

**Fair Haven Planning Commission**  
Town of Fair Haven - January 21, 2026 - Regular Meeting

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

**Commissioners Absent:** Deborah Laiacona - Vicechair

**Others Present:** Phil Adams - Zoning Administrator, Jennifer Jackson - recording secretary

**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 - January 7, 2026**

Mrs. Finley motioned to accept the minutes of January 7<sup>th</sup> with corrections. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Sienkiewicz.

Mrs. Sienkiewicz stated that page 2 line three read awkwardly. Mr. Lucci suggested to swap "*Town of Fair Haven*" and "*as much as he can*".

Mrs. Finley stated that page 2 paragraph 3, "*he*" needed to be changed to "*the*".

Mr. Lucci abstained from voting due to his absence from the meeting. All others were in favor and the motion passed.

3. **New Business:**

**a. Discussion of new Downtown Designation application requirements.**

Community Investment Program Downtown Designation: Step Three Center Application

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

Chairman Richards stated he would like to go back to the Selectboard and ask for a new Direction to complete the application

[https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/ACCD/ACCD\\_Web\\_Docs/CD/CPR/State-Designation-Programs/CPR-DT-Downtown-Designation-Step-Three-Guidelines-FINAL.pdf](https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/ACCD/ACCD_Web_Docs/CD/CPR/State-Designation-Programs/CPR-DT-Downtown-Designation-Step-Three-Guidelines-FINAL.pdf). He stated it is very important to the application to have some form of Downtown Organization. Mrs. Finley reported she has started to talk to the business owners downtown about the need and to gather their interest in participation. The EDC is down to one member. Chair Richards stated funding from the town is a must for the application.

Mrs. Sienkiewicz asked what the EDC, or Downtown Organization, job was. Chair Richards stated their job was to improve the Downtown. It is not the job of the Planning Commission to dictate how they are organized and facilitated. Chairman Richards asked, as a board, the Planning Commission, to ask people who would be willing to participate in such an Organization.

Mrs. Sienkiewicz asked where the Downtown Organization would meet. Chairman Richards stated wherever they decide. He asked that each PC Member report back at the February 4 meeting.

Chair Richards stated another thing he thinks the PC should do is schedule a premeeting with Gary Holloway to ask what parts of the previous application are still applicable

for the new application and which sections need new information. Mrs. Sienkiewicz asked a question about Step 6 on Page 11 of the application packet. *"Adopted historic preservation regulations for the district with a demonstrated commitment to protect and enhance the historic character of the downtown through the adoption of bylaws that adequately meet the historic preservation requirements in subdivisions 4414(1)(E) and (F) of Title 24. Note: Downtown Designation: Step Three Center must contain or be a part of a historic district that is listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (please note that this is not the same as a local historic district created through zoning bylaw). It is not necessary for the downtown center and the National Register district to have identical boundaries. (This provision does not apply to the legacy New Town Center, Village Center, or Downtown Center designated under chapter 76A of this title in effect upon initial approval of the regional future land use map and prior to December 31, 2026)".* Is this something we had? Mr. Lucci stated he would look it up. He felt the wording was interesting because it states "is eligible" which to him means it probably doesn't need to be on a list currently. Mr. Lucci stated that the "Fair Haven Green Historic District" is on the National Register of Historical Places that is managed by the Park Service. It was placed on the list in 1980.

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/84285647>

Mrs. Finley stated she used AI to create a sample document with steps on how to create a Downtown Partnership. Mrs. Sienkiewicz asked what the organization would be called. It would be their choice.

Mrs. Sienkiewicz asked about Step number 7 - "The Downtown Investment Agreement". Chair Richards stated he believed it was up to the town to create the document. Once grant money was obtained it would be the part of the Downtown Organization to manage the funds.

Mrs. Finley stated that when she looked through the EDC minutes that were available on line she saw no record of any bylaws being drafted for the new Organization. Mr. Lucci stated that the minutes for the EDC can be very thin and that didn't mean they hadn't started talking about what the bylaws might have been. Mr. Lucci stated he believed the idea of a joined Downtown Partnership and EDC was a good idea because of the lack of volunteers within the town. He still believes that despite recent events the joining of the two organizations should improve the Downtown. If planned more thoroughly in the future it should be an effective organization. He stated he believed having it created as a board of the municipality gives the Organization strength. Chair Richards stated that was why he suggested the combination, and he believed that the combination would make it easier to fund the Organization. Mrs. Sienkiewicz suggests that the PC hold off talking too much about the application until a discussion with Gary Holloway happens to clear up some confusion.

Chair Richards summarized what should happen between now and the next meeting. He stated that the PC needs people who would be willing to be in an Organization of the sort they had been discussing. The PC needs to get direction from the Select Board to complete the new application. He asked the PC members to speak with anyone with a stake in the downtown area who they believed might be interested in the Organization. The PC discussed which business owners they would speak with.

Chair Richards stated he would try and get a meeting with Gary Holloway to ask the questions of how to go forward with completing the application, which documents already created can be carried forward and what are new requirements. He stated he was in conversations with Devon Neary from RRPC, but the organization is down two staff members. Mr. Lucci asked if the PC was under the gun to complete the application. Mr. Richards stated

no. At 8:24 pm Chair Richards called the discussion until more knowledge and learning was obtained.

**4. Other Business:**

- a. **Public Comment: None**
- b. **Review of Mail: None**
- c. **Other:** The Recording Secretary asked if there was to be a Public Hearing on February 17th. It was determined that the notice had a typo and Mr. Lucci stated he would reach out to the Town Manager to correct the document.

**5. Adjournment:**

Mrs. Finley **motioned to adjourn at 8:28 pm.** Mrs. Sienkiewicz 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 February 4, 2026 at 7:30 pm\*\*\*