Fair Haven Economic Development Committee
Regular Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, February 4, 2025

Members in attendance: Cecelia Hunt, Glen Traverse, Laura Pedroni, Mike Pavelec (via Zoom), Chadd Viger and for a short time, Town Manager Joe Gunter

Guests in attendance: Glenn Heitsmith and Ethan Pepin (Rutland Planning Commission)

Glen called the meeting to order at 5:00PM in the Conference Room of the Town Hall.

The agenda was reviewed, no changes were made.

The minutes of the January 7, 2025, meeting were reviewed prior to the meeting by board members. Cecelia moved to accept the minutes as written. Laura seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

News from the IBC (Itty Bitty Committee) included the work being done on the welcome packets. The packets will include the new Fair Haven brochures. It has been too cold and icy in the park to do any decorating.

Ethan Pepin brought in the latest version of the “You Are Here” map. It will be too large for the new Community Bulletin Board. We will need to purchase a new board a for the sign which is 3 feet wide and 4 feet high currently. We worked on putting in more locations and making small changes. Until the Committee and Select Board make final decisions, Ethan will not change the map. We hope to have everything designed, printed and installed by spring.

The February EDC newsletter has been sent out and is available at several locations. Cecelia asked if we could print 100 copies each month for distribution to local businesses and organizations. Glen feels there is money in the budget to make that happen. A copy of the newsletter is currently being sent to town employees in the office.

The new Fair Haven brochures were distributed. The printing of 1,000 brochures came in under budget. The committee commented on how great the brochures look. Six hundred of the brochures have been sent to the three welcome centers in Vermont for distribution. The committee thanked Laura for taking the lead on the project.

Our name for the EDC has not been officially changed. We are working on the name to signify our work with the downtown designation.

Deb Laiacona could not make the meeting due to illness. She is working on updating the EDC bylaws for work with the downtown designation. Glen also said that her name will be taken to the Select Board to become a member of the EDC committee.

The State Legislature is currently working on a bill addressing property appearance and maintenance. No changes have been made to the current proposed ordinance we submitted. It is now in the hands of the town manager and the town attorney before going to the Select Board.

Glen gave an update on the CEDRR Marketing Committee. They cancelled the meeting for this month, but Glen did attend the Legislative Breakfast and said it was a good meeting. The push in the committee continues to focus on Rutland and Killington. They are focusing on brand awareness. Discussion on how CEDRR impacts Fair Haven took place. It was commented that they do help anyone who may want to open a business here and that includes support in finding ways to finance new businesses. Glen commented that Project Based TIFs were discussed at the breakfast. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a tool that municipalities use to finance improvements for public infrastructure like streets, sidewalks and storm water management systems. The improvements serve a specified area known as a TIF District. Killington is currently benefiting from TIF with their water project.

Laura and several others commented that one of the challenges here in the downtown district is the state of disrepair of many of the buildings. While rents are affordable, bringing and keeping the buildings in good repair is cost prohibitive.

Laura shared with the committee a project she has entitled Fair Haven Blooms. It will be held in conjunction with Vermont’s Green Up Day. Laura asked for support from the committee and other community and business members to support the project both financially and with a workforce. The event will take place on Saturday, May 3rd, from 10AM until 2PM. Laura has requested funding and supplies from area businesses including Home Depot and Casella Waste Management. She has asked local churches to sponsor planters and take care of the plants in the pots or barrels in the area. Ceil commented that the workload is pretty large, and that Laura might consider coming up with a committee to share the workload. Ceil will take the project to the Itty Bitty to see if they can help. Laura has been in contact with the rec director to see if she can get the help of local sports teams.

The Catalog of possible funding opportunities for businesses was discussed shortly and the best resource for that listing is from CEDRR.

Glen reported that no work has been done with the website but believes there is some money to do this work. We will keep adding it to the agenda to monitor progress toward the work that needs to be done to update the site.

No public comment.

The next meeting will be held on the second Tuesday, March 11th, due to our originally scheduled meeting falls on Town Meeting Day.

Ceil moved to adjourn at 6:25. Chadd seconded.

Respectfully submitted,

Cecelia Hunt