

Town of Fairfield
Office of Community & Economic Development
Minutes of Economic Development Commission Meeting
November 7, 2013

The Economic Development Commission of the Town of Fairfield held a meeting on November 7, 2013 at 8:00 a.m. in the Old Town Hall Conference Room.

PRESENT: Peter Penczer, Chairman; Don Peterson; Brian Silvestro; Sally Ward; Maureen Abrahamson

ALSO PRESENT: Mark Barnhart, Director of Community and Economic Development; Raymond Rizio, Atty.; Ross Ogden; Beverly Balaz, Fairfield Chamber of Commerce

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 8:07 a.m.

Minutes: The minutes of the meeting of September 5, 2013 were approved.

54 Sasco Hill Road

Atty. Rizio presented plans by Love Where You Live for the redevelopment of the property at 54 Sasco Hill Road. The new building would be mixed use, with parking at ground level, office space on the 2nd level and residences on the 3rd level. The driveway would be shared with the adjacent property owner. Mr. Rizio said there would be 10-15 workers in the facility and that it would add to the tax base for the town. The building would be handicapped accessible. The commissioners voted to support the project.

Business Accelerator

Mr. Barnhart said that the opening of this space was well attended. Three entrepreneurs have been selected as the first recipients of assistance. The focus of one is food based; one is involved in electronics design and manufacturing; one offering professional services consulting. Mr. Barnhart said Fairfield University brings mentoring capabilities, technical support, access to alumni networks and venture capital.

Ms. Balaz said Fairfield's high schools are adding business/entrepreneur classes.

Fairfield Restaurant Week

Mr. Barnhart said there has been a good response to the questionnaire distributed to participants. They appreciated the ability to collectively buy media support. The high-end restaurants reported the most success. He has had requests from some on the lower end of the cost scale to find a way to include them in the promotion. Other comments focused on the timing and frequency of the event.

Other Business

Ms. Balaz said that among the events the Chamber is planning is one to coincide with NYC's Fashion Week. Another is a Shop and Stroll to be held downtown December 12 in cooperation with the EDC. She is asking choruses from local schools to provide entertainment. Merchants are being asked to stay open later than usual and to offer refreshments.

Mr. Peterson asked what became of Safety Street (Halloween event). Ms. Balaz said the concept was being reevaluated and may return in some form by 2014.

Ms. Abrahamson said that as a member of the Business Advisory Committee she has become more aware of the difficulty of moving development and redevelopment items through the building department in a timely and cost effective manner. Mr. Peterson suggested inviting Mr. Tetreau to attend the December meeting of the EDC to hear the input of the commissioners.

Mr. Barnhart said the Kings Highway streetscape proposal went to the Board of Finance. He did not have the results of their deliberation.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

The next meeting is December 5, 2013 at 8:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Gretchen Goethner