

Fair Haven Planning Commission
Town of Fair Haven - August 16, 2023 - Regular Meeting

Commissioners Present: Robert Richards - Chair, Cindy Pritchard - clerk, Linda Sienkiewicz, Lorraine Brown, Patrick Frazier

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present: Phil Adams - Zoning Administrator, Jennifer Jackson - minute-taker, Elizabeth Ambuhl - minute taker, Morgan Granger, Grant Reynolds

Agenda

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Richards called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. At ZA Adams request, the agenda was modified to first approve the minutes of the previous meetings to accommodate Ms. Ambuhls' need to leave early. All were in agreement.

2. **Review of Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

- a. **Approval of Minutes:**

- i. **Regular Meeting - July 19th, 2023**

Mrs. Pritchard motioned to approve the minutes of July 19, 2023 as written. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Sienkiewicz. All were in favor and the motion passed. Mrs. Ambuhl left the meeting.

- ii. **Regular Meeting - August 2, 2023 canceled due to lack of quorum**

No discussion

3. **New Business:**

- a. **Application #2023 - 028 for approval of the new use of the leasing of box storage containers, for use off-site and associated new commercial signs. Applicant: Grant Reynolds. Property owners: David J and Robin R Young. Location 977 Prospect Street. Tax Map #07-01-49**

Chairman Richards passed the application around the table and asked Mr. Reynolds to present his application. Mr. Reynolds stated that he was not interested in signage currently. Maybe in the future, but he felt it wasn't needed right now. He stated he was going to put in a rental storage box business. The storage boxes would be like the one that the town is now currently using outside the building. Customers would rent the boxes, they'd be brought back to the site after the rental term was up or they would go directly to another customer for use. He stated he believed that there wouldn't be many boxes left on the facility property. The boxes would come in both 20 ft and 40 ft. Inventory on site would be minimal.

He felt spring and fall were busy times for the box rental. The boxes on site would have nothing in them. Mr. Reynolds would utilize the buildings on the site for his own use and storage of equipment for all of his businesses. Chair Richards asked him if the storage would be on the Western side of the property. Mr. Reynolds stated that he would be putting in a clearing and he wants to gravel some of the property. He doesn't own a loader for the boxes

yet, so he needs to be able to get under the boxes to load them onto the trucks for transport. Chair Richards asked if this caused a change in use of the property. ZA Adams stated that that was up to the Planning Commission to decide. Mrs. Pritchard asked how many boxes would be kept on the site. Mr. Reynolds stated that 10-12 boxes would be kept on site at all times. He stated that he has thought about putting some screening along the roadway. Mrs. Pritchard stated that she would like to see some screening because the property is on one of the main entrances to Fair Haven. It would soften the intro into town. She then asked about signage. Mr. Reynolds stated the business' name is Storage Solutions, but that they wouldn't put one in now, but maybe in the future. Mr. Richards asked if screening would impede movement and loading and unloading of the boxes. He stated that Youngs never had any screening. Ms. Granger explained that their idea is to hide the older boxes behind the newer boxes for a more pleasing visual. Mrs. Pritchard agreed that with potential visitors from the Welcome center entering town that way it would be nice to have the lot clean and welcoming looking.

Mr. Reynolds then explained the map he created and the use of the buildings on the property. He stated that the block buildings in front have no real use to him and he may eventually take them down. He will make that final decision after he gets on the property and starts using it to see his actual needs and uses. He stated he still feels like he is in the design planning phase of the buildings on the lot; maybe he'd even want to create brand new buildings. ZA Adams stated that he and Mr. Reynolds had spoken about the setbacks with the railroad behind the property. Mr. Reynolds explained that the only big change he sees happening to the property within the next year will be painting the buildings. He wants to get established first before he makes any major changes.

Chair Richards asked if anyone was concerned about the addition of gravel? Mrs. Pritchard said she thought there would be no difference in the property, it would make it look cleaner. Mr Reynolds explained that the gravel wouldn't cover 100% of the property, only a portion. ZA Adams stated he believed gravel would be appropriate for the use of the land. Mrs. Pritchard asked how much gravel he was thinking. Mr. Reynolds showed the Planning Commission his thoughts on the map and explained that snow removal would also be pushed west on the property.

ZA Adams then asked about security lighting. Mr. Reynolds explained that he wasn't planning on putting any in as he didn't want to upset his neighbors. He may put in motion sensitive lighting, but not necessarily needed as he feels there is nothing for people to steal on the property. Ms. Granger explained that there are lights on Mr. Reynolds truck if he needs lighting at night.

Chair Richards asked if there were any other questions for the applicant and if there weren't he would entertain a motion for a vote. ZA Adams suggested some procedural advice; that the PC decide if the property needs a site plan review. Chair Richards stated he believed it would be exempt from a site plan review. Mrs. Pritchard **motioned to consider the application as a minor change application and therefore exempt from site plan review.** The motion was seconded by Mrs. Brown. All were in favor of the motion and the motion passed. Mrs. Brown **motioned to accept the application written.** The motion was seconded by Mrs. Pritchard. All were in favor and the motion passed. Chairman Richards welcomed the applicants to Fair Haven.

Mr. Reynolds and Ms Granger left at 7:21pm.

b. Review and discussion of beginning the Fair Haven Town Plan update

7:26 pm Chair Richards explained that he finally was able to get ahold of Devon Neary from Rutland Regional Planning Commission just earlier today. He stated that Mr. Neary would like a meeting on Friday concerning the Zoning Bylaws and the finalization of them. They will have access to a virtual meeting. Mr. Richards will bring the latest copy of the zoning bylaws with the minutes from July 19th to the meeting. He will also ask for anything State driven for the Town Plan update while meeting. Mrs. Pritchard shared a few articles about town plan updating with Mr. Richards that were shared at earlier PC Meetings, including an article about new Vermont Laws that will be going into effect. ZA Adams shared that he had printed only one color copy of a State booklet on reviewing town plans. Mr. Richards asked if revisions to maps needed to be completed. ZA Adams stated he believed that all the revisions are OK, but might not be shown on the town webpage correctly. He asked the PC to look at the maps on the town webpage to see if they looked accurate to them and let him know if anything was off.

Mr. Richards asked the PC if anyone had looked over the Town Plan and if they were ready to discuss. Mrs. Brown stated she had looked it over and made notes, but by accident forgot to bring her notes with her. Mr. Richards suggested that the PC hold off discussing the Town Plan until everyone had reviewed the plan, had their notes, and after his meeting with RRPC.

Mrs. Sienkiewicz stated she had some questions about how Airbnb's function in town and if any sort of permit was required for them in zoning as they are a business. Mrs. Brown stated that the EDC has been discussing them and haven't looked through what the Planning Commission has completed with zoning. Mr. Richards stated that the EDC could come through the select board to change zoning, but it would be a longer process to complete. ZA Adams stated that Airbnb's do not need permits because it is just a rental property. The use of a building doesn't change. He stated that listers tried years ago to account for all the Air B&B's but it didn't go anywhere. Mr. Richards asked about taxing them differently because they are commercial. Mrs. Pritchard stated it would be nice to have an example to form some sort of regulations around Airbnb's from another town. She thought maybe other towns are waiting for the same thing before creating them.

Mr. Frazier stated he had completed some research on recreation at the High School property. He had spoken with Mr. Wilson, who stated that the track was an exemption to special permitting and allowance to public use of school property.

Mr. Richards asked again about postponing the Town Plan discussion until after the meeting with RRPC on Friday. He stated he would share the virtual access link with the PC.

Mrs. Pritchard asked for a summary of the purpose of a town plan. ZA Adams explained that the town plan was the Town's vision for the future and a short written history of the town. Mrs. Pritchard then asked if a change happened in the bylaws does it need to be reflected in the Town Plan. Mr. Richards explained the town plan revision needed to be completed by March 2024. Mr. Frazier asked about the use of the municipal zoning grant funds with town plan update. Mr. Richards stated part of the reason for the RRPC meeting on Friday is to get an update on the grant and funds left.

4. Other Business:

- a. **Review of Mail: None**
- b. **Public Comment: None**

5. Adjournment:

- a. Mrs. Pritchard **motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 pm.** Mrs. Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

**** Next Scheduled Regular Planning Commission Meeting is on September 6, 2023****

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Jackson, Minute-taker