

# 2016 Fair Haven Town Plan

PREPARED BY THE FAIR HAVEN PLANNING COMMISSION THE  
FAIR HAVEN SELECTBOARD AND THE  
CITIZENS OF FAIR HAVEN

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Historic Background .....	4
Demographics.....	5
Housing .....	6
Utility and Facility Plan .....	9
Natural Resources .....	15
Parks and Recreation.....	17
Culture .....	18
Historic Sites and Features .....	19
Energy .....	20
Transportation .....	22
Flood Resiliency Plan .....	25
Education .....	26
Child Care.....	31
Economic Development .....	31
Land Use.....	34
Future Land Use .....	38
Fair Haven Town Plan Update.....	39
Implementation.....	40
Public Participation .....	40
Appendix -- Other Longer Term Goals & Action Items	

## Introduction

The small town of Fair Haven appears as a well kept secret in the state. The town serves as a gateway to Vermont from New York, from the western side of the state border along U.S. Route 4. Fair Haven lies at the intersection of U.S. Route 4 and Vermont Route 22A, which runs northerly just east of Lake Champlain to US Route 7 and Burlington. Because many travelers see the grouping of commercial groupings that sit right along the highway of U.S Rt 4, they miss seeing the quintessential downtown village of Fair Haven. One of the main goals of this plan is to find ways to incentivize travelers to visit and support the downtown area.

Our five-acre circular town green (or as locals call it –the “park”), with six spoke-like walkways leading to a fountain in the middle is surrounded by a white marble fence enclosing a number of large sugar maples and with a spacious and lush lawn outside the park. The bandstand at the southerly edge of the park is where the town hosts weekly concerts (with varied bands and music) in the summer.

Southeasterly of the park is our traditional commercial district, full of interesting, “retro” architecture and varied stores, restaurants and services. Most of the town streets are lined with maples and other hardwoods. With few exceptions, the houses in Fair Haven reflect their own time period and have an architecture as individualized as the old Vermonters themselves.

As an attractive, friendly interior village, we need to find ways to show off our best assets to the world, not only for reputation and economic impact, but just for our own pride in the town.

**Goal:** Incentivize and attract travelers – both nearby New Yorkers and other Vermonters - to the interior village of Fair Haven.

### Action Items

Fair Haven Planning Commission will host an open forum soliciting ideas on how to accomplish the above goal. The forum will be publicly advertised to all voters of the Town of Fair Haven, but special notices should be sent to the Fair Haven Chamber of Commerce, to all benevolent societies located in town and to the heads of all town boards, committees or commissions urging them or their representatives to attend the forum to submit ideas on how to best accomplish the above goal.

Based on the responses generated at the forum, the Planning Commission will create an implementation program for the above goal.

## Historic Background

Forested unsettled land in the Revolutionary War eventually became a settlement area known as Fair Haven. This area not only included present-day Fair Haven, but also included what is now known today as West Haven. Hessian soldiers crossed the Poultney River passing through this area as they headed toward Castleton, and a detachment of Burgoyne's army passed through here headed for Skenesborough, (present day Whitehall, N.Y.).

Because of its proximity to New York State, Fair Haven was not incorporated under the New Hampshire Grants as many other area towns were. Instead, on October 27 1779, Capt. Ebenezer Allen and 76 of his associates were granted "a tract of unappropriated lands within the state in order for settling a new plantation to be erected into a township."

On April 26, 1792, by an act of the Vermont General Assembly, the town of Fair Haven was divided into West Haven and Fair Haven along the present boundary line. At the time of the division Fair Haven had 545 residents. By 1820, Fair Haven's population had reached 714 and West Haven 684. In 1823 each town was granted its own representative.

One of the first inhabitants, Matthew Lyon, continued to buy tracts of land in the village and become known as the Founder of the town. As a boy of 15 he left Ireland, coming to America as an indentured servant. He lived and worked in Connecticut before joining Ethan Allen in the Revolutionary War and came to Fair Haven in 1782. Lyon built a saw mill, a gristmill, a paper mill, a store, iron works, and a nail factory. He also ran a tavern on Main Street. He donated land for a town park, part of which is today our town green. Active politically, he was elected to the U.S. Congress and re-elected while in prison in Vergennes for publishing writings against President John Adams, illegal under the *Alien and Sedition Acts*. Business interests eventually slowed and he moved to Kentucky in 1800.

Early businesses were typical of small town commercial interests, providing the necessities of local life. Fair Haven was blessed with good water power, with falls on the Castleton River on either side of Main Street. Wood constructed stores lined Main Street and Liberty Street in the late 1700's. Fires were primary causes of changes in buildings, especially with many of the brick buildings built in the last quarter of the 1800's. Fire protection began to be discussed in 1865, and a hand water pump engine was purchased. The first Engine Company was formed in 1874.

Alonson Allen and Caleb Ranney began the first slate quarry in 1839, and development of the slate industry followed, soon making it the most prominent business in town. A marbleizing process, introduced by Ryland Hanger in 1859, expanded the slate industry. The depression hurt the slate business, but it has since revived.

At one time, there were over 30 industries (such as the manufacture of brick, oil safes, wagons, carriages, and the cutting of marble) along the Castleton River. Two well-known businesses were the Clock Company started in 1896, and the United Shirt and Collar Company in the early 1900's.

Fair Haven had several hotels in the earliest years. Matthew Lyon ran Lyon's Tavern house and the Dennis Tavern across the Street. After Col. Lyon left town his house on the corner of Liberty and Main Street became the Vermont Hotel, running successfully until it burned in 1878. Park View Hotel was built in 1882 on the site of the current Tenney Brook convenience store on the corner of

Main and South Park Place. When the Park View burned in 1899 it was rebuilt as the Allen Hotel in 1904. The building was demolished in the 1950's to make way for a gas station. The Rutledge Hotel sat on the corner of Main Street and River Street. And there were others.

A trolley ran from Rutland through Fair Haven to Poultney from 1903 to 1924.

The Fairmont Trotting Park, constructed in 1874 south of the village, hosted a fair from 1883-1916. As many as 17,000 people attended on a single day. This area became the Fairmont Speedway in later years but since the site currently has no occupant. It would make a good site for a commercial or industrial endeavor.

Several newspapers have been printed in town, the most well-known being the Vermont Journal and the Fair Haven Era both have been out of publication for decades. Another more recent weekly was the Promoter which ceased publication in the 1990's.

## Demographics

Fair Haven's rural character, enhanced by its location, places this community in a unique position in Rutland County. The town is within a 15 minute drive of the New York State border. US Route 4 and Vermont Route 22A intersect the community, and 4 colleges and a technical center are located within 15 to 30 minutes commuting time from the town.

**Population:** Age – According to the 2010 census the population of Fair Haven was 2264; 4.76% of the population are 0-4 years of age; 17.14% are 5-17; 62.49 range in age from 18-64 and 15.60% are 65 years and older. Fair Haven's population had decreased by 664 people from the 2000 to the 2010 census.

Fair Haven's population has been declining since the year 2000. Lack of employment is most likely the cause for the decrease. This decrease in total population also effects the population of the schools. The national economic decline in 2008 and which still impacts our town, took with it the last none-slate related industry still in operation. Skyline closed its doors suddenly in the summer of 2011 after 40 years of operations.

## Housing

Fair Haven is a quiet and lovely place to live where family life is emphasized. The values that our youth gain from such community support have helped them succeed in many areas.

Our community faces many challenges. Diversity of housing is key to continued growth, however, providing opportunities for our young people and seniors to remain in the community should continue to be at the forefront of a communities housing needs.

Housing demand	Fair Haven Village	Fair Haven	Rutland Co.
Total population, 2010	2,269	2,734	61,642
... in occupied housing units	2,269	2,734	59,324
... owner occupied	1,520	1,928	43,515
... renter occupied	749	806	15,809
Total group quarters population, 2010**	0	0	2,318
Number of households, 2010	957	1,135	25,984
... owning home	604	755	18,147
... renting home	353	380	7,837
Number of families, 2010	606	738	16,018
Average household size, 2010	2.37	2.41	2.28
... in owner-occupied housing units	—	—	—
... in renter-occupied housing units	—	—	—
Average family size, 2010	2.90	2.91	2.81

Vermont housing data profiles, from Vermont Housing Data  
<http://www.housingdata.org/profile/resultsMain.php?village=021302>

Fair Haven is a very typical New England town, the majority of the houses are 50 years old or older, many well over 100 years old and are clustered in the village surrounding the green. Many of the newer homes are on the roads leading out in every direction from the green. Mobile homes, although they can be found scattered around the village are mainly found in 2 mobile home parks. The Housing Trust of Rutland County owns a large Park, *Haven Meadow MHP*, located off Benson lane. A privately owned Park, *Green Mountain Mobile Home Park*, is located on Airport road.

The town hosts 5 subsidized housing projects. While this type of housing forms a more compact pattern of development, it generally consists of one or two person units for the elderly, handicapped, or underemployed/unemployed. *Appletree Apartments*, the first of its kind for Fair Haven has 2 sections one for seniors and another separate section for low income, located on Fourth Street, not far from the down town district or from the supermarket, drugstore plaza on Washington Street. *The Owen House*, is a group home for handicapped individuals located on Union Street, *Alfred Court*, located on Airport Rd, is close to the plaza on Washington Street, but not close to downtown. *The Adams House and The Park View House*, are both on the town green and offer housing for seniors and handicapped individuals.

For a small community we have ample low income housing for our citizens.

The economic downturn of 2008 affected the housing growth in Fair Haven. This downward trend has not yet reversed. Without major road constructions, the possibilities for developing new residences is limited to a few small areas. Zoning Permit records show that from July 1, 2004- June 30, 2005 there were 16 permits for single family dwellings, (6 for stick-built houses, 4 new & 6 replacement mobile/modular houses. For the same period for the year 2013-14 only 3 permits are recorded.

The most recent reappraisal was concluded in 2009, at the peak of the housing market, prices have decreased since that time with the *Common Level of Appraisal* as of 2015 is 116.67%.

The decrease in sales prices have made the homes more affordable, but the lack of jobs makes Fair Haven a difficult market. Permits for new construction also fell after 2008.

**CONCLUSIONS:** The current economic conditions have negatively affected the housing growth in Fair Haven. The flip side is that there is adequate housing in town. The affordability, continues to be an issue, not only in regards to purchase price, but the burden of state and local taxes, water and waste water rates, which need to be addressed. The correlation between funding items which appear on the town meeting ballots and the town tax rate needs to be fully explained prior to elections.

## Goals

To support safe, affordable and decent housing opportunities for all residents.

Allow residential development which promotes efficient land use.

The Town's growth rate should be related to its impact on the cost of municipal, government services and school costs.

Encourage adequate housing for the elderly, with alternatives, which enable them to remain in their homes as long as they wish.

Promote a mix of residential and commercial uses in the village area.

Plan residential development such that it coincides with planned infrastructure improvements and allows for the adequate provision of services.

Assure a rate and pattern of residential growth compatible with Fair Haven's rural character and topography.

Protect the architectural integrity of village-area homes and other historic structures.

To preserve the rural nature of Fair Haven while offering all residents an attractive, affordable and desirable place to live.

To support creative residential development with minimal burden on municipal services.

Promote opportunities for individuals and families of diverse economic backgrounds to live in Fair Haven.

### **Action Items**

The Planning Commission should encourage planned residential developments to conserve land and promote the most efficient use of space.

Focus attention on those areas that may be affected by some form of residential development in the future and use this plan to encourage desired and appropriate residential development.

The Planning Commission will assess current zoning regulations for compatibility with traditional village patterns and/or alternative design standards.

Zoning bylaws will be amended if necessary to promote village scale development.

Residential growth will coincide with the ability of the Town to provide necessary services without imposing an unfair tax burden on existing residents.

Encourage village Main Street property/business owners to rehabilitate upper floors over downtown businesses.

Insure the zoning map clearly identifies the possible areas for future housing development.

Work with Neighborworks and Efficiency Vermont to help residents improve the efficiency, comfort, and safety of their homes.

Expansion of water and sewer systems should be financed by the areas that receive the service.

Where feasible and applicable, foster incentive for businesses and homeowners to carry out building façade, safety, and accessibility.

- Apply for VT Community Development Program funds.
- Re-obtain a Village Designation or, if possible, obtain a Downtown Designation.
- Collaborate with existing entities to help identify other incentives (e.g., Housing Authority of Rutland County, VT Department of Housing & Community Affairs).



## Utility and Facility Plan

### Municipal Water System

The town's urban compact and a few areas outside it (most notably properties adjacent to the water main between the E. Whitcomb Hyde Water Treatment Plant and the urban compact) are served by a municipal water system. The system was originally constructed in the early 1880's with many extensions, upgrades and rehabilitations since then. The state-of-the-art water treatment plant was built adjacent to Inman Pond, at that time the principle water source, in 1982 and went on-line in December of that year.

Inman Pond is an eighty acre lake fed by springs, run-off, and a small, unnamed stream which drains a bit of marshy ground to the south. The Inman Pond watershed, free of development, is fully owned by the Town. Inman Pond has a storage capacity of 450 million gallons. The Temporary Permit to Operate issued by the State of Vermont in 2009 contains an engineer's estimated yield for Inman Pond at 400 gallons per minute (gpm).

Two additional water sources north of Inman Pond, the Howard and Sheldon Reservoirs, were created in 1907 by building concrete dams with wheel-operated sluice gates. Pipelines were constructed at the same time to bring spring run-off down to Inman Pond to supply additional water. The Howard Reservoir was last used for this purpose in 1982, and the reservoir was emptied about 5 years later. The Sheldon Reservoir, abandoned as a secondary water source in 2009, remains an approved water source. The current Temporary Permit lists the yield of the Sheldon Reservoir as "unknown".

With Inman Pond now constituting the single source of the town's water supply, the State of Vermont has encouraged the Town, at least since early 2009, to at least plan to develop one or more alternatives as emergency sources should the Inman Pond be compromised.

The E. Whitcomb Hyde Water Treatment Plant uses pulsated up-flow clarifiers and rapid sand filters plus chemicals for flocculation, pH adjustment and disinfection. Originally designed to treat 750,000 gallons per day (gpd), changes, such as using greater depths of sand in the filters, have reduced the capacity to 560,000 gpd according to its current Temporary Permit.

A 500,000 gallon finished water storage tank at the water treatment plant and another 500,000 gallon water storage tank off South Main Street provide pressurized water for domestic use and fire protection through 890 service connections. Water flows by gravity through the entire system.

According to 2012 and 2013 water production data the system provides an Average Day Demand (ADD) of 156,779 gpd. The 2009 Temporary Permit gives the ADD as 214,896 gpd and the Maximum Day Demand as 300 gpm. A recent study has shown that approximately 23% of the water produced at the water treatment plant is unaccounted for by meters at the water service connections due to meter inaccuracies, hydrant flows, leaks or theft.

The distribution system contains an amalgamation of pipe materials, sizes and ages. Copper pipe, galvanized, cast and ductile iron pipe as well as asbestos cement water mains, ranging in sizes from 4" to 12" in diameter and anywhere from brand new to 135 years old can be found throughout the system although many water lines have been replaced, especially since about 1980. The condition

and age of water valves throughout the system mimics that of the water mains. The fire hydrants themselves are in better overall repair. The Water Department and Fire Department collaborate on maintaining flow data on hydrants and use a paint scheme on them to identify hydrants which produce sub-standard flows.

According to the 2009 Temporary Operating Permit issued to the Town the system has no permitted reserve capacity.

The system has generally met its monitoring and reporting requirements. The Town engineers, in December 2014, completed the Phase I report for the water system which included water system mapping and created and calibrated a hydraulic model to assess the water system and identify deficiencies.

### **Municipal Sewer System**

The beginnings of the municipal sewer system date back to the first five years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Clay tile pipe in two-foot sections, ungasketed and butted end to end were laid by workers in trenches in places as much as thirteen feet deep. These trenches sloped from the heads of numerous streets and avenues in an intricate series of mazes to multiple outlets which dumped their contents into the Castleton River. At this time storm sewers which collected rain from the streets and downspouts of buildings were part of the same system helping to keep the sewers clean with snowmelt and storm water.

The system grew and spread throughout the village with changes in technology mostly consisting of new pipe materials until 1969 when the new Fair Haven Wastewater Treatment Facility was built adjacent to the Town Transfer Station on the south side of West Street. New sewer mains were installed to redirect the flows away from the river and to the new treatment facility. (Treated effluent from the facility is still discharged to the Castleton River.) Pump stations and force mains were installed to move sewage originating near the river or from the south side of the river up to the head of West Street whence it could flow by gravity to the treatment facility.

The treatment facility's original permitted design capacity was 250,000 gallons per day (gpd) although during wet seasons and especially during late winter and spring a combination of snowmelt and rain often sent flows in excess of 1 million gpd to the facility. A bypass at the new pump station at the bottom of Adams Street hill, built to direct to the Castleton River excess flows which the station could not handle, was rarely dry at such times. In the early 1980s, under order by the State of Vermont, the Town separated its storm sewers from its sanitary sewers reducing the hydraulic load on the treatment facility. This reduced, but by no means eliminated, the number of overflow events on Adams Street which still occurred at alarming frequencies. By the late 1980s a moratorium was placed on new sewer hookups due to a lack of treatment capacity at the facility.

In 1988 ground was broken on a major upgrade at the wastewater treatment facility which would double its design capacity to 500,000 gpd. In the history of the facility, the average daily flow for a month only exceeded that capacity on three occasions: in April 2001 and March and April 2008. It came close in December 2003. The crack in the dam appeared, quite literally, in 2008 when the Main Street dam began to fail. As fissures opened in the dam the water table began to fall, allowing

less ground water to seep – or pour – into the sewer lines, especially when the river was running high. Hurricane Irene completed the destruction of the dam in August 2011. From a high of 330,874 gpd for 2003 the average daily flow dropped to a low of 132,518 gpm in 2012.

In 2000 the undersized and overburdened pump station at Adams Street was replaced with a larger station with its own back-up power supply. In 2013 the long-suffering River Street ejector station built in 1969 to move sewage over the Castleton River was finally replaced. This old station had seen plenty of abuse from the start. Due to the lack of storm drains east of the trestle many of the homes there have sump pumps plumbed directly to the sanitary sewers. While dry weather flows often ran under 3,000 gallons per day through the ejector station, they could quickly swell to over 95,000 gpd during wet periods. This remains true today.

Over the years many private pump stations with their requisite force mains were built on the outskirts of the village to provide sewage disposal for new developments or to take the place of failed septic systems. Some of these were subsequently taken over by the Town while others were not. In either case many of these force mains have been subsequently used by abutters to connect to the municipal sewer, increasing the reach of sewer areas, especially over the past ten to twenty years.

The Town currently operates pump stations on River Street east of the bridge, at the bottom of Adams Street hill, at the west end of Academy Street, at the Vermont Welcome Center and at the National Guard Armory on Airport Road.

At the end of December 2014 the annual average daily flow had climbed to 144,932 gallons. With an Unconnected Committed flow of 13,551 gpd, the 12-Month Committed Flow stood at 158,483 gpd. The facility's design capacity of 500,000 gallons means that on January 1, 2015 the 12-Month Uncommitted Reserve Capacity was an enviable 345,517 gallons per day, or 61% of the facility's design flow.

In mid-2014 the Town's engineers performed a walkthrough of the facility as part of its Phase I engineering study to determine the life expectancy of the various facets of the sewer system, especially the wastewater treatment facility. This report is expected to tell us what the system requires to maintain the municipal sewer system not only as a viable system, but as a real and valuable asset to the Town for years to come.

## **Internet**

A generation ago the Internet would have been a part of science fiction, existing in the active imaginations of writers. Today we consider ourselves lost without the ability to access it. In the past two decades we have gone from desk top computers and the then familiar sound of the "dial up" connection being made, to high speed DSL. Several companies: FairPoint Communications, Comcast, SoverNet, HughesNet and VTel provide individual and business connections. Portable devices like notebook PC's, tablets and smart phones have created a need for internet connections beyond the home. The Fair Haven Free Library has not only wifi access but also has two desktop computers to allow patrons to access the internet for 30 minutes per day. If you have your own device the reading room is available for you to use during the hours they are open. The range of their wifi allows you to access it outside the building even during closed hours. The Town of Fair

Haven has added a wifi access without a password, which can be accessed on the south end of the town park and the downtown area 24 hours a day seven days a week. Access is also available with a password inside the municipal building. Anyone interested in using the latter must first obtain the password from the town office during regular business hours.

Some businesses in town also offer free wifi connections, McDonalds on 22A, The Cleaning Center and Tenney Brook/Dunkin Donuts offer this service in the downtown area. The Vermont Welcome Center on Prospect Street also offers free wifi. The American Legion building has a guest connection if you are an active member of the Legion.

### **Fair Haven Police Department**

The Fair Haven Police Department, under the leadership of Chief Bill Humphries, has become one of the best local police forces in the state. The department has four full-time officers and several part-time officers who provide full-time coverage (occasionally an officer is only on call). In-house detective service is also available.

The department manages to help town expenses by applying for and often obtaining grants from the state. The Governor's Highway Safety Grant, for example, is designed to use officers from several area municipalities to concentrate their efforts for a time in each town to check seat-belt use and to detect DUI infractions.

Since the close of the Castleton State Police barracks, several state-police officers use the Fair Haven Police Department office facilities. In addition to helping with expenses, their presence in and around town is valuable and appreciated.

### **Fair Haven Fire Department**

The Fair Haven Fire Department is a town department under the direction of the chief. It provides fire protection to the town of Fair Haven and has mutual aid agreements with neighboring departments. The primary purpose of the department is the saving of life and the protection of property. All equipment is purchased with these goals considered. The town has a fire hydrant system.

Every year, the department spends numerous hours in training, both locally and through regional training schools. Members are also trained in rescue work, HazMat awareness, CPR/AED certification, helicopter rescue training and fire ground communications.

The department is a member of the Vermont State Firefighters Association and the Rutland County Mutual Aid. The work force is approximately 20 members. The budget for operation is provided by the town as well as donations and fundraising. The town maintains a capitol fund to update equipment as needed.

Equipment includes

A2011KME custom pumper/rescue truck – it has a 1500 gpm pump, 750 gallons of water and 30 gallons of foam.

A 1997 International pumper/tanker. It has a 1250 gpm pump and 1500 gallons of water.  
A 1995 Dodge brush and utility truck.

### **Emergency Medical Services**

The Fair Haven Rescue Squad Inc. is an independent squad serving the Town of Fair Haven with mutual aid to surrounding communities. They are available twenty four hours a day seven days a week.

The squad is staffed by approximately 16 certified members who are advanced EMT's or Paramedics. They receive funding through donations, individual memberships, revenue from service charges and towns in the service area who contribute on- a prorated basis on population. They are located on Prospect Street. The squad is constantly updating their equipment and training. Equipment includes:

- 2 Advanced Life Support equipped ambulances
- 1 Intermediate Life Support equipped ambulance

### **Emergency Management**

Responsibility for the safety of Fair Haven's residents and visitors rests with the Board of Selectmen. Typically, the Board appoints an Emergency Management Coordinator to oversee the Town's activities in the four phases of Emergency Management – Preparedness, Response, Recovery, and Mitigation.

1. Preparedness – One of the key functions of the Emergency Management Coordinator is the preparation and annual updating of the Town's Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP). This document serves as a brief but comprehensive overview of the Town's Emergency Management system, including contact information for key personnel, information on shelter sites, delineation of responsibilities, and a National Incident Management System (NIMS) framework, to be used in the management of emergencies both large and small. The LEOP is a required document for maximum State funding matches under the Emergency Relief Assistance Funding (ERAF) Program.
2. Response – “Response” activities address the short-term, direct effects of an incident, and seek to save lives, protect property, and meet basic human needs. In Fair Haven, response services include fire suppression and rescue through the Fair Haven Fire Department, emergency medical treatment and transport via the Fair Haven Rescue Squad, and law enforcement and security, provided by the Fair Haven Police Department and the Fair Haven Constables.
3. Recovery – “Recovery” is the process of rebuilding, restoring, and rehabilitating the community following an emergency. The Town would maintain records of expenses incurred in the recovery from disasters, including road and culvert repairs. This information is forwarded to the Vermont Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security and the Vermont Agency of Transportation, where it can be used to support federal Disaster

Declaration requests and can lead to the Town's eligibility for significant cost reimbursements.

4. Mitigation – “Mitigation” is taking action before a disaster occurs to reduce loss of life and property damage. In 2009, the leadership of Fair Haven's emergency response community drafted an annex to the **Rutland Region All-Hazards Mitigation Pre-Disaster Mitigation** (PDM) Plan, which was approved by the Board of Selectmen, and presented to the Rutland Regional Planning Commission, to be forwarded to FEMA for approval. In the interim, however, the format for such documents was changed at the federal level, and the regional PDM plan was replaced with a town-specific Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). The Town is currently on a waiting list for assistance from the RRPC in developing this document. Adoption of a FEMA-approved LHMP will allow the Town to receive 12.5% state funding for eligible disaster-related recovery projects, instead of the standard 7.5% state match.

### Goals

All future development within the town should consider the capabilities of the Fire department to service such development. Use of dry hydrants and ponds should be considered.

The Fire department encourages residents to join the department

Since service by Rutland Regional Ambulance is 25 miles away, the need to keep the Fair Haven Rescue Squad is vital to saving lives in our town.

Facilities and equipment should be improved within the capabilities of the town budget.

### Action Items

The town shall encourage the continuance of the capital fund to replace outdated equipment.

The Planning Commission will have conversations with internet providers to increase internet access across the town.

The Planning Commission will identify areas for future development on the zoning map with input from the Fire Department to insure such development is in line with Fire Department capabilities.

Pursuant to 24 VSA Section 4430 & 4443, adopt a capital budget & program, and amend it annually thereafter.

The Town Reserve Funds ought to be reviewed to determine what baseline level of funds are needed for each fund. Thereafter, each fund should be maintained based on the identified need (i.e., based on an annual amount of growth to reach a specified amount or

based on replenishment of an existing level already attained and only added to when a portion of the funds are drawn down for a specified purpose.

The Town needs to continue to seek non-residential property tax based sources of funding to help with infrastructure improvements (e.g., Transportation Alternatives Grants, VT Community Development Program, Class 2 Paving Grants, etc.)

## Natural Resources

### Geological

Fair Haven's main geological asset is slate. We are at or near the northerly end of a slate vein which runs north/south through the westerly side of Castleton, through Poultney and to Pawlet, Vermont and Granville, New York. Our slate is now more than ever tied to our economic well-being since the local quarries and mills supply almost all of the industrial jobs in town.

The topsoil of our village area is largely sand, left over from a prehistoric inland sea.

### Zoological

For wildlife we have most of the common Vermont animals, including an occasional black bear or eagle, and there is always a small chance of seeing a moose. Our defining wildlife is the Eastern Timber Rattlesnake, which dens up near the West Haven easterly border. Located in the North Woods is a fragile den of rattlesnakes, one of only two habitats to exist in the state. Relatively few are even sighted and their nature camouflage and ability to avoid people, even while gathering sunlight, which is so much needed for their survival. People in early years hunted them for the bounties and some people still have unfounded fears of them. Rattlesnakes are rarely spotted away from the den, and because of our relatively short stretches of hot sunlight in summer (when they can build up venom) they are not considered deadly to anyone except small children and infirm adults. The local rattlesnakes are actually rather timid, try to hide from people and reportedly have not been seen in the village.

### Vegetation

The vegetation in Fair Haven varies, from both natural and decorative trees and shrubs in the village to forests like the "North Woods", where many species (sugar maple, red maple, several types of oak and hickory, ash, birch, beech, pine, hemlock and others) thrive. The remaining farm lands are primarily planted to grasses (hay) but occasionally we see a field of corn or other grain crop. The pastures, woodlands, marshes, swamps and ponds contain most of the species of vegetation common to Midwestern Vermont and the Champlain Valley.

### Water

Water Quality - Protecting the quality of water servicing the town, including both groundwater and surface waters, is an important part of the Town Plan. Water quality is protected in numerous ways including: 1) regulation of on-site sewage systems

- 2) Surface water setback requirements
- 3) Floodplain regulations
- 4) Vegetated buffer requirements
- 5) Erosion control measures on steep slopes

### **Protection of wetlands**

While there are other small water assets in town, the main three are Inman Pond (our municipal water supply), the Castleton River and the Poultney River. The Poultney River comprises our southerly and westerly town boundaries and the state line with New York. The Castleton River has, since the start of the official town, been our historical source of industrial water power, and we are still hoping to have it generate an appreciable amount of electricity on the grid (see “Energy” section).

### **Scenic Resources**

Two major features dominate Fair Haven’s landscape; the Taconic Mountains and the Poultney River Valley. Much of Fair Haven’s rural character and appeal results from the scenic vistas that can be observed from many parts of the town and include an interplay of villages, mountains, forested hills, farms, fields, river, streams, ponds, and woodlands. Some of these features include Inman Pond, the Castleton River, State forest Lands, Mud Brook, Old Marsh Pond, The Great Ledge (north of the village), Cedar Swamp, the Poultney River, North Woods (still untouched) Beaver Meadow and Carver’s Falls. Fair Haven is also fortunate to have many tree lined streets in the village and along outlining roads. Trees provide shade, beauty and habitat, can serve as food sources, and reduce noise and pollution, as well as increase property values by as much as 10%. Species in Fair Haven include the stately sugar maple.

### **Goals**

Generate a Town open space, significant features, recreation/open space, and natural resource plan.

### **Action Items:**

Generate a Town open space and natural resource plan that identifies and protects significant farm and forest land, watersheds and water quality, wildlife, including aquatic species, rare and endangered species, and exotic/non-invasive species.

Support efforts that protect the Eastern Timber Rattlesnake.

Apply to applicable agencies for planning and implementation funding to inventory the natural resources information necessary to create the open space and natural resource plan

Use the services of the RRPC to help with the inventory, planning, and mapping of the Town’s important natural resources.



## Parks and Recreation

Our Village Green contributes as much to our identity as a town as anyone or anything else in Fair Haven. Originally owned by Matthew Lyon, our most famous (and notorious) ancestor, it was granted to the town by Tilly Gilbert in 1805. With its large, shapely maples, its new fence and marble posts, its lawn outside the fence, its park benches, its shady walking paths and the fountain in the middle, it is one of those places where it is simply impossible to be tense. It is allegedly the only “spoked” town green left in Vermont. Like living in a house with a gorgeous view we who live in Fair Haven take our “Park” for granted. Many people pass through the edges of Fair Haven every day and never see our lovely green. The Exit 2 businesses contribute a great deal economically and socially to our town, but while we do not want to be totally defined by that area, we often are. We need to find ways to draw people from the stores and truck stops near Exit 2 to the businesses in the center of town. (see Goal 1)

Besides our village green or just “The Park” as it is commonly known by our residents, there are four other areas in town which are or can be used for recreation of some kind.

The Fair Haven Union High School playing fields, where football, soccer, track, baseball and softball can all be played formally in games. When the fields are not needed for school or community functions, citizens may use the grounds for exercise or informal games with permission of the Union High School Athletic Director, who is the ultimate authority over the playing fields.

The Fair Haven Grade School playgrounds, can also be used for both formal and informal play. While the school itself would seem to be the ultimate authority, there is a Recreation Committee which controls most of the planned activities here, especially during the summer, where there are regular programs to use not only the playing fields, but also the play area for young children. Anyone may play tennis on one of the courts if they are not already in use, and there are basketball hoops designed for pick-up games or individual practices.

The “South School Playground”, just easterly of the Eagles’ Club on Academy Street is not now being used. It is small but there is room there for a softball or Little League baseball field and a playground for small children. We should see what can be done to develop that into a real “park”.

The former airport grounds at the northerly end of Airport Road has several uses, for example bow shoots, and model airplane club, walking etc.

### Goals

Keep “The Park” as nice for posterity as it was preserved for us.

Promote recreational programs and activities for residents of all ages.

### Action Items

Continue to maintain the recreational facilities and Town’s Recreation Department Program.

Plant some maple saplings in the Park every decade or so to replace the big maples which are now over mature and can be expected to die within a few years.

To establish a committee or group to outline, develop and oversee more uses for both the “South School Playground” and the former airport.

Restructure the Recreation Committee to identify the community’s needs for residents of all ages, to make policy and program recommendations to the Selectboard and the Town Manager.

Include park & recreation facilities as part of an updated capital budget & program.

## Culture

The first inhabitants of Fair Haven were indigenous people, who utilized the natural resources and topographic features important for life. Paleo-Indians are believed to be the first Vermonters, and they undoubtedly traveled through and hunted in Fair Haven. They were hunters and gatherers and lived in the Champlain Lowlands.

Vermont served as a passageway for French and Indian raiding parties harassing English settlers to the south and east and served as a slave corridor when captured whites were marched north to Canada.

Fair Haven and what is now West Haven split in 1792 with West Haven obtaining the larger land mass, rich in agricultural land and access to Lake Champlain. While Fair Haven indeed had farms, the Castleton River afforded it an ideal spot for industry and it became more of an industrial town. The town’s business district starts at the bank of this river. A saw mill was built about 1783 by Col. Matthew Lyon, who also started the iron works in 1785 and a paper mill about 1790. This bustling village also could boast during the early years a tannery, cabinet maker’s shop, cloth dress works, hat shop, distilleries and inns. When Slate was discovered in 1839 a whole new way of life appeared for the town and many emigrants mainly from Wales and Ireland, came to town in search of a better life. Over the years countless slate companies have come and gone. Today two are based in Fair Haven, Vermont Structural Slate and Camara’s Slate.

Great leaps forward had occurred by the end of the 1800’s; telegraph, telephone and electric service along with public water and waste water had made life easier. We were fairly self-sustaining with several grocery stores, meat markets, bakeries, clothing stores, liveries, etc. There was also an opera house to provide entertainment and a Fair which took place every summer on the south side of town. There were many religious, military and civic minded groups which not only provided fellowship but also held events in towns.

For information on churches see page 19.

On our beautiful town green Fair Haven annually hosts, “Spring Fling”, which is put on by the Chamber of Commerce and held on the Saturday of the Memorial Day weekend to coincide with the Memorial Day Parade. Concerts are held every Thursday night in the summer at the gazebo and draw a good crowd each week. There is also an annual Classic Car Show, and Apple Fest rounds out the year with the Fair Haven Grade School hosting this event.

The Fair Haven Free Library, through *Friends of the Library*, hosts several programs both for adults and children throughout the year, the annual St. Patrick's Day musical program and the Holiday Open House being two of the favorite yearly events. Many well-known authors have spoken here also. In January the Fair Haven Historical Society holds their annual meeting, which is free and open to the public. Programs generally lean toward topics of area interest. There are also summer activities for the younger children through the Fair Haven Recreation Department.

**Goal** - We should strive to preserve Fair Haven's New England character.

**Action Items:**

Continue to support Concerts in the Park, Spring Fling, Apple Fest, and other cultural events that promote Fair Haven and its viability as a sub-regional cultural hub to the greater Rutland County and eastern Washington County, New York regions.

Foster possible collaboration with the owner of the Opera House to help realize re-opening of the venue for additional value-added cultural opportunity.

At least through membership support, help promote local and regional chamber of commerce efforts, especially related to cultural events benefiting Fair Haven.

Support on-going activities and special events sponsored by the Fair Haven Historical Society.

Work to re-obtain the Village Center Designation or, if possible, obtain a Downtown Designation.

Make sure the Library is included for consideration in the capital budget & program.

## Historic Sites and Features

In early days there was a library association. Then in 1886 a library was located over the First National Bank (now Merchant's bank on Main Street). In 1905 Andrew Carnegie provided \$8,000 for a new library building. The town library remains today one of the architectural gems of the town and is one of only four Carnegie libraries in Vermont. The library is the hub of the community with a varied circulation of books and movies.

Many churches were built around the green in the center of town. The Congregational Church was formed in 1803 and erected a building in 1812 on the north end of the green. The Methodist church was organized in 1825, a church built in 1843 on the northwest corner of the green, was destroyed by fire in 1877. The present church was dedicated in April of 1778. The first account of Baptist preaching in town was in 1865. The church was built on the west side of the green in 1867. The Catholic Church was originally located on the corner of South Park Place and Main Street but outgrew that structure and Our Lady of Seven Dolours was opened in 1873 on Washington Street. This is the only church with a private cemetery, located a few blocks north of the church on Washington St. The Episcopal Church sits on the corner of Main Street and Allen Ave. Two Welsh churches on North Main Street have been closed for many decades and their buildings repurposed. The French Catholic church which was once located on Caernarvon Street was closed and

dismantled decades ago. Fair Haven, like the majority of towns in the state and country, has seen a decline in church membership over the past several decades and the churches struggle to survive with a dwindling, older membership.

The two banks in Fair Haven were The First National Bank founded in 1864 and the Allen National Bank founded in 1879.

In 1848 the D&H railroad began coming through town. A depot was built to accommodate the train traffic but it burned and was replaced with the present depot around 1894.

### **Goal**

To continue to protect not only the historic buildings which lie in the Historic district of the downtown, but also the buildings such as the library, town offices, depot, churches and schools. Sites should also include the cemeteries and the Park. (Information from the Fair Haven Historical Society)

### **Action Item**

The Planning Commission will research ways that they can ensure the preservation of the historic architecture and history of the town.

Support on-going activities and special events sponsored by the Fair Haven Historical Society.

Apply for historic grants (e.g., Historic Preservation of Vermont and the Vermont Community Development Program) to carry out Town-identified projects of historic consequence.

## **Energy**

Energy use in the town of Fair Haven parallels patterns throughout other rural communities. Transportation and home heating are the two primary draws on fuel and energy. While energy use in Fair Haven is low due to the sparse population and lack of industry, and Vermont has the sixth lowest per-capita energy use in the country, rising energy costs and the environmental impacts of energy production have made energy an important issue and a planning priority. (Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration)

With two large truck stops and at least three other gas stations, Fair Haven residents have plenty of access to gasoline, Kerosene, diesel (fuel) oil and other petroleum products for motor vehicles, Electricity, provided to the townspeople by Green Mountain Power Company, is still primarily delivered in Fair Haven by pole lines. In a few places in town electricity is distributed by underground cable, which seems to be the wave of the future.

Propane is readily available in small containers from at least three retail businesses in town and in bulk from several companies outside of town but not far away.

### **Hydroelectric**

While hydroelectric generation was a part of our town many years ago, there has not been any hydroelectric power generated here in decades. The Town of Fair Haven now has a committee set up to explore and implement the use of our Upper Falls of the Poultney River for the generation of hydroelectric power for the Green Mountain Power Company grid. So far they seem to be making good progress in working with the Vermont Public Service Board and other state agencies, but they still have a long way to go and it is very difficult to get approval for this kind of project. It is our goal as a Commission and we think it should be the goal of the town itself and its residents to encourage, support and help the hydro committee in any way we can.

### **Biomass**

Several years ago, Fair Haven tried to get a biomass plant, which would also have produced pellets for stoves and small furnaces, through a prominent Northeast biomass company. A very large majority of our residents supported this plant, and for a while we were very optimistic, but in the end it appears the company was not able to obtain the necessary permits from the State of Vermont. As with the hydroelectric project, the town and its townspeople should do whatever they can to secure that asset for the town.

### **Geothermal**

Geothermal is the heat form the interior of the earth, and someday in the fairly near future it may be used to heat most of our houses and buildings. It is used with success in parts of this country, but for some reason it has not gotten a good foothold in this state. Some of the pitfalls and their possible corrections in the future are: (1) Heat-exchangers for this application are not as good as they could be. (With American ingenuity we can expect them to improve in the near future.) (2) There do not seem to be many people in this area well versed in the installation of geothermal mechanics (Somebody will eventually step up and serve and advertise in Vermont when they see the need and the opportunity). (3) The cost of building a house or building will be more. (On the other hand, you never have to pay for fuel, as you are using the warmth from underneath the ground).

### **Wood**

Some Fair Haven residents still burn wood to heat all or part of their houses. The most efficient have their own small wood lot nearby, and it only costs them a little in gasoline and a lot of sweat to heat their homes. Lacking that, they can buy wood cut and split, they can purchase it in bulk (and work it up themselves), or now the most popular way to use wood is to buy it in pellet form for use in stoves or furnaces.

### **Solar and Wind**

The state has established a set of ambitious goals to increase the use of renewable energy for both heating and electricity, and as of fall 2015, most of the renewable energy projects in Rutland County are solar (PV) arrays. As of fall of 2015, Fair Haven has three small solar (PV) panels.

Fair Haven acknowledges that new energy generation must avoid undue adverse impacts on local communities and the environment. Thus, the Town of Fair Haven encourages renewable energy generation development only when the facility will: 1. Practice a good neighbor policy, and will not disrupt the view or peaceful nature of neighboring properties 2. Be adequately screened from neighbors and roads 3. Will not disrupt the character of the Scenic Resources listed on page 16 of this plan 4. Include a full decommissioning plan

**Goal** - To find a balance between the use of fossil fuel and renewable resources.

**Action Items**

Determine suitable places / siting criteria for renewable energy generation resources.

Pursue applications to generate electricity through waterpower on the upper falls of the Castleton River.

Where possible and financially feasible, make Town-owned buildings as energy efficient as possible, especially as existing buildings are rehabbed or updated. When new buildings are proposed, the design of such buildings should incorporate energy efficiency.

Work with applicable organizations and programs (e.g., P.A.C.E) to help promote energy efficiency in existing/new residential, commercial, and industrial buildings.

Where possible, the Town should help with efforts to realize a biomass and other renewable energy facilities in the Industrial 2 District.

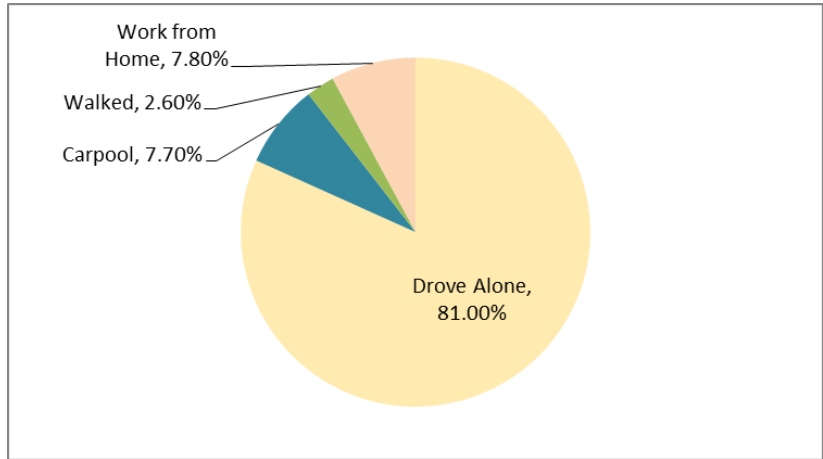
## Transportation

### General Assets

Fair Haven’s main commercial advantage is in its transportation system and its role as the “gateway” to Vermont from all points west and southwest.

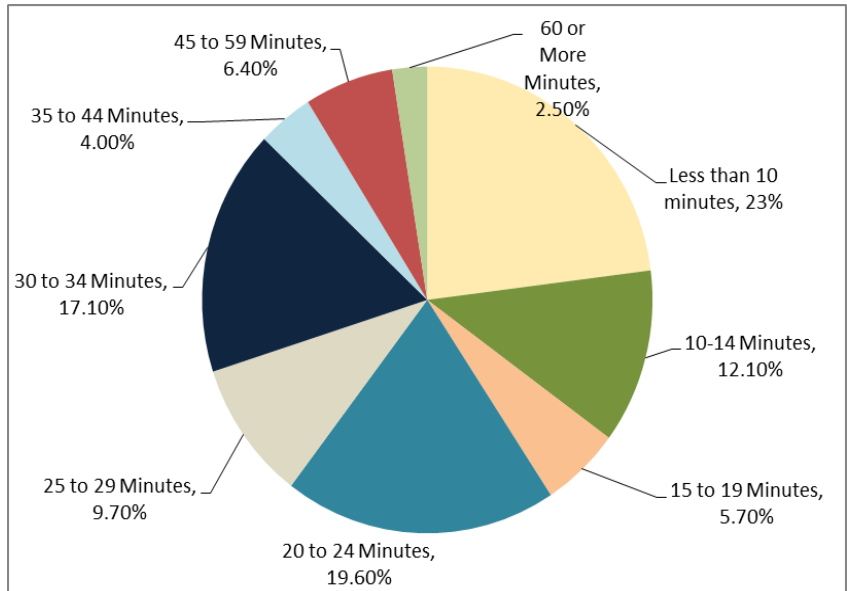
The limited-access, four lane, divided highway US Route 4, is the primary gateway to Vermont for visitors and commerce from New York, western Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the rest of the country west and south of those states. AT “Exit 2” US Route 4 intersects with Vermont Route 22A, which emanates from New York Route 22 in Granville, New York. In Fair Haven US Route 4 delivers a great deal of traffic to VT Route 22A North, which is the main corridor on the west side of the state to Burlington, Canada and northern Vermont.

The Clarendon & Pittsford Railroad enters Vermont from Whitehall, New York near US Route 4 and runs easterly through Castleton to Rutland. Both freight and passenger rail service runs through Fair Haven on the railroad, and there are several sidings in town. An Amtrak train runs once a day on these tracks from New York City to Rutland (and vice versa). Fair Haven was for several years a stopping point for Amtrak, that stop was moved to Castleton several years ago.



Above: Mode of Transportation for Town Residents.  
 Below: Average Commute Time for Town Residents  
 Source: Census 2010

Our Present “Air Park” (the former municipal airport) has now been decommissioned, and the large parcel of land seems now to be underused. The land would seem to be valuable, and the question of what is the best use of the former “airport” lands should be considered and dealt with in the reasonably near future.



We have limited public transportation. There is no taxi service in our town, but it is available from Castleton and Poultney. We are a stop for “The Bus” and the Marble Valley Regional Transit District. While these facilities are already used by some, their more frequent use by townspeople should be encouraged.

The adequacy and design of parking in and near the downtown district has long been the source of much discussion, but generally it seems to function fairly well. Some residents and employees of the “downtown” area use the large parking area on the westerly side of VT. Route 4A (and 22A) through the middle of town, but that is what makes parking easily accessible to customers of the businesses of our main commercial area, and at least so far, the system seems to work.

The Utilities and Educational Facilities map depict the transportation routes and facilities existing in Fair Haven today. Of Fair Haven’s 36.316 miles of roadways, 2.785 miles are “Class 1” Town Highways (State Highways running through Urban Compact Limits) about 8.160 miles are “Class 2” Town Highways (connecting links between towns or population centers), 14.830 miles are “Class 3”

Town Highways (the balance of highways which are navigable by a regular passenger car for twelve months of the year) and 1.69 miles are “Class 4” Town Highways (these are public rights of way which, other than culverts, are not required to be maintained by the town).

### **Traffic Patterns**

Because of its location within commuting distance to Rutland, Fair Haven has experienced a significant increase in traffic along key commuting routes. In addition to Fair Haven’s own residents, commuters from surrounding communities travel through our town en route to and from US Route 4. As a result, “levels of service”, which are used to measure the effect on capacity of current road conditions, are likely to be stressed at major intersections within the town.

### **Bridges**

There are several highway bridges in the Town of Fair Haven. The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) routinely inspects the bridges and rates them according to their condition; bridges with ratings below 50 are considered marginal and in need of repair. VTrans is currently working, as State and Federal money becomes available, to replace or rehabilitate all bridges which have a rating below 50. There are 4 bridges which fall under town jurisdiction 2 bridges are closed. The traffic has been diverted from Depot St. to Colvin Rd. Adams street bridge has been closed to traffic for some time and traffic now has to flow only down Main St. Two of the Castleton River bridges are steel bridges which were built to replace others destroyed in the 1927 flood, and two were built in the late 1960s as part of the then-new US Route 4 divided highway. The “West Street Bridge”, which crossed the Poultney River into New York State, has recently been replaced and should be in good condition for many years to come.

### **Sidewalks**

Fair Haven’s sidewalk system serves the village area and provides access to various popular destinations, such as the Post Office, the Fair Haven Free Library, and the village commercial or “downtown” district. Many town sidewalks have recently been improved, and a study of the sidewalk system as a whole is now being undertaken in order to establish priorities and needs for the future. We hope to eventually revisit (with repairs or replacement) all of the town sidewalks over the next several years. .

### **Goals**

Support multi-modal transportation within the town, and improve transportation in an effort to boost economic activity in the town.

### **Action Items**

The above goals will be prioritized according to the availability of funds for each individual project.

Establish relevant road and transportation policies.

Organize regular culvert inventory and, where necessary, replacement or repair of culverts.

Sidewalk inventory, “scoping” engineering and, as needed, repair or replacement



Apply for grant funding to help us improve roads, engineer and build sidewalks, and complete other transportation projects as needs arise and grant funds become available.

Analyze state ratings of all bridges and establish continuing schedules, based on present information, to encourage the State of Vermont to repair any with a low rating.

Improve pedestrian ways (and where applicable, bicycle trails) to major commercial, educational, recreational and other points of interest in town.

If possible improve vehicular access to and parking near downtown businesses.

Determine the best future for the “Air Park”.

Repair the Depot Street Bridge for Pedestrian use, and conduct feasibility analysis as to the best use of the buildings owned by the Town of Fair Haven on Colvin Street and the area surrounding the former railroad station.

The town should consider marking the main downtown crosswalk near Tenneybrook as a high visibility crosswalk with additional signage.

As financially feasible, replace the Adams Street bridge with a new bridge that accommodates motor vehicles, pedestrian traffic, and the utility infrastructure.

Adopt a capital budget & program and, thereafter, update it annually, to address the transportation needs of the Town.

## Flood Resiliency Plan

Act 16, an act relating to municipal and regional planning and flood resilience, became law May 6, 2013.

To encourage flood resilient communities, the goals of Act 16 are:

1. New development in the identified flood hazard area, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas should be avoided. If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.
2. The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be encouraged.
3. Flood emergency preparedness and response planning should be encouraged. 24 VSA §4302(14)

As is so often stated within this Town Plan, Fair Haven is located in a particularly well situated area. During times when areas around us are experiencing major damage from flooding we have escaped with little or no damage. The 1913 flood, which had a major impact around us, only occasioned the loss of a shed at one of the slate mills in town, the 1927, flood which affected the entire state, had a much smaller impact on our town. Irene in 2011 devastated many towns and caused damage to one small area of Fair Haven, which was well within the flood plain. No privately owned property received help from FEMA and no property owner took part in the FEMA buyout. However there

was a FEMA claim from this storm from the Town of Fair Haven for an air compressor motor at the River Street Sewer Ejector Station....Total Claim was for \$1,881.49.

The flood resiliency map indicates the number of structures in our flood prone areas, you will note the total number is 79, which would indicate a very low chance of major flooding impact on structures in the town as a whole, with only 35 structures in the area most prone to flooding.

### **Goals**

To make certain that the Town of Fair Haven is able to recover from flooding quickly and in a way that improves flood resilience.

To see that development in the Town of Fair Haven occurs in a manner that does not worsen flooding.

To make sure that the citizens, property and economy, the quality of life of the townspeople of Fair Haven, and the town's natural resources are protected by using sound planning practices to address flood risks.

### **Action Items**

Complete the EPA and State of Vermont flood resiliency checklists.

Invite the State to groundtruth the town's river corridor maps.

Adopt River Corridor Protection language in to the Town's Flood Hazard Regulations.

Review current zoning bylaws, existing emergency plans, and other plans and regulations, to ensure they adequately address the flood resiliency goals of Act 16. Then, if necessary, amend those documents applicably.

## **Education**

The town provides education for its students in two schools:

Fair Haven Grade School serves students Pre-K through grade 8.

Fair Haven Union High School serves students in grades 9-13 from five towns: Benson, Castleton, Fair Haven, Orwell and West Haven.

### **Fair Haven Grade School**

The school sits on 28 acres of land which encompasses the ball fields and courts behind the school. Many acres are in wetlands and while the school is high on the bluff the fields below are prone to some flooding, the good news is this affords opportunities for lessons in science and conservation.

Fair Haven Grade school was built in 1916. The school opened its doors at the beginning of the spring semester of the 1916-17 school year. Records found for the spring semester 1917 indicate a student population in grades 1-8 of 310 students. An addition to the rear of the school was built during the 1973-74 school year to accommodate the influx of students from the parochial school

that closed in the early 1970's. This addition included a new gym and library along with many new classrooms. A third addition was erected in 1989, and an energy upgrade was completed in 2007.

The student population is in the area of 350 (Pre-k through grade 8), which is down from the population of the 1990's.

The District Mission statement reads as follows: *"We are dedicated to the academic excellence of every student by empowering them with the means for the successful completion of district, state and national educational standards and by challenging them to be productive members of society. We are committed to a comprehensive system of support to assure each student has the opportunity to develop the skills and talents necessary for college and career readiness."*

The school has long enjoyed a good relationship with the community. The proximity to the center of town, and the fact that many of the townspeople attended school in that same building, may be part of the reason for its standing in the community. During the year the school sponsors events that include the community, starting with Applefest in September. The 2014 Applefest marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this event. Supermarket Bingo is held before Thanksgiving every year and there is a school report night in the spring. There are also chorus and band concerts and programs which display the talents of the children and their development through the year.

The school maintains a comprehensive website that disseminates information to students, faculty and the community.

Education spending per equalized pupil<sup>1</sup>:

FY2011	\$10,839.92	FY2014	\$12,228.45
FY2012	\$10,919.49	FY2015	\$12,504.99
FY2013	\$11,603.35		

### **Fair Haven Union High School**

Fair Haven Union High School is located at 33 Mechanic Street at the end of two dead end streets and sits on 15.7 acres of land. The high school opened its doors on October 7, 1957. Total construction costs (not including land and other expenses) was \$458,927.26. Three additions have been erected, the first in 1965 when the Library wing was added. In 1973-74 the industrial arts and the "open English" wing was added to alleviate overcrowding. The most recent addition was built in 1997 with a new second floor science wing, and a new music wing.

The school educates students from five towns; Castleton, Fair Haven, West Haven, Benson and Orwell. Currently the school's population is about 450 students, down from its population in the 1990's.

Their mission statement reads:

---

<sup>1</sup> Furnished by Laura Jakubowski, Addison Rutland Supervisory Union

*Fair Haven Union High School, in partnership with the community, will promote in all students the knowledge and skills necessary to become independent thinkers, effective communicators, and responsible, productive citizens in the global community.*

***Fair Haven Union High School students will:***

*Communicate effectively using verbal, written, artistic, and technical forms of expression.*

*Have the skills necessary to be successful in post-secondary education, the military, or employment.*

*Develop, explain, and apply an organized process for problem-solving.*

*Demonstrate personal and social responsibility by contributing to a safe and well-disciplined academic environment.*

*Develop their understanding of the historical forces that continue to shape our nation and our world; and develop a sense of the role of the individual in a global society.*

*Use computers, telecommunications, and other tools of technology to research, to gather information and ideas, and to represent information and ideas accurately and appropriately.*

***Fair Haven Union High School will:***

*Provide a safe and orderly learning environment in which each student feels valued as a unique individual with an important contribution to make to the school community.*

*Provide the resources, staff, and facility necessary for students to achieve their individual potential.*

*Provide an integrated, diverse, and challenging curriculum that meets the changing needs of students.*

*Provide and adequately fund a wide variety of co-curricular/extracurricular activities that promote students' personal and social development.*

*Provide a variety of student services, which are based on the active, positive involvement of parents, faculty, administration, and community members.*

The school offers a wide variety of course and learning opportunities including, Advance placement (college credit) classes, Business Technology, Family and Consumer Science, Fine Arts, Languages, Mathematics, Physical Education, Science, Social Studies, Technology Education, the Stafford Technical Center in Rutland which historically hosts approximately 35 students in grades 11 and 12 and The Annex which offers a flexible schedule to accommodate the learning needs of some students, which may include work study at local businesses. Approximately 12 students currently participate in work study.

The constantly changing world of technology has been a main focus of the administration of the school. The task of keeping the technology up to date and planning for new growth is a challenge. The devices used today were not developed as recently as a decade ago. Bridging the educational generation gap between parents who grew up with text books and land lines to children who were born into an age of wireless computers and cell phones has been a difficult one. The world is now just a mouse click away. What once took hours, days or weeks to research can be located in a second. This, like everything, has its pros and cons. However this world is here to stay and the students must learn to use this in their daily lives in order to succeed.

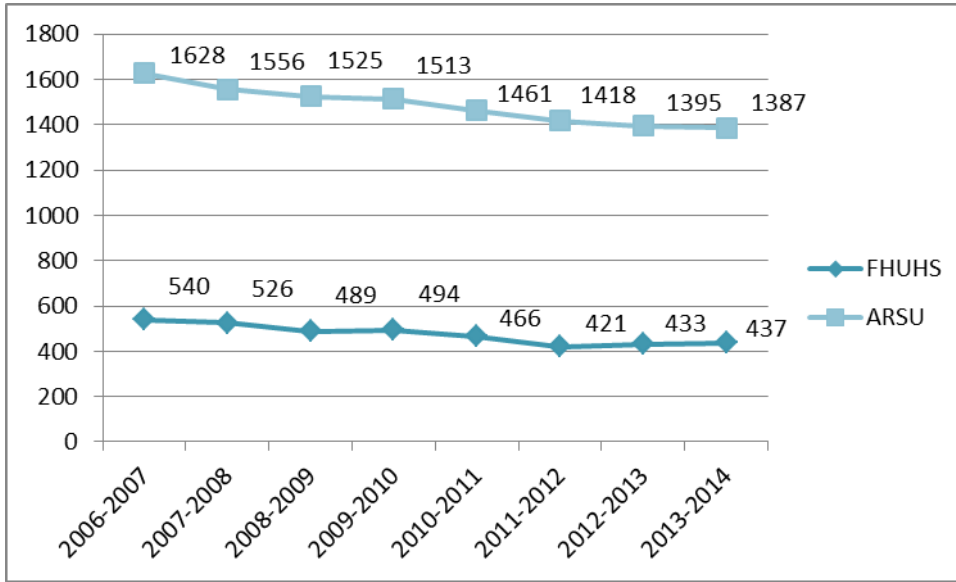
Both the indoor and outdoor sports facilities are heavily used by students. The track is used by area residents when not in use by the school as a place to walk, or run in a safe environment.

Extracurricular activities include sports: Basketball, Baseball, Cheerleading, Cross Country, Field Hockey, Golf, Football, Indoor Track, Soccer, Softball, Tennis, Track & Field and Wrestling.

Clubs: Adventure, Chess, Community Service, Field & Forest, French, Literacy and Spanish.

Activities: Band (Concert and Jazz), Cadets, Chorus, Drama, Flag Line, Homeward Success, Keynotes, Marching Band, NHS, Poetry Out Loud, SADD, Scholar's Bowl, Snowboarding, Student Government and Yearbook.

**Secondary School Student Enrollment**



Fair Haven Union High School, like Fair Haven Grade School has a good relationship with the town. The residents attend the athletic games in good

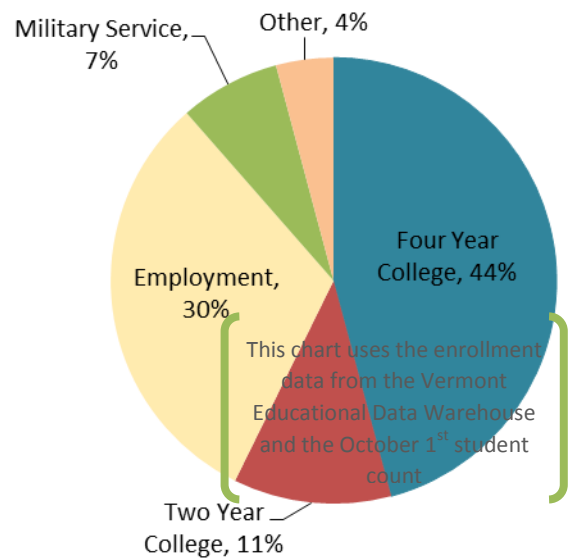
numbers. The Break-A-Leg Society has enjoyed sold out performances of their productions. Band and chorus concerts have good attendance.

It is a hope to one day have a Performing Arts Theater at the school. This could be used not only for student activities but also as a location for town events.

**Education spending per equalized pupil<sup>2</sup>:**

FY2011	\$12,081.30
FY2012	\$12,232.26
FY2013	\$12,679.04
FY2014	\$14,159.79
FY2015	\$13,483.90

**Post-Secondary Activities based on 2014 graduating class:**



<sup>2</sup> Furnished by Laura Jakubowski, Addison Rutland Supervisory Union

Conclusion: Although the day to day operations of our schools is the responsibility of their administrations and School Boards, it is vital that all residents of the town, whether or not they have students, are well informed and participate in setting the direction that schools are headed.

Both schools continue to keep pace with the ever changing landscape of education and technology. The challenges have changed greatly over the past generations. Not all students come from a stable home, some are homeless. These also put a strain on the local educational system.

The community has done and continues to do a commendable job in supporting, not only financially, the schools in the town.

In recent years the cost of educating our children has risen steadily while at the same time the population of our schools has decreased. The tax burden for Fair Haven, like the whole of Vermont, has become unsustainable. More needs to be done at the state level to devise a new approach to funding the education system in Vermont to lessen the cost while continuing to successfully educate our students.

### **Goals**

To educate all children from early education to grade 12 to be productive members of society and responsible citizens.

We would want to encourage a required civics class at the high school level, in order that future generations will be capable of writing a Town Plan.

We also need to expand educational opportunities for gifted students at all levels to ensure they too have the opportunity to excel to their full potential.

### **Action Items**

Any adopted capital budget & program should include consideration for school facilities.

The Town's overall recreational "program" should be created in sync with the school districts and their athletic and extra-curricular programs. Where possible, joint use of facilities should be improved upon.

## Child Care

According to the 2010 Federal Census there were 108 children in town under the age of 5, while that number plummeted from the 2000 census which showed 290 children under the age of 5, the need for daycare has increased in the past generation due to the rise of two income families. Fair Haven's daycare and preschools are fairly fluid. There have been preschools that were part of the community for years, one for decades. However at this writing there is no "pre-school" in operation in town. According to the *Bright Futures, Child Care Information System*<sup>3</sup> there are 9 daycare providers in town, offering structured and unstructured settings.

### Goal

Ensure that child care provisions in town meet the needs of the residents.

### Action Items

Planning Commission will review zoning to ensure that the town does not inhibit the ability of licensed/permitted child care providers to operate in town.

Planning Commission will work collaboratively with neighboring towns to support affordable early childhood care and education.

## Economic Development

### Past and Present

At its very birth Fair Haven was an industrial town, as Matthew Lyon and his compatriots established several mills (and related small factories) using the water power of the Castleton River. In fact there was still an operating grist mill near the upper falls as late as the 1930s. By the time the present "downtown" was built and improved through the last half of the nineteenth century, the emphasis of town business was more on the commercial side.

The Park and Downtown remain the heart and pride of the community, serving as the central business district. The area has a good mix of single and multi-story historic buildings and uses, including retail, office, restaurants, services, governmental, churches, library, residential (elderly, rental, and single-family), a second story opera house, a beautiful green space, and recreation. It is fully serviced by water, sewer, public transportation, a state designated park and ride, LED converted street lighting, free public wifi, and even an electric vehicle (EV) charging station. In addition, the local grade school, Police Department, and Fire Department are located in the area. In other words, the area serves as the epitome of a traditional Vermont downtown surrounding a well cared for town green. Besides buildings surrounding the Park, the Park itself is on the National Register of Historic Places.

---

<sup>3</sup> [www.brightfutures.dcf.state.vt.us](http://www.brightfutures.dcf.state.vt.us)

The broad land use pattern in downtown is fairly well established, but there are opportunities for redevelopment, façade improvements, and rehabilitation. To support the downtown’s viability and livability, in the past, the Town participated in the state’s Downtown Program via a Village Center Designation. The designation allowed Fair Haven to receive grants for improvements within the identified area, gave priority designation for some state-funded grants, and allowed property owners some eligibility to receive tax credits for building improvements. Unfortunately, with expiration of the Town Plan, the town lost its designation. Once the plan herein is adopted (and approved by the RRPC), the Town intends to re-apply for at least a Village Center Designation, if not a Downtown Designation, so the area’s businesses, property owners, and the Town can once again benefit from the Downtown Program. The boundaries of the original designation are shown in the below figure.

Re-obtaining at least the Village Center Designation will allow the Town to further the intent of the Future Land Use and other sections of the plan herein. It will better allow public and private physical improvements in this all-important mixed-use area of Town. The designation will allow focused resources to help this area have a better opportunity to thrive. Having access to historic tax credits will support redevelopment/rehabilitation of older and historic properties while preserving the historic character of the designated center. In addition, the Town could benefit from downtown transportation funds intended to improve pedestrian and other public safety.

**Commercial**

Fair Haven has a population of only about two thousand eight hundred, but we are the primary commercial center for about the same number of people, i.e. the residents of West Haven, Benson, and Hampton, New York. We are also, if not a primary at least a secondary commercial center for Castleton, Hubbardton, Orwell, Poultney, and Whitehall, New York. The Fair Haven Inn (a highly rated Greek restaurant), Carl Durfee’s Clothing Store, Fair Haven Chrysler Dodge (a car/truck dealership and repair) all businesses around “Exit 2”, our recreational vehicles center “Exit 1 RV”, Interior Connections, (gift shop), and the tattoo parlor all bring in customers from outside the areas mentioned above. In addition to the businesses specifically mentioned we have two banks and one credit union, two franchise restaurants (McDonalds and Subway), a lunch counter, purveyors of Chinese and Italian food, a supermarket, a laundromat, a pharmacy/drugstore, a





hardware store, financial services, a bookkeeping service, a liquor store, two large truck-stops with convenience stores, three other gas stations, two with convenience stores attached (Stewart's and Dunkin' Donuts), a bar, two exercise/fitness centers, a "Dollar General" variety store, used car sales, a truck repair garage, two fuel-oil delivery services, a lawyer, a veterinarian, two barber shops, three hair salons, two summer snack bars, a photographer and two insurance offices.

Tom St. John successfully ran a sporting goods store in Fair Haven, and we had always had at least one florist in town until recent years. We also had a book store for a while. We should work to reestablish these outlets in our community. A pet store, a shoe store or a music store are other commercial businesses we could try to attract. Our ultimate goal should be to have commercial businesses on the ground floor of all of our large downtown buildings, with shops and offices on the upper floors.

### Industrial

Fair Haven has for a long time had a slate industry to employ some of our residents, but we need more than that. We recently lost our Skyline mobile-home manufacturer, which employed a few administrators, bosses and salesmen as well as about sixty workers to build the mobile homes. Few of the jobs could be classified as "careers", but it was a good place for mostly young, mostly men to get started; many, after establishing themselves as good and cooperative workers, later applied for good jobs, outside town, especially at the General Electric plant in Rutland.

Todd Ferguson's shop for his thriving metal-working business in Fair Haven at the former Cumberland Farms plant on Prospect Street. Even though they work on jobs all around the Northeast, they do not employ a great number of people in the Fair Haven shop, and most of the jobs require experience and specialized skills.

Fair Haven has for years been trying to attract industry. The last project which failed was the proposed Beaverwood biomass plant. We need and want new "light" industry in Fair Haven, and our zoning has sites set aside for that purpose.

We are well suited to have industry with our advantages of transportation and our desire for local jobs, and we need to continue to encourage industry, and business to locate in Fair Haven.

Present day industries include Camara Slate and Vermont Structural Slate. As in many towns, business interests have expanded into outlying areas. In Fair Haven's case, this is north of the village center on Route 22A. Commercial businesses include a pharmacy, restaurants, grocery store, hardware store, credit unions and two truck stops, insurance agency while we still maintain an active business district in the center of town.

### **Goal**

Increase the economic activity in Fair Haven.

**Action Item**

Work with a local Chamber of Commerce to increase the number of businesses in Fair Haven.  
Attract a new industry in town.

Re-obtain the Town's village Center Designation or, if possible, obtain a Downtown Designation, in an effort to revitalize and to attract business and visitors to the downtown area.

Continue to promote linking the Park with the downtown and other activities surrounding the Park (other businesses, Library, Town Offices, churches, grade school, elderly and other housing).

Participate in activities and continue to support membership in the Rutland Region Chamber of Commerce and the Rutland Economic Development Corporation. In addition, the Town needs to be ever-vigilant to remind those organizations to be more inclusive of western Rutland County municipalities in carrying out their respective missions.

Create public/private partnerships that maintain, expand, and attract local business (e.g., apply for public infrastructure funding to help with fire code safety and pedestrian accessibility).

Plan for and carry out infrastructure improvements as needed. This can be best accomplished with updating and annually maintaining a capital budget & program.

Improve the Town's recreational programs so that people of all ages benefit, and, thus, helping to make Fair Haven even more desirable to live and work in.

Examine the Zoning Ordinance and other regulations to ensure they are appropriately business-friendly, including for the creative economy, green industry, IT/computer-based technology business, start-up and footloose business, adaptive re-use of existing buildings, and businesses that foster high level multiplier effects.

## Land Use

### Land Area, Types and Topography

Fair Haven contains slightly more than eleven thousand acres (seventeen and one-half square miles). The residential and commercial "village" is about nine hundred acres, or about 8% of the town's total area. The rural and open lands account for approximately 4,770 acres, or 43% of the total, with the remaining 49% consisting of forests, rocky hills, wetlands, town watershed and lands of the State of Vermont.

Topographically, the town runs from a high point of 947 feet above sea level at the summit of "Coon's Den" in the "North Woods" to a low of about 285 above sea level at the point where the Poultney River exits town above "Carver's Falls" at the common boundary with West Haven and New York State. The primary residential and commercial districts are generally flat and sandy and lie roughly 385 feet above sea level.

## **Climate**

People often ask why this town was named “Fair Haven”. One theory is that it was so named because we have arguably the best or “fairest” climate in the State of Vermont. Lower in elevation than most of the towns around us, Fair Haven seems often, but naturally not always, protected from the prevailing winds out of the west by the hills near the easterly border of New York State in Hampton. We get our fair share of storms, but often they do not seem as intense here as in other nearby towns. For instance, hurricane “Irene” a few years ago caused some flooding to the Cottage Street and River Street area, which did damage a few homes but nothing to the gravity of other towns in our area.

## **Soils and minerals**

The sand on top of the blue clay in the village was once (tens of thousands of years ago) supposedly a beach on an inland sea. Over millions of years blue clay became shale, and then ultimately slate. While all of these substances are present at the surface in some parts of town, the deeper substance is apt to be under more pressure and therefore more “advanced” geologically. So where there is no sand, blue clay is often just below the surface, beneath a thin layer of recently decomposed vegetation or wood duff. Even where there is sand on the surface, as in most of the village, the blue clay starts about five feet down.

## **Water**

With two rivers running through town there is almost always plenty of water. The Poultney River flows from the southwesterly corner of Fair Haven northerly and westerly along our border. The Castleton River flows generally westerly from the town it is named for to join the Poultney River a little northwest of the large bridges across U.S. Route 4 between Exits 1 and 2. “Mud brook” also runs into the Poultney River northwesterly of the village.

A Natural Wetland Inventory map, on file at the Fair Haven Town Clerk’s Office, shows many small patches of wetlands, some even in the residential portion of town.

## **Historic Land Use**

Because New Hampshire Governor Benning Wentworth, was the representative of the King of England as the proprietor of the “New Hampshire Grants” (now Vermont) did not want to further annoy the neighboring New Yorkers, Fair Haven was not chartered until October 27, 1779 (signed by Thomas Chittenden, Governor of the (then) Republic of Vermont. In 1792, Fair Haven split into two towns, with the portion still named Fair Haven largely on the south and east and the newly established West Haven on the north and west.

River-valley soils and possibly the best climate in the State of Vermont have traditionally made agriculture, particularly dairy farming, an important land use in Fair Haven. While there are still a couple of dairy farms operating in town, the future of dairying anyplace in Vermont is doubtful. While other, smaller agricultural endeavors are still under way in Fair Haven, it will be hard in the future for the town to replace the land use, jobs, and scenery that dairy farming has always provided our town.

After the split West Haven was larger in both area and population, but Fair Haven was left with a large commercial advantage because of the mills and the water power which was soon harnessed on the Castleton River. While these original mills are now gone, they play a prominent role in our town's history until well into the twentieth century. Even now there is a local movement to try to produce electrical power from the Castleton River on the easterly falls (see the "Energy" section.)

### **Present Land Uses**

The purpose of this section is to document present land uses and establish a guide to further land use for residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial, recreational, conservational, open-space or other public uses. Fair Haven has balanced the needs of its residents by encouraging a variety of activities.

### **Parks**

Northwesterly of the business district lies our "town green", a spacious park in the center of our village and one of the few (and possibly the last) of the old "wheel" or "spoked" parks. The green was donated to the town in the late 1700's by Matthew Lyon, the most famous and prosperous of Fair Haven's early settlers. This piece of land was in part sold to another early settler Tilly Gilbert, who deeded what is now The Green back to the town in 1805.

In addition to the central park, there are four other recreation areas in town – one surrounding the Fair Haven Union High School, one behind the Fair Haven Grade School, and one next to the former "South School" (now the Eagles' Club), and a portion of the former airport land area.

### **Cemeteries**

The oldest large cemetery in town is the West Street Cemetery, which is on both sides of West Street about one-quarter mile westerly of the park. This cemetery is closed to new burials. St. Mary's Cemetery is located on the westerly side of Washington Street, opposite the westerly end of Second Street, and is a private Catholic Cemetery. Cedar Grove is on the south side of Cemetery Street. Both St. Mary's and Cedar Grove date back to the latter half of the nineteenth century and are open for burials.

### **Commercial/Industrial**

Our traditional downtown area is always the most important commercial spot to most townspeople. Its central location, its charm and its history make it "ours" in a way that no other location can be, but as expressed in the introduction, the townspeople may need the help of others to keep it prosperous in the future.

Because of its small area, Fair Haven must make the most of its land. In the middle of the nineteenth century, the business district started to appear on top of the hill above the Castleton River falls. It grew and prospered and remains much the same today as it was a hundred years ago or more. New visitors to our town are often impressed by the quaint mid-to-late nineteenth-century architecture of the "downtown" buildings.

The immediate “Exit 2” has, in recent years become a major commercial area, providing gasoline, restaurants, groceries and several other services not only to the local people but to the long-distance and short-distance travelers as well.

We have several sites which lend themselves more to industrial use (slate quarries especially) or development rather than to either residential or commercial use.

### **Agricultural**

As will all Vermont towns, we struggle to hold on to our small farms. While it was a major part of our past, the town has only 3 working farms remaining. No commercial orchards of any kind remain in town.

Much of the remaining productive agricultural land is located in the flood-plain of our town’s most significant natural features, the Castleton and Poultney Rivers.

### **Undeveloped Land**

Large parcels of undeveloped land do exist in Fair Haven. The “North Woods” is an example, but it, as most other areas of woodlands in town, is not well suited for either residences or commercial/industrial applications.

Open landscapes, consisting mainly of family farms, former family farms and slate quarries remain outside the residential district.

Most recently the outlying areas along the town’s main roads and at major junctions have continued to grow and may prove to have a lasting impact. Our motto, then as now might be “Prosperity with Pride” in our community. Without down playing the role of these new developments, we should above all try to utilize the charm of our “downtown” area to build more prominent commercial opportunities there.

### **Zoning**

Fair Haven presently has nine zoning districts.

**Residential, Commercial, Watershed, and Flood-Hazard** districts are self-explanatory.

The **Industrial 1 District** is mainly for existing, permitted slate quarries already in operation and land to which they may be expected to expand.

The **Mixed River District** is intended to accommodate an area on the northerly side of the Castleton River that has for many years’ hosted residences and businesses side by side.

The **Lake Shore District** consists only of our very small amount of shore-line on Glen Lake in the northeasterly part of town.

The **Recreational District** includes five areas around town, including, of course our prized village green.

The **Rural District** includes all the lands of Fair Haven which are not included in one of the above zoning districts.

The Town is proposing to add two more districts:

[Proposed] **Industrial 2 District** (in two sections) is designed to host new businesses in our town and boost employment.

[Proposed] **Downtown Commercial District** is intended to be a concentrated commercial district featuring our several-story nineteenth-century commercial buildings and the environs.

### Goals

Refer to the Appendix for longer-term land use goals.

### Action Items

Work with the RRPC to prepare a “build-out” analysis based on existing zoning regulations.

Upgrade water and wastewater systems as necessary, as identified via applicable engineering analysis, and within the bounds of fiscal responsibility.

## Future Land Use

The “Land Use Map” shows zoning land use districts uses. The areas shown on the map in bold, reflect some, but not all, of the characteristics which support future uses. The Zoning Ordinance, not this plan, defines zoning district boundaries. Changes in the zoning ordinance districts must be consistent with the plan and have the purpose of implementing the plan.

### Observations and Conclusions

The “village” has typical small-town housing density interspersed in certain places with home businesses and occasional commercial enterprises. Approximately 72% of the town’s dwelling units are located in the central village area. In the fairly recent past, renovations to Adams House, Carriage House and Green Block have encouraged revival of the town’s commercial core. However, we need to continue working toward that goal.

The fairly steady residential development which we have seen over most of the last century seems to have dissipated in recent years. Without major road construction, the possibility for developing new residences is limited to a few small areas. We do, however, have several sites which lend themselves more to industry. With our desire for local jobs and our transportation advantages, we need to continue to encourage industry, whether quarries, or traditional light industrial uses and emphasize that development over residential use.

### Goals

Since we are well suited to have industry with our advantages of location, transportation and capable work force, we should try to encourage industrial businesses to come to our town.

To encourage the rehabilitation of Main Street properties to accommodate new and retain existing establishments at street level while providing rooms for offices or other commercial space on the upper floors.

To turn Fair Haven into a prosperous town with jobs which its citizens, and of course some citizens of neighboring towns, will be proud to have.

### **Action Items**

Amend the Zoning Ordinance to correct the land use designation near the old railroad station – convert it back to the Industrial 1 designation. Also, convert the Park to a Recreation District designation instead of a Commercial designation.

Re-obtain the state Village Center Designation or, if possible, obtain a state Downtown Designation.

Participate actively in the formulation and implementation of the RRPC Regional Plan to ensure the regional functions of the area’s municipalities are represented.

As applicable, consider amendments to land use regulations that foster Downtown growth (i.e., the Town’s growth center).

Work with other communities to ensure land use compatibility across municipal boundaries while protecting Fair Haven’s role as a sub-regional center.

Adopt a capital budget & program and amend it annually thereafter to help ensure that an acceptable rate of growth can be accommodated by the Town without overburdening Town facilities, utilities, and services.

## **Fair Haven Town Plan Update**

The process of the 2015 Fair Haven Town Plan was based on the work of townspeople and community organizations over several years. Relationship to Development Patterns and Town Plans in, Castleton, West Haven, Poultney, and Hampton New York. The 2015 Town Plan seeks to address pertinent issues currently facing our community through identification of goals and programs meant to guide development and other activities occurring within the town. The town, however, does not operate alone. Development in Fair Haven affects neighboring communities, and vice-versa. This is especially apparent along major roadways, on Lake Bomoseen, and where employment is concerned. This plan promotes the preservation of Fair Haven’s historical settlement pattern through the focusing of economic development efforts in Fair Haven Village, a designated downtown. Residential growth is also promoted in this area of town. Outside of the village, residential and commercial sites are more dispersed, with the greatest available commercial space yet to be developed laying outside the Village area. These outlying areas are characterized by agriculture and other businesses, and low-density residential uses. While Castleton and Poultney are similar in population, Castleton and Poultney’s transient populations swells in the summer months from their vacation home residents on Bomoseen in Castleton and Lake St. Catherine in Poultney and in the remaining months from Castleton University in Castleton and Green Mountain College in Poultney.

Fair Haven's other neighbors are much smaller, more rural communities, where agriculture is the leading employer. That being said, Fair Haven's plan and development trends reinforce a rural character on its borders with West Haven and Hampton, NY, and with the somewhat larger employment opportunities of its other neighbors. It is the belief of the town that this Plan is compatible with those of its neighbors, sharing many of the same values for water quality protection and concentrated development industries. The presence of emergency mutual aid agreements with surrounding towns, FHFDD are members of both Rutland County and Washington County, NY Mutual Aid Associations, which covers all fire departments in both counties. Fair Haven Rescue is a member of Vermont EMS District 10, which includes EMS providers in Rutland County, along with Skeenesboro EMS and Granville EMS in New York.

## Implementation

The Plan is implemented primarily through the Fair Haven Zoning bylaws; while the Town Plan informs planning efforts, the bylaws implement and enforce these efforts.

The goals and objectives discussed throughout this document require the support of various community organizations, and committees further demonstrating the importance of bringing these organizations to the table throughout the planning process

The 2015 Fair Haven Town Plan is the main, all-encompassing plan for the town, and meshes with the Zoning ordinances to ensure there are no areas of disagreement with the two.

Relationship to the Rutland Regional Plan- The 2015 Fair Haven town plan is compatible with the Rutland Regional Plan, last adopted in 2015. The Town Plan addresses each of Vermont's Statewide Planning goals, and does so in a manner consistent with the direction provided by the Rutland Regional Plan.

Acknowledgements - This Plan was prepared by the Fair Haven Planning Commission with assistance from: Peter Laramie, Waste Water Chief Operator; James Heller, Emergency Management coordinator; Rutland Regional Planning Commission; and local organizations.

## Public Participation

The Commission held Special Meetings in compliance with the requirements of enacting a Town Plan in order to gather input from residents, as with so many other community meetings these were poorly, if at all attended and very little input was gained from these meetings. Interviews were conducted with the principals of both the Fair Haven Grade School and Fair Haven Union High School to collect data and correctly incorporate the desires of those Schools into the plan.



## Appendix – Other, Longer-term Goals & Action Items (Some require additional discussion by the Selectboard before moving forward)

### Housing Action Items:

- Consider adopting an unsafe building ordinance.
- Consider adopting public works specifications for new development.

### Parks & Recreation Action Items:

- Establish a system/way to engage the community's youth, especially middle school and high school aged youth, to learn about, understand, and provide activities, facilities, and programs that are well-maintained, change according to on-going interaction/engagement, and are fun.
- The Selectboard ought to examine whether a realistic, self-sufficient recreation fee schedule is feasible for the Town's overall recreation program (i.e., program expenses are offset 100% by program fees).
- Consider Park pathway and downtown sidewalk lighting that is aesthetically pleasing, is tourism-friendly, offers pedestrian safety during evening hours, and does not detract from the area's historic character.

### Historic Sites & Features Action Items:

- Work to create a historic-cultural/recreational destination facility as part of the Town's effort to create a small-scale hydroelectric facility at the dam nearest the Depot Street bridge and the former train depot, especially since this site serves as the earliest historic center of Fair Haven's commerce and industry.
- Capitalize on opportunities that focus on the Town's slate industry.

### Energy Action Items:

- While the Town supports renewable energy facilities, proper regulations should be adopted to help guide their development.
- The Town should collaborate with the Vermont League of Cities & Towns to ensure municipalities have a greater say in state regulatory proceedings (Act 250 and Section 248) related to renewable energy projects (e.g., solar, wind, biomass, etc.)

### Education Action Items:

- Periodically, the Selectboard and the School Board ought to hold joint sessions to discuss items of mutual concern.
- As applicable, the Town School District needs to be included in any effort to re-obtain a Village Center Designation or to obtain a Downtown Designation.

- Continue to participate in activities like those of *Impact Fair Haven*, especially when the informal group is involved in programs and activities that involve the growth and development of our children.

Child Care Action Items:

- Where possible and feasible, support any school district effort to maintain and bring-on accredited pre-Kindergarten programs and other school readiness activities.
- Given opportunity, support the school district's requirement to ensure "universal access to pre-Kindergarten" programs and activities.
- Offer Town Office conference rooms to training entities that specialize in courses and training opportunities for day care providers and accredited pre-Kindergarten programs.

Economic Development Action Items:

- Partner with the high school and area colleges, especially on school-to-work type of activities and "first career" employment positions and incentives to obtain those positions in Town/region rather than out of state.
- Consider installing pedestrian-friendly street lighting in the Park and in the Downtown area that maintains historic integrity while being aesthetically attractive and providing pedestrian safety.
- Carry out activities that result in building façade improvements (e.g., apply for VT Community Development Program funding, especially that helps low/moderate income earning households).

Land Use Goals:

- Preserve the historical and cultural aspects of Fair Haven, especially the Downtown and the Park.
- Wisely manage the intersecting elements (built, natural, and social environments) that define the Town's quality of life.
- As applicable, work to rehabilitate existing structures and business façades.

Land Use Action Items:

- As applicable, apply for VT Community Development Program funds that especially benefits low/moderate income earning households.