

Fair Haven Planning Commission
Town of Fair Haven - January 7, 2026 - Regular Meeting

Commissioners Present: Robert Richards - Chair, Linda Sienkiewicz - clerk Ann Finley,

Commissioners Absent: Deborah Laiacona - Vicechair, Sam Lucci

Others Present: Phil Adams - Zoning Administrator

Agenda

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Chair Richards.

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

Approval of Minutes: Regular meeting - December 3, 2025

Mrs. Finley motioned to accept the minutes of December 3rd as written. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Sienkiewicz. 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 he would like to table the talk until more members were present.

Mrs. Sienkiewicz stated she would like to talk about the Town Plan. Out of curiosity she has read the minutes of the last three months of meetings for the EDC. Mrs. Finley stated she had read them all. Mrs. Sienkiewicz stated the EDC seems dysfunctional now. Mrs. Finley stated that there were only three members currently as Laura resigned at the last Selectboard meeting. She stated the budget was reduced to \$5000 - they had asked for \$7000, at the selectboard meeting the previous evening. Mrs. Sienkiewicz asked about the EDDP budget. Mrs. Finley stated it had never been established, there are no bylaws. Mrs. Sienkiewicz stated it seems as if they want nothing to do with us.

Mrs. Finley gave a summary of the last EDC meeting - she stated she was ashamed of the way the EDC had acted towards a potential new member.

Chair Richards stated that he had spoken with Devon Neary of RRPC and that he was flabbergasted by what was going on with Fair Haven's EDC. Chair Richards stated he had shared with Gary Holloway about the resignations and the lack of bylaws for the EDDP. He shared that Mr. Holloway stated the new application, Step 3, cannot be obtained until the RRPC's Regional Plan is finalized. Mrs. Sienkiewicz questioned if an EDDP is still needed? Chair Richards stated there were 10 items that are highlighted and needed to complete the application; 1. The RRPC's Regional Plan needs to be completed. 2. The Town needs to show capital improvement plans for the Down Town area in the budget. Mrs. Finley stated she had a perfect plan for "beautification" of the Downtown area, but that her plan wasn't agreed upon with the previous chair of the EDC when she presented it. Chair Richards stated the committee needs to be revitalized; if not the EDC then the Fair Haven Partnership. Chair Richards stated this is one of the things the Step 3 Application needs, which should be available by the end of

the week. Mr Holloway will send the application when it is available. He stated that Mr. Holloway thought many of the pieces they already created would fit into the new application process. Chair Richards reported that Mr. Neary of RRPC stated he would go through Logan Solomon's notes and help the Town of Fair Haven as much as he can complete the process.

Chair Richards reported he was informed the approval of the DT Designation would be approved at the Staff level, not by the higher ups in the government. He stated that Mr. Holloway will be doing the approval - which is a great resource. ZA Adams asked where the Fair Haven Select Board was with their public hearing process. Chair Richards stated it hasn't happened yet. ZA stated then there is still the ability to make needed changes.

Chair Richards stated Mr. Holloway wasn't too excited about the \$5000 budget the Selectboard was offering the EDC. Chair Richards understood from Town Manager Gunter that the budget would be decreased. He apologized for not sharing that information sooner. Mrs. Sienkiewicz asked what the EDC uses the money for. Mrs. Finley listed the programs.

Chairman Richards stated that he learned about a few grants that Fair Haven is eligible for; a Down Town Vibrancy Fund - \$25,000 grant that can be recurring. Poultney has received the funds and used it to hire a part time staff member. He stated the State would prefer for the Downtown Organization to manage the grant as the committee usually has less turnover than the government positions. The Second grant is a Down Town Transportation fund which could be used for sidewalks. He believes receipts of these grants would help with the Step 3 application review board. Chair Richards suggests to the PC that what they work on until the Regional Plan is finalized is to develop the Strategic Plan for the Down Town Organization. He stated the details of the plan do not need to be broken down until the Grant is officially given.

Some of the other highlighted items with the application are Downtown Investment Commitment with a high level strategic plan. Chair Richards stated the PC needs to do some leg work to get the downtown businesses more invested in the application process. Mrs. Sienkiewicz asked if there will still be an EDC and if the EDDP needs to be maintained or how to handle the unrest within the organization. Chair Richards stated that the Town needs some form or organization, the two can be separate, but that wasn't his original vision.

Chair Richards stated that the maps that were created with Logan Solomon's help need to be obtained from the RRPC and if possible need to indicate the National Historic District. He let the PC know that when the State was looking over the maps created for the RRPC, they pulled the business district addition from the Skyline area that the PC added. They stated there wasn't town water or sewer access there. Chair Richards stated he told RRPC's Devon Neary that yes there was town water and sewer access hook ups and capability to accommodate, Skyline had added the lines. Mr. Neary stated he would pass on that information.

Mrs. Finley asked about the "Walkability" complaints with the maps they had drawn. Chair Richards explained that the addition of Green Mountain Manor was removed because it was deemed not walkable as there were no sidewalks from the area. Chair Richards asked Mr. Neary if including a clause in the zoning asking any developer to include the addition of sidewalks to their plans at least to the apartment building behind McDonalds if that would solve the problem. Mr. Neary stated it is up to the Town's discretion. Mr. Richards stated the new Subdivision Regulations have a lots of stipulations for sidewalk inclusion. ZA Adams asked if Airport Rd was wide enough to accommodate sidewalks. Chair Richards stated that is a

question that needs some one to look into it, as new sidewalks would also need to be ADA accessible.

Other highlighted items were; Natural Resources including water and sewer access, updated zoning regulations, and the Downtown Investment Agreement. He highlighted the need for an operating committee to the success of the application. Chairman Richards stated that the RRPC's Final Draft won't be submitted until March, so there is time to do some prep-work before the application is live. He suggests that all PC members do leg work of talking to business owners in the Downtown area.

4. Other Business:

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

5. Adjournment:

Mrs. Sienkiewicz motioned to adjourn at 8:30 pm. Mrs. Finley 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 21, 2026 at 7:30 pm