

Town of Fairfield
Office of Community & Economic Development
Minutes of Economic Development Commission Meeting
June 13, 2013

The Economic Development Commission of the Town of Fairfield held a meeting on June 13, 2013 at 8:00 a.m. in the Old Town Hall Conference Room.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peter Penczer, Chairman; Don Peterson

ALSO PRESENT: Mark Barnhart, Director of Community and Economic Development

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 8:15 a.m.

MINUTES: Approval of the minutes of May 16, 2013 was postponed due to a lack of a quorum.

Fairfield Metro Center

Mr. Barnhart said that the developer, Mr. Wittek, would be submitting a simultaneous proposal for a hotel and a residential building to the TP & Z.

Fairfield Sidewalk Sale Event

Mr. Barnhart said 34 vendors are confirmed for the event on July 27, 2013. Ten are food related. There will be music in two-hour sets at five venues. Mr. Barnhart said he is talking to more stores. Representatives of Kleban Properties are speaking with the chain store managers. The Chamber of Commerce is a sponsor.

Business Accelerator

Mr. Barnhart said that Fairfield University is very interested in participating in this program. The Accelerator Program will be located on an upper floor over the Fairfield University Bookstore. Administrators at the university mentioned that the cost of housing in town is a deterrent to new businesses locating in town.

Commerce Drive Pedestrian/Streetscape Enhancement

Mr. Barnhart said there is an informational meeting about this program on June 27, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Education Conference Room. The proposal to be discussed would be for pedestrian and streetscape improvements to the King's Highway area. If implemented, 80% of the cost would be provided by federal dollars and 20% would come from local sources. The meeting on the 27th is being held to assess community interest in the project.

Other Business

Mr. Peterson asked if there is any outreach program to existing businesses. Mr. Barnhart said he regularly makes contact with the larger employers in town such as Bigelow Tea, Carolton, GE and the Universities. He said there is a need to focus on the next tier of companies.

Hurricane Sandy: Mr. Barnhart said the town expects some reimbursement from FEMA and the state. He is waiting to see what will be covered. He asked that the donors use a higher AMI than that in current use (that is tied to the Bridgeport rental market values).

The state agreed to do so. The largest 'commercial' entities affected by the storm were Fairfield Beach Club and Trinity Church, Southport. The state agreed to exceptions so that these may receive funds for rebuilding. Mr. Peterson asked the number of homes in town that were affected. Mr. Barnhart said there is no final number yet.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

The next meeting is July 11, 2013 at 8:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Gretchen Goethner