

# **Town of Fairfield**

## **Office of Community & Economic Development**

### **Minutes of Economic Development Commission Meeting**

January 10, 2013

The Economic Development Commission of the Town of Fairfield held a meeting on January 10, 2013 at 8:00 a.m. in the Old Town Hall Conference Room.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Peter Penczer, Chairman; Don Peterson; Brian Silvestro; Maureen Abrahamson; Chris LaSala; Abbas Nadim

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mark Barnhart, Director of Community and Economic Development; Sally Parker

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

**Minutes:** The minutes of December 2012 were approved.

#### **Neighborhood Designed Business Districts**

The Commissioners discussed the P & Z decision limiting the size of professional offices allowed in these areas. Ms. Parker said the intent of the amendment is to bring the regulations into conformance with existing regs limiting these offices to no more than 4000 square feet. He suggested inviting members of the P & Z to an EDC meeting so that ideas about zoning and development could be shared. Mr. Nadim asked how additional medical offices would contribute to the quality of life in Fairfield, as most of these would be satellite offices of existing practices rather than new facilities employing more people. Mr. Barnhart noted that the medical industry is responding to consumer demand.

#### **Metro Center**

Mr. Barnhart said that Black Rock Realty and Mr. Wittek are holding a meeting on Tuesday, January 15 to present their proposals for a residential building at Metro Center. It will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Quick Center, Fairfield University. The proposal for 197 units will need a zoning amendment.

## **Exide**

Mr. Barnhart said the DEEP is hosting a public meeting tonight at Fairfield Ludlowe High School to review the proposed plan for cleaning up Mill River. He suggested the commissioners encourage the DEEP to adopt the plan and begin work as soon as possible. Mr. LaSala reinforced the fact that this is an economic issue for the town and therefore of great importance to the EDC. Mr. Barnhart said he would draft a letter of support from the Commission to forward to the DEEP stressing the need to move forward with the clean-up as expeditiously as possible.

## **Budget**

Mr. Barnhart said the budget for his department is 1.4% more than for FY2012. There are some funds for initiatives such as Restaurant Week. He met recently with members of the Bridgeport Regional Business Council to plan cooperative marketing efforts among the members.

## **Goals for 2013**

Mr. Barnhart and the Commissioners mentioned these:

- Upgrade the web site
- Provide communication to the business community regarding regulations & news
- Kings Highway, Southport Post Road corridor improvement
- Designate member to be liaison to the Chamber of Commerce
- Survey stakeholders as to what kind of development is appropriate for the town (utilize Fairfield University and Sacred Heart University students to assist with this)
- Apply for grants to improve entry points to town
- Work with technology facilitators in town to strengthen collaboration

## **Officers for 2013**

The following were approved as officers for the FY 2013:

Chair: Peter Penczer

Vice-chair: Chris LaSala

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 14, 2013

Respectfully submitted:

Gretchen Goethner