



TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN, MASSACHUSETTS
PLANNING BOARD
Town Hall - 40 Center Street - Fairhaven, MA 02719

FAIRHAVEN TOWN CLERK
RCUD 2025 MAR 27 PM3:51

MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, January 14, 2025 at
6:30PM Held both at Town Hall &
Remotely via Zoom**

1. GENERAL BUSINESS:

a) Chair's Welcome and Media Notification:

Cathy Melanson, Chair, opened the meeting at 6:32pm and welcomed all.

b) Quorum/ Attendance:

Present: Diane Tomassetti, Richard Trapilo, Sharon Simmons, Cathy Melanson, Patrick Carr, Kevin Grant, and Jessica Fidalgo.

Absent: Ruy DaSilva

Recording Secretary Hailey Anne Hemingway and Land Use & Planning Director Bruce Webb was present at the meeting.

c) Minutes: October 28, 2024 & November 12, 2024 drafts to be reviewed:

No minutes were able to be approved at this meeting. Mr. Webb addressed the board to let them know that the meeting minutes for October 28, 2024 and November 12, 2024 were not ready for this meeting.

d) Correspondence (if any):

No correspondence discussed at this meeting.

2. REVIEWS/ DISCUSSION:

a) Bridge Street:

i) Presentation from Joshua Crabb from the Board of Public Works Highway Department on Bridge Street redevelopment between Huttleston Avenue/ Route 6 and Alden Road (and Rt. 240).

Mr. Joshua Crabb, the Highway Superintendent, presented the slideshow for the board about the redevelopment project for Huttleston Avenue/ Route 6 and Alden Road and Route 240. (See Attachment A.)

The board brought up various concerns about street lighting for those areas, bike lane locations, and input opportunities for abutters to properties.

Ms. Fidalgo asked Mr. Crabb when the BPW meeting was that this presentation was presented. Mr. Crabb confirmed it was on December 2, 2024.

Mr. Carr asked if there was a grant received for this work. Mr. Crabb confirmed there was a grant for \$1,000,000.00. Mr. Carr wanted to know what the possibility is of more grants to cover the costs of all the work that is covered in this project. Mr. Carr asked if the work can be done in phases focusing on the areas with more crashes and then going from there. Mr. Crabb confirmed that would be able to be done.

ii) William Gardner from Livable Streets Committee to speak.

Mr. William Gardner was present representing the Livable Streets Committee.

Mr. Gardner brought up various concerns with the walkways around the area of Walmart, located at 42 Fairhaven Commons Way, the increase in bicyclists in the area and making those areas safe, and the traffic study that was in the presentation.

Mr. Gardner requested that when the work starts for installing bike lanes that there is adequate safety put in place for the bike ways.

iii) Planning Board to discuss letter of support to Board of Public Works addressing design features sought by the Planning Board for inclusion in the Bridge Street redesign/ redevelopment.

Ms. Melanson spoke about the letter and if Mr. Crabb would like the board to write one.

Mr. Webb offered for the board to look over all the plans and the presentation, hold a future meeting to go over information and make a recommendation for any changes, possibly holding a public hearing, and then go through the process of approving or denying and having a letter written. Ms. Tomassetti mentioned that she would like to look over the plans and the presentation before making any decisions.

No vote was had at this meeting.

b) **Charter Committee Recommendation: Planning Board to discuss the Charter Committee's recommendation to reduce the Planning Board membership from 8 members to 7 members.**

Ms. Melanson spoke to the board about the recommendation from the Charter Committee to reduce the Planning Board membership from 8 members to 7 members. Ms. Melanson spoke not in favor of the change. Ms. Melanson recommends not changing the membership number.

Mr. Grant spoke not in favor of the recommendation. Mr. Grant presented a graph he made of the planning board member term patterns. (See Attachment B.)

Ms. Fidalgo brought up concerns with the recommendation. Ms. Fidalgo wants to know if the Charter Committee did research and looked at other municipalities around the area.

Ms. Simmons mentioned if the number of members is an issue bringing the membership up from 8 members to 9 members.

Mr. Carr brought up concerns with if the Charter Committee has the authority to change the number of members on the board without a vote from Planning Board. Ms. Melanson confirmed that the Charter Committee does have the authority to change the number but it would have to go to Town Meeting for a vote.

Ms. Tomassetti spoke not in favor of lowering the membership number from 8 members to 7 members.

Mr. Grant made a motion for Mr. Webb to draft a letter stating our unanimous opposition to eliminating one of the chairs for this planning board, seconded by Ms. Tomassetti. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

c) **Planning Board Member Binders: Planning Board to discuss inclusion of new material in the Planning Board member's binders; 40R bylaw, ADUs bylaw, 40R design standards.**

Ms. Melanson passed on this agenda item for this meeting.

- d) **Street Discontinuance Policy:** Land Use & Planning Director to introduce the idea of a formalized Street Discontinuance Policy. Planning Board to discuss creation and adoption of a Street Discontinuance Policy.

Mr. Webb brought up past situations where residents were able to petition to have a paper street or right of way discontinued and the applicant takes over the street. Mr. Webb brought up concerns with that because it cuts off the established right of ways that give access to parcels of land across town. Mr. Webb mentioned it can cause issues, especially with the town looking for future growth. Mr. Webb would like to come up with a procedure for handling these cases.

Ms. Melanson noted that if a street gets discontinued then it can land lock some other parcels of land that could have been used.

Ms. Simmons brought up concerns involving paper streets and that you would need to go back into old deeds and look to see who is the owner of that parcel and the land to confirm whether the town has the authority to the land.

Mr. Carr brought up that he is not in favor of making a street discontinuance policy. Mr. Carr mentioned each case should be looked at individually. Fellow board members agreed.

- e) **Land Use & Planning Department Updates:** Land Use & Planning Director to give an update.

Mr. Webb mentioned that they are still looking to fill the administrative assistant position for the conservation and planning department. The job posting is up on the website and they are reaching out to a past applicant.

- f) **Any business not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting.**

No discussions were had at this meeting.

3. **NEXT MEETINGS:**

Regular Business: Tuesday, January 28, 2025

Ms. Melanson closed the meeting at 8:58pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Hailey Anne Hemingway

Minutes approved at Board Meeting on 3/25/2025