

**Town of Fairfield  
Office of Community & Economic Development  
Minutes of Economic Development Commission Meeting  
February 6, 2025**

The Economic Development Commission of the Town of Fairfield held its regular monthly meeting on Thursday, February 6, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room of the Old Town Hall as well as via Zoom.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** (On Zoom) Steve Rosato, Jennifer Anderson; Jennifer Trudeau-Tham; Matt Rappoport; and Ken Hochhauser

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Justin Beck and Collin Colburn

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mark Barnhart, Director of Community and Economic Development; David Kooris, Executive Director, MRDA; Don Peterson

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m.

**To Consider, Act & Approve the Minutes of the 12/5/24 and 1/9/25 Regular**

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Rappoport to approve the minutes of 12-5-24 and 1/9/25. The motion was approved unanimously.

**To Receive, Consider & Act on a Presentation Regarding Fairfield's Participation in the Municipal Redevelopment Authority (Guest Speaker: David Kooris, Executive Director, MRDA)**

Mr. Barnhart introduced Mr. Kooris to the Commission and noted that he had worked with the EDC in the past.

Mr. Kooris is the Executive Director of MRDA, a new initiative of the State to aid communities in developing new housing around transit centers and relevant downtown areas. The organization can provide participating municipalities with technical support and capital funding for infrastructure to support new transit-oriented development. In order to receive the services of MRDA, communities must join through action of the town's legislative body. MRDA will begin working with these entities by reviewing relevant land use regulations to determine feasibility to support new development. Mr. Kooris emphasized that a town is not obligated to accept its recommendations. Once an area is defined and meets the requirements of the MRDA, communities/developers can apply for gap financing and other assistance. Mr. Kooris emphasized the importance of the EDC in promoting the opportunities available through this organization.

## **To Consider & Act Upon an Annual Report Submission to the RTM**

Mr. Barnhart reported that the report he is prepared to submit on behalf of the EDC to the RTM includes mention of some of the future goals of EDC: to sponsor a small business resource fair; to explore Town participation in the MRDA; and to explore redevelopment opportunities for certain underutilized town owned properties.

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Rappoport to authorize Mr. Barnhart to submit an Annual Report to the RTM. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **Director's Report**

Mr. Barnhart referred to a proposed town ordinance that would allow the Town to withhold permits or licenses for property owners and businesses in arrears on tax obligations.

Mr. Barnhart stated that his office is planning to work with Sustainable Fairfield and the CT Green Bank to offer a workshop on CPACE as a way to help finance improvements to commercial properties.

Mr. Barnhart reported that the town's 8-30g application has been accepted by the State, and is under review. A decision is expected by the end of March.

Mr. Barnhart advised that his office is updating its 5-year plan to meet its obligations under the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG). Mr. Barnhart stated that he would like to hold a workshop on economic development priorities at the EDC meeting in March.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2025.

Respectfully submitted, Gretchen Goethner