

Fair Haven Planning Commission

Town of Fair Haven - December 3, 2025 - Regular Meeting

Commissioners Present: Robert Richards - Chair, Ann Finley, Deborah Laiacona - Vicechair,
Sam Lucci

Commissioners Absent: Linda Sienkiewicz - clerk

Others Present: Phil Adams - Zoning Administrator, Jennifer Jackson - Minute-take

Agenda

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:34 pm by Chair Richards.

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

Approval of Minutes: Regular meeting - November 19, 2025

Mrs. Finley **motioned to accept the minutes of November 19th as written.** The motion was seconded by Mr. Lucci. Mrs. Laiacona abstained from voting due to her absence from the meeting. All others were in favor and the motion passed.

3. **New Business:**

a. Continue the review of 2024 Fair Haven Town Plan Goals and Actions.

Chairman Richards stated that Lorraine Brown had wanted to be at the meeting tonight to help with the review, but she was unable to attend.

Mr. Lucci asked ZA Adams what he wanted to review at the last meeting. ZA Adams stated he wanted to see if there was a step by step review for the application for Historic District review in the Zoning Regulations. He wanted to make sure he hadn't missed seeing it or having it added. Chair Richards stated that he will have that review added to the next meeting agenda.

Chairman Richards moved the PC on to the review of the Goals and Actions that were created for the Town Plan.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES GOALS

1. To plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet current and future needs.

Chairman Richards stated this is in the lap of the select men. Mrs. Laiacona asked if the Planning Commissions in other towns make recommendations to the selectboard Chair Richards stated absolutely, and that they absolutely should as well. The creation of this list should be presented to the Selectboard.

Mr. Lucci stated there are plans to put in a paver walking path by the playground and tennis courts - does anyone know if this is happening or happened?

2. To support educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of Fair Haven's residents.

It was suggested that they present the goals to the School Board and ask if they can help reach the goals. Mr. Lucci stated the 1% option tax may help here.

3. To encourage the availability of safe and affordable childcare.

The PC asked the recording secretary her opinion and needs for childcare as she is the only person with young children in the room. Shared her difficulties in finding childcare.

The PC asked how this should be encouraged? Having a list of available childcare options. Include the library as a place children can utilize. ZA Adams stated he had never seen a daycare proposal to be denied in his years in government service. He feels the town has a positive attitude towards childcare applications.

4. To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for Fair Haven's residents and visitors, and to preserve Fair Haven's New England character.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES ACTIONS

1. Annually review the Fair Haven Local Emergency Management Plan and Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and revise these plans as needed.

Chairman Richards stated this was finished in fall of 2025.

2. Collaboratively work with Fair Haven Schools, Stafford Technical Center, and surrounding towns to identify further opportunities for students to gain job training opportunities besides a four-year degree.

The PC suggested meeting with the School Board.

Chairman Richards asked if there was an entity that the report of completion of goals and actions needs to be reported. ZA Adams stated inclusion in the Annual Town Report would be a good idea, the accomplishments could be listed.

3. Promote state agency information on the Town website and in the Town Hall on best practices for home use of public facilities and services, including proper disposal of cooking grease, water conservation, and recycling.

SWAC sends a quarterly newsletter. The town webpage has oversight from the creator and Joe and Eileen.

4. Evaluate town-owned property's current use and identify potential future uses to benefit the citizens and environment of Fair Haven most efficiently.

Mrs. Finley suggested the creation of the Land Use maps with RRPC. Mr. Lucci asked if town specific parcels should be included here. Mrs. Laiacona was stating that the EDC was creating a list of Town Lands and were coming up with ideas of possible used for the land.

5. Work with the Rutland Regional Planning Commission to identify and pursue funding opportunities to upgrade the wastewater facility, and other public facilities and services, as needed, to meet current and future needs.

Mrs. Finley suggested the selectboard, Chairman Richards stated water and sewer department - this is ongoing.

6. Annually evaluate the Consumer Confidence Report and take action as needed to maintain Fair Haven's healthy water quality.

The town of Fair Haven has good water. Mr. Lucci stated the consumer confidence report comes out once a year.

7. Attend training by state, regional, local, and community organizations to grow knowledge in meeting day-to-day and long-term public facility and utility needs.

Chairman Richards stated the Water and Sewer department are actively training all the time.

8. Scope the feasibility of using Howard and Sheldon Reservoirs, or other waterbodies, as a potential emergency water source.

Chairman Richards stated the reservoirs are drained at this point, but there is no big need for them at this point. The dam would need to be re-worked. But in general he is under the impression that there is no real need for more water.

Mrs. Laiacona asked for clarification, she was under the impression that the town's water treatment facility was created for a higher volume of water, and shouldn't be run with a lower volume of water. Chair Richards stated he never thought we were treating too much water, but the water would be cheaper if more people bought water.

9. Work at adding recreation facilities at the South School Playground and former airport grounds and seek public input on where/what recreation facilities and paths should be built.

Mr. Lucci mentioned the dogpark. Mrs. Laiacona stated the land owned by the town is large. She stated that in one of the hearings about the dogpark placement people from the Southside were stating they felt neglected on their side of town. There is a need for more recreation there.

10. Address collection system needs. Some manholes need to be rehabbed and sewer lines replaced or lined. Specifically, Sewer Lines on Capital Hill, Prospect and Cedar were noted as poor condition during a 2022 Camera inspection and manholes at the beginning of West Street Prospect Street, and Cedar Street.

Chairman Richards stated this is an ongoing project. Capital Improvement plan for replacement.

11. Enlarge Adams St. Pumpstations to accommodate both pumps running simultaneously during high flow situations.

Chairman Richards believes this is complete. He will speak with Town Manager Gunter.

12. Budget and plan sludge removal, given the trend in rising costs.

Chairman Richards stated that hauling the sludge to Rutland is cheaper than building the infrastructure.

13. Encourage residents to join the Fair Haven Fire Department

Chairman Richards stated the FHPD is actively encouraging residents to join the department. Mr. Lucci also stated they reported they don't have enough equipment sets to help new volunteers.

14. Ensure Fair Haven Rescue Squad exists, given the distance from the Rutland Regional Ambulance service.

Chair Richards stated residents pay for this service.

15. Acquire equipment, as needed and as the budget allows, to meet current and future facilities and utilities needs.

Mr. Lucci noted the new building acquisition from the National Guard out near the dog park.

16. Continue participation in the regional Communications Union District to ensure meeting communication needs.

Mr. Lucci stated the town is currently part of CUD.

17. Work with the Fire Department to plan growth in a manner in line with the Department's capabilities.

18. Seek non-residential property tax-based sources of funding to meet facilities and utilities needs and infrastructure improvements.

Mrs. Laiacona stated this sounds like the request for the 1% tax. Chair Richards stated that the EDC should look into it.

19. Review the Town Reserve Funds to determine the baseline level of funding for each fund. Funds should be maintained on the identified 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.

Chairman Richards stated the Town needs limits to its' reserve fund. But this task is more of a selectboard item.

20. Maintain all recreational facilities and the Town's Recreation Department Program. Begin a search for a full-time Recreation Director.

Mr. Lucci stated the director has been hired.

21. Plant maple saplings in the Park every decade to replace big maples as needed.

Chairman Richards stated this is continually happening. When trees are cut down new saplings are planted. Mr. Lucci stated the limbs of the large trees were just trimmed this past summer.

22. Continue to support all cultural events that promote Fair Haven and the greater region.

The PC listed many events that happened in Fair Haven; food truck frenzy, story walk concerts in the park.

23. Cooperate and Support Fair Haven's schools and relevant entities to continue developing a diverse college and career readiness to meet the needs of all students; to establish community engagement, service, and partnerships; to recruit, develop, retain, and leverage exemplary educators.

Mrs. Finley stated this action item sounds like number two action item. Mrs. Laiacona stated this deal more with job training besides a four year degree.

Chairman Richards called the PC to stop here for the meeting. He asked if anyone had any input on the town report page to please e-mail him the information. Mr. Lucci asked about the stipulation of funding the economic development for the downtown designation. Is the current funding enough to achieve the requirement? Chairman Richards stated the \$5000 is an effort and that was what they were looking for. Mrs. Laiacona looked at the chart emailed by Logan Solomon with his notice of the ending of the application program. She believed there was a stipulation for an increase of time in the amount of funding. Mr. Lucci stated if there was

a compelling need to add more to the budget he would fight for it with the selectboard, he just needs a solid reason and plan. Chairman Richards stated he believed the town needed to show interest in downtown development. Mr. Lucci asked about a framework. Mrs. Laiacona stated the last email from Mr. Solomon answered that question.

4. Other Business:

- a. **Public Comment: None**
- b. **Review of Mail: None**
- c. **Other: December 17th meeting.** Mr. Richards stated that ZA Adams will be on vacation during the end of December. There will be no new applications for review. He asked the Planning Commission if they would mind not having a meeting that day. They were all in general agreement, unless there was an urgent need that comes up.

5. Adjournment:

Mrs. Finley **motioned to adjourn at 8:56 pm.** Mr. Lucci seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Jackson, Minute-taker

The Next Commission Meeting will be held on January 7, 2026 at 7:30 pm