

**TOWN OF FAIRFIELD  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
FINAL – MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 5, 2020**

The Economic Development Commission of the Town of Fairfield held a meeting on March 5, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. in the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room, Sullivan Independence Hall.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kevin Lesko; Don Peterson; John Slavin, Steve Rosato; Alethe Fatherly

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mark Barnhart, Director of Community and Economic Development; Beverly Balaz, Fairfield Chamber of Commerce; Attorney Ray Rizzio

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting of February 6, 2020 were approved.

**Guest Speaker; Atty. Ray Rizzio Regarding Proposed Development, 5545 Park Avenue**

Atty. Rizzio described the property in question and the previous attempts to develop it. The current proposal is for 90 units of rental housing and the developer is seeking a text amendment in order to proceed. Attorney Rizzio stated that if approved, the project would generate \$360,000 in tax revenue. Attorney Rizzio is seeking a text amendment that would restrict fifteen percent of the units as affordable in exchange for increased density. The text amendment will be considered by the P & Z on March 10.

**Community Development Block Grant Workshop on Economic Development in Fairfield**

Mr. Barnhart said his department is preparing to submit a five-year plan to HUD as to how the town would use its allotted funds. This grant is to be used in low and moderate income areas of town to support housing needs, improve the living environment, and enhance economic opportunities. Past funds have been used for accessibility improvements, micro enterprise assistance, business counseling, and infrastructure improvements. HUD likes to know how these funds have been used to leverage local spending. Representatives of several local organizations described the programs for which they will be asking for help.

**2021 Budget**

Mr. Barnhart met recently with First Selectwoman Kupchick to discuss the goals of the Community and Economic Development Department. He will be seeking additional resources for the office as part of the budget process.

### **Update on Key Development Sites**

Mr. Barnhart said he submitted a letter to the P & Z on behalf of the EDC regarding the development of the Exide property. He expects to meet with the option holders in the near future although development of the property is still several years in the future. It is important that the property use provides an economic benefit to the town.

A hearing will be held on the Fairfield Metro Center development on February 11. Current plans call for a hotel and mixed use (retail, office, residential).

The developers of the Plant Factory site have asked P & Z for a change in use to residential. Conservation said this would require a new application.

At this time, there is no definitive request regarding the 8+- acreage in Southport that may be proposed for an assisted living facility.

The property comprising the Joe's American Bar and Grille is on the market as a lease or sale.

### **Other Business**

Ms. Balaz said the Chamber's Health and Wellness Expo is scheduled for March 14 at Fairfield University. A breakfast is to be held March 30 at Brooklawn Country Club. It is hoped that Governor Lamont will attend.

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 2, 2020 at 8:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gretchen Goethner

You can obtain the audio recording of the meeting here,  
<https://fairfieldct.org/meetingrecordings>.