

**Fair Haven Planning Commission**  
Town of Fair Haven - September 20, 2023 - Regular Meeting

**Commissioners Present:** Robert Richards - Chair, Cindy Pritchard - vice chair, Linda Sienkiewicz - Clerk, Lorraine Brown, Jason Coupal

**Commissioners Absent:** Patrick Frazier

**Others Present:** Phil Adams - Zoning Administrator, Jennifer Jackson - minute-taker, Logan Solomon - RRPC Representative

**Agenda**

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Richards called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. The Planning Commission went through a brief introduction session for new member Jason Coupal and guest Logan Solomon.
  
2. **New Business:**
  - a. **Meeting with Rutland Regional Planning Commission planner Logan Solomon to discuss the completion of the Fair Haven Zoning Regulations revision and the State of Vermont required components for the Fair Haven Town Plan update.**

Chairman Richards asked Mr. Solomon to present his findings as he would like. Mr. Solomon brought with him a handout of findings which he shared with the commissioners. "Fair Haven Compliance Findings - 2016 Town Plan and Current Bylaws". Mr Solomon stated that out of the 5 pages of suggestions the last 2.5 pages were state statute requirements and mandated changes, except parking.

Chair Richards stated that he PC needs to present the new material to the Select Board. ZA Adams asked if there were new regulations with substantial changes could they be changed at the Selectboard level? Mr. Solomon stated he would need to ask RRPC for guidance. He stated his handout should be easy to follow as it tells one what to do to add the needed information. Chair Richards asked if the Fair Haven would be able to receive the same level of support as it had been receiving from Mr. Bove previously or if the grant money had expired. Mr. Solomon stated there is still money in the grant to help fund the development.

Mr. Solomon then started to guide the PC through the handout and comments. The first bullet point was about updating the town data from census information. Mrs. Sienkiewicz asked if the 2020 census should and could be used. Mr. Solomon stated yes, it contains the best, most accurate information. The ACS (<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>) is another source with a 5 year estimate, but it is not as accurate. The US Census has less data points but is more accurate in the information they have. He stated he could help with data gathering depending on his work load.

Mr. Solomon then guided the PC back to his handouts and began with the Utilities/Facilities/Services section. Chair Richards asked for guidance on how the town should approach the need for a new town garage in the town plan. Mr. Solomon suggested wording

such as " Interested to explore options..." He suggested looking at finances, what is needed to build the garage, evaluating the sites, and what is required to build a new garage.

They moved on to the Energy section. There needs to be an analysis of Energy Needs which explains the demand. It doesn't need to have hard numbers because those can be hard to get. Ms. Pritchard stated she thought the Town Plan had a section on energy. Mr. Solomon apologized if he missed it. They moved on to energy scarcity and issues of limitations to town growth. Costs; Efficiency VT has an energy burden report (<https://www.encyvermont.com/news-blog/whitepapers/vermonts-2023-energy-burden-report>) that could help with the section. He suggested the PC look it up. Mr. Solomon stated that the depth they get into energy is up to the PC. Chair Richards stated there will be a new substation soon.

Mr. Solomon moved on to Transportation. He noted that there was nothing related to cost in the report. He stated that it could be as simple as touching on cost; people being able to walk or bike is cheaper. Depth of report is up to the PC.

Natural Resources section; Mr. Solomon noted the first bullet points asks the PC to change the statement to mirror the State goal. He then reviewed the other points listed on the handout.

Economic Development Section; Mr. Solomon suggested that the PC indicate in the Town Plan specific locations that they would like to see more economic growth. Ms Pritchard pointed out that she believed Fair Haven had increased in business since the last draft of the Town Plan. Mr. Coupal stated he assumed that the changes Mr. Solomon was recommending were from using the 2016 Town Plan and that the PC just had to update the information. Mr. Solomon stated the affirmative and told the PC that many towns schedule separate sections to review at each meeting.

Recreation Section; Mr. Solomon suggested that the PC needs to think about a few action items to add to the Town Plan. They should think about the action items from 2016 and explain if progress was made and report on the items.

Housing Section; Mr. Solomon went over his bullet points. Chair Richards pointed out a section in the 2016 Town Plan that stuck out to him, something like; for a small community we have ample low income housing. He believes that wording should be changed. Ms. Pritchard asked about accessory dwellings and mentioned how people are stopping their rentals because the State isn't supporting the landlord. Mr. Solomon pointed out S.100 Home Act = Act 47. He noted that it will create funds for landlords who have backrents to help them recoup lost money.

Flood Resilience; The PC satisfies the State requirement just by talking about flood regulations in the plan.

Introduction; Fair Haven needs a clear statement of municipal policies. Mr. Solomon will send a copy of a few towns who have done this.

Designation(s); The section should include the goal of acquiring a designation and the steps the town will be taking to achieve it or steps to renew the current designation.

Surrounding Towns; A statement is needed on how Fair Haven will plan future development with relation to other towns. Or in other words will work with other towns when appropriate. Chair Richards asked when the deadline is for completion of the Town Plan. Mr. Solomon stated June 2024. This transitioned the Planning Commission to two handouts with

flow charts for completion; one was a timeline for the planning commission to follow and the other was for the Select Board. The flow chart has the Planning Commission completing their work by February 21 so that the public meetings can be held within proper times.

The PC discussed how realistic the timeline looked to them. Ms. Pritchard stated that it seems doable if the PC chunks out 15 pages per meeting. Mr. Coupal asked if there was a Word file of the Town Plan. Mr. Solomon stated that the RRPC has a computer file and will see if it is in word format. Mrs. Brown stated she would work on the town history section. Mrs. Sienkiewicz stated she would work on gathering statistics. Chair Richards asked the Commission what was needed from RRPC at this time. Mr. Solomon stated that if the PC runs into barriers or data gathering issues to reach out.

ZA Adams asked about the process for submitting the Zoning Regulations to the Selectboard. Mr. Solomon stated he would ask RRPC and get back to him. ZA Adams stated he is concerned about accurately following state guidance and isn't entirely certain of the process.

Chair Richards thanked Mr. Solomon. Mr. Solomon left at 8:07 pm. Chair Richards confirmed with the PC that the goal is to work on 15 pages of the Town Plan next meeting. He asked each member to come with drafts of what they think needs to be changed.

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

Chair Richards asked the board their opinion on the size of the Planning Commission. Mrs. Pritchard stated she believed the PC should stay at an odd number of members. Chair Richards agreed that a 7 member board was a good size. Mrs. Brown asked how the PC could find another member. Chair Richards stated that any member of Fair Haven could submit a letter of intent to Town Manager Gunter. Mrs. Pritchard suggested that something be put in the news outlets. She will create something for Facebook posting.

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

**a. Approval of Minutes:**

**i. Regular Meeting - August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

Mrs. Sienkiewicz motioned to approve the minutes of August 16, 2023 as written. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Pritchard. All were in favor and the motion passed.

**ii. Regular Meeting - September 6, 2023 canceled due to lack of quorum**

Mrs. Brown apologized for missing the meeting.

**4. Other Business:**

**a. Review of Mail: None**

**b. Public Comment: None**

**5. Adjournment:**

**a. Mrs. Pritchard motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:1 pm. Mrs. Sienkiewicz seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.**

**\*\* Next Scheduled Regular Planning Commission Meeting is on October 4, 2023\*\***

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jennifer Jackson, Minute-taker