

Fair Haven Planning Commission
Town of Fair Haven - August 12, 2026 - Regular Meeting

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

Commissioners Absent:

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

Agenda

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:38 pm by Chair Richards.

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

a. **Approval of Minutes: Regular meeting - July 22, 2026**

Mrs. Sienkiewicz, at 7:39 pm motioned to accept the minutes of July 22nd with **corrections**. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Finley. Mrs. Sienkiewicz stated that on Page 2 second paragraph the second to last word *pan* needs to be changed to *plan*. On the same page 6th paragraph, 7th line "*Kucci*" needs to be changed to "*Lucci*". All were in favor and the motion passed.

3. **New Business:**

- a. **Application # A2026-29. Applicant Michelle Scott proposed to replace the current flush-mounted commercial sign panel with a sign to show the new business owners' name for the bakery and cafe. Property owner: Sheldrick and Sons on Main, LLC. Location : 73 Main Street. Fair Haven Tax Map number 24-51-30**
- b. **Continued discussion of possible changes to update the zoning regulations Article IX - General Regulations, Section 910-Keeping of Animals, Following the enactment of the State Law Act 166 (H.941.)**

ZA Adams stated he asked Ms. Scott to do a writing concerning no additional changes to the interior of the business and about employees not parking in public parking space in front of businesses, but instead utilizing the free public parking locations near the park. Chair Richards confirmed with ZA Adams that the applicant knew about parking and seating with the business. ZA Adams stated that she did and that the change in menu with the business will offer additional items.

Mrs. Finley at 7:44 pm motioned to approve the application without the need for a **site plan review**. The motion was seconded by Mr. M. Richards. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Chair Richards moved the Commission on to a **discussion of the zoning regulations and Article IX 910 following the State Law changes**.

Mr. Lucci asked if anyone read the zoning bylaws from Burlington. They affirmed. Mr. Lucci stated he received notes on wording from Mrs. Finley. Mr. Lucci stated a lot of the Burlington bylaws seem as they would be a better fit for Ordinances within Fair Haven rather

than zoning bylaws. He stated that the PC recommended ordinances to the Selectboard after drafting their bylaws. Chair Richards stated because Mr. Lucci has a better grasp on the law he would like for him to choose what from the Burlington Bylaws Fair Haven should keep and bring just those to the PC for discussion. Mrs. Sienkiewicz stated because Burlington is a big city and we are a little town we shouldn't make too much of this and she wishes there was a smaller town's zoning to mimic rather than the big city. Mr. Lucci stated he had hoped everyone would read the bylaws with the "eye for what Fair Haven should keep" as all small towns will need to be changing their bylaws as well. He chose to use Burlington's bylaws because they have had lawyers vet the laws before they were adopted. Mrs. Sienkiewicz asked that the PC go through the entire Burlington bylaws together to pick and choose what should be kept. Mr. Lucci stated he believed if each PC member read through it themselves and then brought notes to the meeting it would be a faster process. He was hoping just for a meeting to agree on edits. Mr. Richards stated that Mr. Lucci is kind of a committee of 1 to bring the highlighted important sections to the PC.

Mrs. Sienkiewicz asked if the PC was going to work on zoning concerning prohibited animals like cows as well. Mr. Lucci stated the FH bylaws already exclude the keeping of farms unless its a RAP. Mrs. Sienkiewicz checked that the bylaws that are currently in review are only Chickens. Mr. Lucci stated that if the PC wants they can change other bylaws, but it isn't required under the new law. Chair Richards stated that the PC is reacting to the State Law, that no real guidance has been given yet. ZA Adams stated that FH doesn't prohibit them in our current regs if the lot is over 1 acre.

Mr. Lucci asked how the PC feels about the keeping of roosters. He stated the PC can say no to the keeping of roosters if they wanted. General consensus is the PC doesn't have strong feelings either way. ZA Adams asked if larger parcels can have different regulations. Mr. Lucci suggested using the zoning districts to regulate roosters. ZA Adams wanted to share an opinion, he felt discouraged with the pages of Burlington regulations as Fair Haven only had one paragraph before the law. Mr. Lucci stated he would like to just use their zoning as a reference and outline. His hope is to keep Fair Haven's zoning for chickens to 1 page or less. He points to the current bylaw on page 39 of the zoning regulations section 9.10.

Mr. Lucci clarified that the PC should consider size of enclosure allowance and the distance from lot lines. He read the Burlington Bylaw and stated the FHPC could list a maximum size for enclosure if they wanted; and stated that animal control should be concerned with the welfare of the animals. ZA Adams stated that smaller lots might be difficult to manage with a maximum size of enclosure. Mrs. Finley asked how apartments should be managed with chicken keeping. Mr. Lucci stated the mandate from the state is per lot, not family living on the lot and that the landlord still had the power to restrict chickens from their property. The law is geared towards municipalities, not people.

ZA Adams asked about the possibility of keeping chickens in the front yard. Mr. Lucci stated that where the chickens are kept is under their ability to regulate. Mr. M Richards stated, if the front yard was big enough, the coop would be ok to be in the yard, as there would be plenty of room. Mr. Richards suggested the location of the coop could be a function of the zoning district as well. The PC then had a discussion on how they should focus on creating the bylaws and how chicken issues are handled currently within the town. Mr. Lucci explained what

he had already completed in the digital document that was shared with the PC. He also stated that he added Essex Junction's bylaws for review.

ZA Adams asked if a max size was used for a chicken coop would that restrict people from using existing structures on the property for the keeping of chickens? Mr. Lucci shared some other suggestions for wording. Chair Richards stated that he felt if the town got too specific in one area it opens up issues in other areas. Mr. Lucci suggested that the PC could use wording that chickens cant be brought into the home - the intent meaning that chickens are meant for the coop, not wherever people want. ZA Adams asked that bylaws aren't created that are a might-mare to enforce. Mr. Lucci suggested that maybe some things are better as an ordinance.

Mr. Lucci brought up consideration of coop in front vs back yard. ZA Adams explained the current accessory structure zoning. Mr. Lucci questioned barbed wire and electric fencing for the chickens. ZA Adams explained there is already an ordinance that prohibits electric and barbed-wire unless needed for a facility and it needs to be approved.

Mr. Lucci asked if there were any other chicken concerns as he had reached the end of his list. Chair Richards asked if he would create a concise document for the PC to look at. He agreed he would, then asked about the maximum number of chickens the PC wanted to allow, does the PC want to allow more than what the law says is the minimum allowance. ZA Adams suggested if the property is more than 1 acre there be no limit, and suggested that under 1 acre the minimum allowance by law and over 1 acre no limit.

Mr. Lucci stated that all their chicken bylaws would be looked over by the lawyer before they go into effect. Chair Richards stated that if the property owner takes care of their chickens you wont even know they are there.

4. Other Business

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

5. Adjournment:

Mrs. Finley **motioned to adjourn at 8:39 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 August 26, 2026 at 7:30 pm*****