comment & Participation

Tom Ifkovits, a New Fairfield resident, attended the Board of Selectman meeting re: the sewer study which showed the map with proposed plans in highlighted colors. He asked if the plans would affect the residents. Mr. Kloos said the highlighted colors were for the phasing of the project. The benefits would be to the environment and economic development.

Mr. White, Zoning Officer, said the residential will have the right to tie into the sewer. The main users will be businesses, the commercial district and schools. The Town has 200,000 gallons of reserve at the Danbury sewage treatment plant.

5. Correspondence & Announcements

Mr. Kloos said he had no announcements.

OLD BUSINESS

6. Beautification Project – Signs Update

Mr. Manning said he met with Mr. White and Ms. DiTullio about the placement of signs in and around Town. Mr. White spoke to his contact at Danbury City Hall to understand how Danbury works with the State, etc.

Mr. Furhman arrived at 7:16 pm.

7. EDC Sponsored Community Holiday Sing Along Recap

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Mr. Furhman said there were over 100 people in attendance and felt the first ever event went very well. He felt the part that could be improved would be to get more vendors. Mr. Manning gave a big shout out to the high school choral group.

Mr. Furhman noted Santa came to the event as a volunteer but felt that he should get a tip since he stayed until the last child got to take a picture with him. Mr. Manning said he was awesome and people were commenting that he was the “real” Santa and he should be contracted for next year before too long.

Mr. Furhman moved to tip Santa Claus Company from New Milford, CT \$100 for services rendered at the Holiday Sing Along, seconded by Mr. Kloos and motion passed 5-0-1.

Aye: Kloos, DiTullio, Furhman, Manning, Kiviat

Abstain: Balbus

Mr. Kloos said they need more musical groups for next year, maybe more festive lighting and mics to showcase the singing groups.

Mr. Manning said next year they probably should consider the QR code for the song book as people couldn't read the song book with the low lighting.

Mr. Balbus asked about the expenses versus the income and Mr. Furhman said he would work out the numbers but said the most expensive part of the event was advertising.

8. New Fairfield Town Postcard/Town Sticker Update

Mr. Furhman said the design is done and the request had been made to pay the invoice of \$800 for the design work. Mr. Kiviat said he would get a price on the postcards but needed to know how many to print. He said he got a price of \$42 for 250 but that was an online site and not a local company. It was decided to get a price on 500 of the residential and commercial postcard.

Mr. Furhman said it might be cheaper to get a roll of the stickers. Mr. Kiviat said he would price out different options and sizes.

Ms. DiTullio asked if they should get some magnets to be sold at local stores and it was determined to wait until next fiscal year.

9. EDC Commission Participation in upcoming New Fairfield Events

Mr. Manning said he would circle back with Parks and Recreation to see what they have on their calendar. He also suggested the Commission wait until Spring for the business happy hour event. Ms. DiTullio said there is talk of moving the Sip & Stroll from May until June or July.

10. Signage at High School - DiTullio

Ms. DiTullio said this might not be in the budget until next fiscal year but asked if people liked the collage that she had forwarded. She asked Mr. White about the variance possibly needed for the sign and he said they could go up to 32 square feet without too much flack from the Zoning Commission.

Mr. Furhman suggested Ms. DiTullio should start the due diligence to get the sign up for the next fiscal year.

11. EDC Newsletter

Mr. Kloos said he was publicizing the sing along for prior newsletters, He said he has not done much since. He was looking for ideas for the next newsletter and was thinking of sing along pictures and the postcard. Mr. Furhman asked Mr. White if there were any new businesses and he said there is a woman who is hoping to open up a woman's clothing boutique. There is also a cigar shop looking to move next to Froggy's.

12. ARPA Funding Update/Small Business Grants

a.) Community Development Ideas

b.) Sewer Study

Mr. Furhman said he attended the Board of Selectman meeting and made a presentation of options for the ARPA funding including the ice rink and a splash pad. He said the rink would have synthetic ice so it could be used year round. He said the rink should be in the center of town area to help with economic development.

Mr. Kloos said the town park was purchased to be used for things like the rink, picnic tables and even the charging station.

Mr. Furhman asked Mr. Balbus if he wanted to be included in the community development subcommittee and he said he did not understand the charter of this commission and felt he would pass for now.

Mr. Furhman said he, Ms. DiTullio and Mr. Kiviat would meet offline to discuss.

Mr. Furhman said there is also the potential to use ARPA funding for the sewer study. He said this could be a benefit to the commercial sector. He said restaurants and breweries have declined coming to New Fairfield because of the septic issue. He said a bad thing could be if the landlords charge the tenants for connection fees.

Ms. DiTullio said generally the landlord will cover the connection fee but will pass use fee on the tenant. She also noted that Brookfield just received a \$600,000 grant to add on to the Francis Clarke Industrial Park. She said sewer will increase the values of properties.

Mr. Manning said when they sent their initial survey people wanted more restaurants and places to eat. He said the study is very important. Mr. Furhman said the funding is subject to a public vote so it is not a foregone conclusion if people don't come out and vote when the time is right.

NEW BUSINESS

13. New and Prospective Businesses

Mr. Furhman said this had been covered earlier in the meeting.

14. Consolidated School Discussion – Manning

Mr. Manning said he had joined some of the Permanent Building Committee meetings regarding the Consolidated School building. He said he is concerned with the PBC plan to raze the whole building. He said the newer section is in reasonable shape while the older section does have some roof and utility issues. He said he would like the EDC to take the position of understanding the costs associated with maintaining the newer portion of the building.

Julie Stange, a New Fairfield resident, said they have been fighting the PBC on the consolidated school plan for a year. She said the school and the meeting house use the current septic system and the system cannot accommodate a larger meetinghouse building.

Mr. Manning said he thought EDC should get on the PBC agenda to discuss the cost associated.

Ms. DiTullio said the building should be used for the "highest and best use" and a bus depot is not the best use. She also noted Ridgefield recently got a \$2 million grant for their boys and girls club. Mr. Furhman said that is actually a good analogy as John Pettibone School in New Milford was slated to be demolished, sold or used for a s community center and is now in use as an office for some of the Town departments and a community center. Mr. Furhman said perhaps the septic cannot accommodate another school but could accommodate a community center with less use. He suggested rather than go to the PBC the EDC should go to the Zoning Commission. Mr. White said

the application has not yet been received but the Zoning Commission is probably the appropriate place to proceed. Mr. Manning said the EDC should talk about the future and the sewer study with a building with septic issues and encourage forward thinking.

Mr. Kiviat said a bus depot would be a ridiculous use of this property rather a community center with an outdoor pool should be considered.

Deborah Mangini, 251 Ball Pond Road, said she has been involved in the anti bus lot movement and said the temporary lot currently being used does not work.

Mr. Furhman said the first order of business is to stop the razing of the building.

15. Electric Vehicle Charging Stations - DiTullio

Ms. DiTullio asked if the EDC should get in touch with Rep. Hayes for infrastructure dollars for charging stations. Mr. Furhman suggested that should go through the Board of Selectmen and Mr. Manning agreed.

16. Closing Public Comment

17. Adjournment

Mr. Furhman moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 pm, seconded by Ms. DiTullio and passed unanimously.

Aye: DiTullio, Kloos, Kiviat, Manning, Furhman, Balbus

Minutes recorded by:



Recording Secretary

Received by email on 1/20/2022 @ 1:14 pm
by: Holly Z Smith, Town Clerk, New Fairfield