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Town of Fairfield

Office of Community & Economic Development

Minutes of Economic Development Commission Meeting

March 4, 2010

The Economic Development Commission of the Town of Fairfield held a meeting on March 4, 2010 at 8:00 a.m. in the Old Town Hall Conference Room.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Peter Penczer, Chairman; Sally Ward; Maureen Abrahamson; Abbas Nadim

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mark Barnhart, Director of Community and Economic Development; Ross Ogden, Abbey Road Partners; Don Peterson; Paul Lenoci, United Properties

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:04 a.m.

### ***Minutes***

The minutes of February 4, 2010 were approved.

### ***Presentation, United Properties, 2180 Kings Highway***

Mr. Lenoci presented plans for 15 condominium units proposed by his company for the property adjacent to Bed, Bath and Beyond. Mr. Barnhart said the P & Z had asked for an opinion on the project from the EDC. The piece is presently zoned commercial/industrial. Mr. Lenoci said the proposal has the full support of the neighbors. The density will match that of the existing neighborhood. The plans call for parking in the ratio of 5:1, and the development will have a pedestrian walkway, bike racks and sufficient lighting. There will be several handicapped accessible units but none that qualify as 'affordable'. In response to a question from Mr. Nadim, Mr. Lenoci said the units would be between 1700 and 1900 sq. ft. in size. Ms. Abrahamson asked what school any children would attend. Mr. Lenoci said statistically, very few if no children would live here. Mr. Penczer said the P & Z was asking if the EDC saw this project as appropriate for the site. A motion was made and passed to approve the units.

### ***CDBG/Consolidated Plan***

Mr. Barnhart said the new 5-year plan has been developed by his office. Among the goals are aiding the development of small businesses, support infrastructure development and to aid local community organizations. Mr. Penczer asked what funds were available to Fairfield this year. Mr. Barnhart said he expects approximately \$550,000. He said applications are due to his office by April 4 and that funds should be received from HUD by August 1 for the FY starting in October. Mr. Penczer said some of the previous projects supported by these grants included support of new affordable housing (Greenfield Commons), infrastructure work (sidewalks, lighting), and technical assistance (Women's Development Council, parks & rec departments). Mr. Barnhart said between 25,000 and \$50,000 is used to support economic development projects.

### ***Meeting Schedule***

Mr. Barnhart asked if the commission could meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday morning to accommodate a member's schedule. The Commissioners approved the change.

### ***Other Business***

Neighborhood Assistance Act: Mr. Barnhart said he would be soliciting grant applications from community groups.

Update to videos: Mr. Barnhart said that a firm has been hired to remake some video that is on the town web site and is relevant to the economic development of the town. He expects this to be done in the spring.

Train station: Mr. Abramson expressed displeasure in the method of discussing the progress of the station that was evident in the February meeting. She said that in her opinion, this should not be used as a political platform. Mr. Barnhart emphasized that work is forging ahead. The state and town are working out details about the road and parking and contracts are being awarded to redesign the traffic and signals in the area.

The meeting adjourned at 9:16 a.m.

The next meeting is April 8, 2010

Respectfully submitted:

Gretchen Goethner