

Fair Haven Planning Commission
Town of Fair Haven - February 19, 2025 - Regular Meeting

Commissioners Present: Robert Richards - Chair, Jason Coupal - Vicechair, Linda Sienkiewicz, Cindy Pritchard

Commissioners Absent: Patrick Frazier

Others Present: Phil Adams - Zoning Administrator, Jennifer Jackson - Minute-taker, Deb Laiacona, member of the public

Agenda

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by Chairman Richards.

2. Review of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Approval of Minutes: Special meeting - February 17, 2025

Mrs. Sienkiewicz asked that the minutes reflect her interest in remaining on the Planning Commission even though her commission is expiring.

Mrs. Sienkiewicz **motioned to accept the minutes of February 17th with the addition.** The motion was seconded by Mrs. Pritchard. All were in favor except Mr. Coupal who abstained from voting due to his absence from the meeting. The motion passed.

3. New Business:

Continue work on required components for Fair Haven to qualify for a Downtown Designation.

DownTown Designation Application Packet

(https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/ACCD/ACCD_Web_Docs/CD/CPR/State-Designation-Programs/CPR-DT-Application-Guidelines.pdf)

Chairman Richards stated he had received a letter of resignation from the Planning Commission from Cindy Pritchard. He stated going forward all open or opening appointments will be advertised. He noted that Mrs. Laiacona would like to rejoin the PC and has given a letter of interest. Chairman Richards stated he would try and have the Selectboard approve her appointment at the next meeting which will be March 3rd. ZA Adams asked if her resignation would begin immediately. Mrs. Pritchard stated she would like it to, but wouldn't leave the PC without a quorum. ZA Adam's had a follow up question for the Commission asking if they would like to keep their current numbers the same. Chairman Richards stated that he would so a quorum was easier to reach and business could be completed. He also stated he was anticipating a resignation letter from another member as well due to health and time constraints. Mr. Coupal stated he would like to speak with Chairman Richards privately to talk about his seat on the PC and within other boards. He stated he was running into situations of having too many evening commitments as well and was looking to thin out his calendar and leave where needs are best being met.

Chairman Richards stated that the PC was in need of people who were able to meet at the times required and if anyone was interested or knew of anyone who would be interested in joining the PC to please reach out. Mrs. Pritchard suggested he contact the Lakeside News and see if they would consider running an article on how important the Planning Commission is to the town and give a good explanation of what the Planning Commission does with the hopes that that would inspire people to inquire about joining. Mrs. Laiacona was curious about the minimum number of members that could sit on the commission.

Chairman Richards reported that he spoke with Mr. Solomon about the questions the PC had with the application process. Mr. Solomon said he had spoken with a gentleman named Greg from the State office about oversight of the program. Greg said that although there is a lot of materials put together already there still is much more work to be completed as well as some refinement of what is already compiled. The general thought was the application would not be complete for the April cycle, and that the PC should hold off until the September application cycle. Greg also stated that instead of holding multiple public hearings for zoning modifications, to just complete all the needed modifications for the historic district and the subdivision and hold one hearing with both additions.

The Planning Commission stated they still needed a new example with suggestion of the Subdivision Regulations before they could really start looking at them. Chairman Richards stated the biggest decision he felt the PC had to determine within this set of regulations was what constituted a major and minor subdivision. He will get a better copy for the PC from Mr. Solomon. Chair Richards did not feel like the PC should recommend any changes for adoption to the Selectboard of the Historic Downtown Regulations until they had a completed map from RRPC. Mrs. Laiacona asked if any section on the maps match with the designated "Historic Green" in Fair Haven. There was no clarification. Chairman Richards explained that this was part of the issue, there were many designations but no continuity between the designations.

Mr. Solomon can be in attendance at the March 5th meeting; because of this Mr. Richards believes that might be a good meeting to finalize the Historic District regulations and retrieve the map from RRPC.

Chairman Richards asked the PC if anyone had read over the Town of Hardwicks introduction to their Downtown Designation application? He stated they had a very good Cover Letter and it would be a good template for Fair Haven's. It is much more formal than they have created. Greg from the State suggests edits that align Fair Haven's with Hardwicks. Mrs. Sienkiewicz stated she'd be happy to work on the edits.

Chairman Richards reported, from his conversation with Mr. Solomon, he understood that Greg from the State would be happy to come to a meeting and walk the PC through the steps in the application process and guide as much as he can. He stated that Town Manager Gunter had gathered many of the needed materials for the application together including selectboard minutes, budgets, and EDC notes. The state would also like to meet with the EDC to make sure they understand their importance in the whole process.

Chairman Richards stated the bottom line is the PC still has a lot to do. He will ask Mr. Solomon to prepare a spread sheet with check offs of the steps needed to be completed before the application can be submitted. Although a lot of work has been completed, the State needs a lot of documentation which will still be a lot of work to gather correctly. Budgeting and proof of

budgets is a large component. Because of the change of completion deadline, the PC has more time to properly complete the application.

Chairman Richards asked ZA Adams if he had looked over the sample subdivision regulations. ZA Adams stated he had and he had a few questions to ask as well. He understood that a lot of the subdivision oversight falls on the ZA.

ZA Adams asked if a recommendation from the PC to appoint a commissioner needed to be sent to the Select board. Chairman Richards stated that would be a good idea. He recommended a motion to accept Mrs. Pritchard's resignation. Mrs. Pritchard at 7:33 pm **motioned to accept her resignation letter as written.** Mrs. Sienkiewicz seconded the motion. Mr. Coupal suggested an amendment to the motion to add that **the PC accept the letter of resignation with regret.** All were in favor of the motion and addition, and the motion passed.

Chairman Richards then recommended a motion to accept the letter of interest from Mrs. Laiacona. Mrs. Pritchards, at 7:34pm, **motioned that the Planning Commission recommend to the Selectboard they accept the Letter of Interest from Mrs. Laiacona to join the Planning Commission and that they appoint her.** Mrs. Sienkiewicz seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Chairman Richards stated he would speak with Mr. Solomon about what still needs to be completed and the creation of a check list. Mrs. Laiacona asked a few questions of the process to get herself up to speed for her anticipated appointment to the Planning Commission.

4. Other Business:

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

5. Adjournment:

Mrs. Pritchard made a **motion to adjourn at 7:44 pm.** Mrs. Sienkiewicz seconded the adjournment motion. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Jackson, Minute-taker

The Next Regular Commission Meeting will be held on March 5, 2025