Fair Haven Planning Commission

Town of Fair Haven - October 14, 2026 - Regular Meeting

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

Commissioners Absent: Linda Sienkiewicz

Others Present: Phil Adams - Zoning Administrator, Jennifer Jackson - recording secretary, Devon Neary - Rutland Regional Planning Commission.

Agenda

1. **Call to Order**:

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Chair Richards. He requested a change to the agenda to add a discussion with Devon Neary from RRPC about the Downtown Designation application. Mrs. Finley **motioned to add to the agenda Devon Neary to talk about Downtown Designation status after the Zoning Update on State Law Act 166.**The Motion was seconded by Mr. Lucci. All were in favor and the motion passed.

2. **Review of Minutes of Previous Meeting:**
   a. **Approval of Minutes: Regular meeting - September 23, 2026**

Mrs. Finley, at 7:30 pm **motioned to accept the minutes of September 23rd with corrections.** The motion was seconded by Mr. M Richards. The corrections were as follows; change the date of the minutes previously passed to September 9, Page 2 paragraph 1, 7th line change *RIchards* to *Richards* and the same correction on page 2 4th paragraph line 9 and #4 in the public comment section. All were in favor and the motion passed.

3. **New Business:**
   a. **Update of the zoning regulations Article IX - General Regulations, Section 910-Keeping of Animals, Following the enactment of the State Law Act 166 (H.941.)**

Mr. Lucci stated that VLTC legal aid has responded to his requests for advice and they stated they see no issue with that was submitted. Chair Richards asked for the zoning to be finalized at the next meeting. Mr. Lucci asked if the town should first send the draft to their lawyer to see if they notice any issue with the language. Chair Richards agreed that the review couldn't hurt. ZA Adams stated he wasn't sure who the town lawyer was currently. Chair Richards also suggested that Mr. Lucci alert the Select Board to the request to spend money first.

   b. **Devon Neary Talk about Downtown Designation status.**

Chair Richards asked Mr. Neary to go through where the Planning Commission stands with the Downtown Designation application.

Mr. Neary stated the last update was on October 20, 2025. He stated he reviewed all the work that the PC has completed and found that most of the application was complete, but there was still some significant work to be completed; specifically the structure of the Downtown Organization. He stated there are many parts that just need a little tweaking.

Mrs. Finley passed out a memorandum of understanding between the town and the organization that she created.

Mr. Neary stated that the last application to receive downtown designation status was Hardwick's application. He then went on to review the checklist that was compiled by Logan Solomon before his departure.

- *Coverpage* - complete
- *Table of Contents* – in progress
- *Cover letter* - in progress
- *Selectboard Resolution to apply* - Mr. Neary asked if it was completed. And found on 4/30/25 a signed resolution.
- *Minutes of selectboard adopting resolution to apply* - complete
- *Letter Notifying RRPC and CEDRR* - Mr. Neary thought it would be a good idea to resend this letter, he has a copy of the letter that was sent in September of 2025.
- *Copy of Public warning of application in newspaper* - Not posted. Mr. Neary suggested he could do both the public warning posting and the letter to RRPC and CEDRR at the same time and the RRPC could pay for it. Mr. Lucci was asked to co-ordinate the letter signing. He stated sending the letter to the selectboard chair is fine.
- *Letter confirming planning process from RPC* - Complete
- *Local Historic DIstrict Regulations* - Complete
- *Community Reinvestment Agreement* - Mr. Neary read off Hardwick's language for their application, stating it is pretty standard language. Mrs. Finley was concerned with the fact that Fair Haven does not have a location for a Downtown office space. Mr. Neary stated he could change the language to broader terminology to accommodate that. He stated Hardwick had 12 or so signatures from local businesses included in the agreement. Mrs. Finley was aware of which businesses would likely sign Fair Haven's agreement. Mr. Neary suggested at least 5 signatures from Fair Haven.
- *Municipal Capital Budget and Program Narrative* - Mr. Neary sees this section to be a big hurdle. He knows there are some good examples to follow. He doesn't feel he has a clear understanding on whether the town has a capital budget or plan yet. Mr. Richards stated he asked for $2,500 in the Planning Commission budget to start the town investment. Mr. Neary asked about a pre-existing capital plan. Chair Richards stated a capital plan might be a grandiose term for what the town has. The fund was set up to replace equipment when needed. Mr. Neary looked at the Hardick plan. He stated he believed he could put the narrative section together, especially considering the improvements that have been completed for the town; the Park and Ride, Main Street Paving of the Class 1 Highway. He asked about a vote on interest in completing town sidewalks? Chair Richards stated it was indicated there is interest in upgrading the town sidewalks. Mr. Neary stated there is a study to inform the budget for this project. He then went on to note that Water and Sewer have capital plans. Mr. Neary stated he would speak with Gary Holloway about what will work for the town. Mr. Neary asked again about the $2500 Chair Richards was speaking about before. Chair Richards stated the money as for the organization. Mr. Neary stated the town might need for sophistication; he stated that Wallingford and Brandon created inhouse Capital Budget plans. Chair Richards asked that not too much be placed on the Selectboard this time of year and asked that more work be held off until January. Mr. Neary suggested going

through the last few years of the Town Report Budget to help create the document. And future budgets. He suggested the 1% option tax is a positive direction. It could be used to show a fund balance. Mr. Lucci stated he was confident that every member of the Selectboard would be ok with a capital budget.

- *Downtown Organization 5-year strategic Plan, Statement of Organization Structure and Mission Statement.* Mrs. FInley stated there is no Mission Statement because there is no organization currently. Mr. Neary stated this organization could be a ton committee if needed. The Planning Commission stated they thought that it was asked NOT to be a town committee. Mr. Neary stated he will talk with Mr. Holloway about this.
- *Downtown Organization Articles of Incorporation*
- *Downtown Organization Bylaws* - Mr. Neary states these are important. Mrs. Finley will send what is started.
- *Downtown Organization List of Committee Members, Committee Positions and Affiliations*
- *Downtown Organization Narrative of Plans to pursue long term funding*
- *Downtown Organization budget* - Mr. Neary stated that Hardwick's budget was $10,500 but much of the budget went to personnel and other office keeping necessities. Chair Richards stated the hope was to use grant money to pay for staff. Mr. Neary stated that can't happen unless there is dedicated money in the budget. Chair Richards asked how many towns are applying. Mr. Neary stated there are no other Step 3 applications since Hardwick in 2022.
- *Downtown Organization Evidence of Municipal Financial Commitment*
- *Drinking water system compliance* - Finished
- *Wastewater System Compliance* - in progress
- *Dedication of Water and Wastewater reserves by selectboard* - in progress
- *Map: Downtown Designation Boundary Map* - in progress
- *Proposed Designated Boundary Narrative* - in progress
- *Photographs of Locations* - Need photos of the buildings to go along with the map. Chair Richards stated he can get the photos.
- *Historic District Boundary Map*
- *Zoning Map*
- *Zoning Bylaws*

Mr. Neary stated the in progress parts are nearly complete. He felt effort needed to be put into missing organization elements and capital plan. He will meet with Mr. Holloway and report back. Chair Richards will take photographs, Mr. Neary will update letters notifying RRPC and CEDRR. Chair Richards would like Mr. Neary emphasized the challenge in finding volunteers to help with town efforts and urged him to advocate for the town organization over a non-profit.

Mr. Neary asked what else the PC is currently working on. ZA Adams spoke about small changes in the use map. Mr. Neary asked if there was anything else the PC should be discussing with him, he asked who his best point of contact for the Step 3 application was. Chair Richards and Mrs. Finley. ZA Adams asked for a clean copy of the Zoning Regulations. Chair Richards asked that the copy wait until after the 27th of October Selectboard meeting. ZA

Adams wants a clean copy from March 17, 2026 effective April 17, 2026. Mr. Neary said he would do this ASAP.

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

5. **Adjournment:**

Mrs. Finley **motioned to adjourn at 8:57 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 October 28, 2026 at 7:30 pm