



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

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 10, 2026
at 6:30PM Held both at Town Hall
& Remotely via Zoom

1. GENERAL BUSINESS:

a. Chair's Welcome and Media Notification:

Chair, Ms. Jessica Fidalgo, opened the meeting at 6:31pm and welcomed all. Ms. Fidalgo read the open meeting law protocols and procedures.

b. Pledge of Allegiance:

The Board stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

c. Quorum/Attendance:

Present: Jessica Fidalgo, Jeffrey Lucas, Sean Powers, Miles Grant, Sharon Simmons, & Ruy DaSilva.

Mr. Kevin Grant was present on Zoom.

Mr. Patrick Carr arrived at the meeting at 6:34pm.

There is a quorum.

Ms. Hailey Hemingway, the Recording Secretary, was present at the Town Hall.

d. Meeting Minutes- Drafts to be reviewed:

Motion to approve the minutes for the meeting on February 10, 2026 made by Mr. Miles Grant, seconded by Mr. Lucas. Motion passed unanimously (8-0).

e. Correspondence: Email- Michelle Costen- Purviews:

Ms. Fidalgo confirmed there was one correspondence received from Ms. Michelle Costen that will be discussed later in the meeting.

2. PUBLIC HEARING:

- a. None

3. RECEIPT OF PLANS:

- a. SD25-02 at 0 Duchaine Street- Potential Properties, LLC proposes to subdivide the property to create 2 building lots by creating the legal frontage along the street with a construction of a 20-foot-wide gravel roadway and hammerhead turn around. The property is located at 00 Duchaine Street Map 34, Lot 38. Updated Plans. Public Hearing rescheduled for 3/24/26 meeting.
Due to cancelled meeting and re-advertising public hearing date.

Ms. Fidalgo notified the Board the Public Hearing for this item is scheduled for March 24, 2026.

4. NEW/OTHER BUSINESS:

- a. PS25-01- 4 Earle Street: Map 31A, Lot 453 an existing single-family residential lot accessed via Earle Street, a private way. The parcel is in the Residential A zoning district, This is a preliminary subdivision application. Applicant submitted a letter to withdraw without prejudice.

Ms. Simmons recused herself from this item.

Ms. Fidalgo noted that there was a letter received from the applicant requesting to withdraw the application without prejudice. Ms. Fidalgo noted the request to withdraw the application is due to changes needed on the plans and the applicant plans to submit a new application.

Motion to approve the applicants request to withdraw the application without prejudice made by Mr. Carr, seconded by Mr. Miles Grant. Motion passed unanimously (7-0). Ms. Simmons abstaining.

- b. Housing Production Plan: Appoint a Planning Board member to work with SRPEDD 12-18 month commitment afternoon meeting 1x a month:

Mr. Carr and Mr. Powers noted interest in being appointed to this position.

The Board requested additional information on this project, the timeline of this project starting, and the ability for multiple members to work on this project. Ms. Fidalgo confirmed she will reach out and request this information.

The Board tabled this item pending getting more information.

- c. Updates from Committee Liaisons:

Ms. Fidalgo confirmed SRPEDD met in February. State Representative Mr. Mark Sylvia was a guest at that meeting to speak to the members.

Mr. Powers confirmed Community Preservation Committee is meeting Wednesday, March 11, 2026.

Mr. Miles Grant confirmed Economic Development Committee and Livable Streets Committee are holding meetings the following week.

Mr. Carr confirmed there was discussion on the possibility of solar fields and the possible plans for the wind turbines at the SRPEDD meeting.

Mr. Carr confirmed the Harbor Development Committee are holding a meeting this month.

Mr. Carr confirmed the Rogers Reuse Committee is on hold at this time.

5. LONG RANGE PLANNING:

Motion to move Item B to be discussed before Item A made by Mr. Lucas, seconded by Mr. Powers. Motion passed unanimously (9-0).

- b. Any other business that may properly come before the Board, not reasonably anticipated when posting 48 hours prior to the meeting:

-There was discussion on a house being built on 3 Earle Street. The Board noted issues with the house being built on a nonconforming lot. Ms. Fidalgo confirmed this item has not been presented to the Planning Board or the Zoning Board of Appeals for approval.

Mr. Michael Gaj, owner of a property on Jenney Street, spoke to the Board regarding the 3 Earle Street house being built. Mr. Gaj expressed concerns with

houses being built and not having the required frontage.

The Board brought up concerns with enforcement not being done in the Town for illegal constructions.

Ms. Fidalgo raised idea of the Planning Board writing a letter from the Planning Board to the Town Administrator and Select Board and Building Commissioner regarding enforcing the fines. Mr. Miles Grant noted idea of drafting a letter before the next meeting. Ms. Fidalgo noted she can make bullets of the items discussed and a discussion and draft can be made at the next meeting.

Ms. Fidalgo confirmed this item will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

-Ms. Fidalgo noted there was an email that was sent regarding attending an executive session Planning Board meeting on Wednesday, March 18, 2026 at 6:30pm. There were 6 Board members that confirmed they will be available for this meeting. Mr. Miles Grant and Ms. Simmons noted not being able to attend.

-Ms. Fidalgo noted the information discussed at the last meeting regarding bylaws was sent to the interim Town Planner and the Town Administrator. Ms. Fidalgo noted the Interim Town Planner is going to reach out to Mr. Brovitz.

a. Board discussion on possible bylaw updates, priorities, information on MAHT and affordable homes (Michelle Costen):

Ms. Michelle Costen, a resident in Fairhaven, was present to speak to the Board regarding this item.

Ms. Costen presented a slideshow Affordable Homes: Fairhaven's Affordable Homes Committee Working to Bring back the Equitable American Dream Starter Home. (See Attachment A)

Ms. Costen highlighted that this program would help get more State Funds and there are affordable housing bank initiatives and grants.

Ms. Costen confirmed there was a petition regarding this item and this item is on the warrant for Town Meeting and there was a request to use Community Preservation Funds.

Ms. Costen noted Mr. Keith Hickey, the Town Administrator, has reached out to other municipalities that have used this and heard positive feedback.

Mr. Carr questioned if Ms. Costen worked with the Town of Falmouth for creating their Housing Trust. Ms. Costen confirmed she worked partly on the project.

Ms. Fidalgo noted discussing this with the Interim Town Planner and the Planner mentioned the possibility of a special permit process for these possible lots instead of changing whole districts.

Ms. Fidalgo noted this item is not getting voted on, it is just a conversation to help gather information for possible zoning.

c. NEXT MEETING:

An Executive Session Planning Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 18, 2026 at 6:30pm.

The next Regular Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at 6:30pm.

d. ADJOURN:

There being no further business before the Board, this meeting is adjourned.

The meeting closed at 8:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Hailey Anne Hemingway

Minutes Approved at the Planning Board Meeting on March 24, 2026

Affordable Homes

Fairhaven's *Affordable Homes Committee* Working
to Bring back the Equitable American Dream Starter Home



The ADU Concept Moves To the Next Level



- Building quality small cottages & ranch homes under 1000 “sq ft.” With curb appeal as requisite.
- Affordable homes not built as an accessory dwelling unit, but as a Single Residence, built for Fairhaven Residents who offer Vital Services to the community, First time Homebuyers, and Seniors.
- Instituting the same bylaws to these Affordable Homes, as that of the ADU, in order to protect our housing stock from being used as mere profit real estate in the future, yet still accumulating equity over 5, 10, 15, and 20 year intervals. The longer people stay in their Affordable Home the better growth of equity. **These homes are intentionally meant to stay in balance within the ranges of the Actual Median Income.**
- Provisions for these homes is that they are maintained, as the same provisions for the First Time Homebuyer programs, And also as currently requisite through various home loans through banks and credit unions. Maintaining Small Affordable Homes and keeping its curb appeal is needed as requisite, to help keep its growth in equity. Currently all financial institutions who hold a mortgage, require maintenance commitment.

Adorable & Affordable Communities

**Fairhaven Cares about our Families,
and is working to inspire our next
generation, to help them succeed
in home ownership opportunities,
where they can grow families &
their own equity too.**



Home is a Basic Need

A Place of Shelter, To Grow a Family, To Grow Equity & Stability
Building Affordable Homes You can be Proud Of



**We Need Affordable Small
Homes for Seniors On a
Fixed Budget**

And who have to Downsize.



★ OPTIMAL Lots Needed for

Affordable Cottage Home Communities
we can be proud of.

Building the Median priced Homes, to
Match the Median Income for our
Residents who offer Vital Services to the
Community is a must. They Deserve to
have the American Dream of owning
their own Home and growing their own
equity

And...

*Could there be residents of Fairhaven that
own land, they would sell for a fair price for
our Affordable Home Building Initiative ?*



! We Need Builders who Want to build Affordable Homes and Be a part of Fairhaven's Affordable Homes initiative ↴

There are FINANCIAL INCENTIVES provided through a 5.16 BILLION DOLLAR HOUSING BILL that was passed in August 2024, for Builders to meet the Balanced Profit Principle for Affordable Home Building.

Where are the affordable homes?

How Deep has the town of Fairhaven Explored these funds for single family Affordable homes and cottages? And how seriously?

We're talking about building small quality affordable homes, with curb appeal, as seen in his presentation for under \$450,00,000.

Affordable homes to meet the Median Income would need to range between \$250 to \$400,000. To fit the median income ranges of \$75,000 -\$120,000.

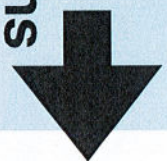
Can we do this? Of course we can. 5.16 Billion is a lot of money. Ultimately, the state's general tax revenue support the repayment of the housing bond bill-



Getting Our ACT Together

FUNDING...

Let us not forget the options we can look into to, to help us Build Adorable Affordable Homes in Fairhaven, Once Again.



Community Preservation Act

- CPA funds can be used to Create Housing for the median income.
- USDA has Affordable Homes funding programs also.
- FYI-** I understand the State of Massachusetts just recently is looking into buying state land to build homes?
- Let's Research all our options and work together in getting **Adorable Affordable Homes** built for our First time Homebuyers, Vital Workers who serve our community and for our Seniors...



Community Land Trust

In Massachusetts, you can create a community land trust (CLT) that allows individuals to own homes while the land remains under the trust's ownership. This model is designed to promote affordable housing and ensure long-term community engagement and stability.

How Community Land Trusts Work

1. **Ownership Structure:** In a CLT, the trust retains ownership of the land, while individuals can purchase or lease the homes built on that land. This arrangement is meant to keep housing affordable and prevent market speculation.
2. **Permanent Affordability:** The trust typically includes specific rules that maintain the affordability of the homes. When homeowners decide to sell, they may need to sell their home back to the trust or to another qualified buyer at an affordable price.
3. **Community Control:** CLTs are often governed by a board that includes both community residents and other stakeholders. This structure ensures that community needs and interests are prioritized.

Building Small Homes

When building small homes on CLT land:

- **Zoning Regulations:** Ensure that the proposed small homes comply with local zoning laws, which dictate allowable land use, housing density, and building codes.
- **Financing Options:** Homebuyers might have access to various financing options that can support their purchase, including potential subsidies or grants designed for CLT initiatives.
- **Community Engagement:** Ongoing community involvement is vital to address needs and preferences regarding housing designs and community infrastructures, such as parks or communal spaces.

Creating a CLT with the intention of building small homes can be a viable strategy for improving housing availability and affordability in Massachusetts. It may be beneficial to consult legal experts or local organizations specializing in community development to navigate the specifics of setting up the trust and adhering to local regulations.

Zoning Waivers for Affordable Housing in Massachusetts-

Appropriate zoning to meet the need feasibly for Affordable Housing-

—In Massachusetts, zoning waivers play a crucial role in addressing affordable housing challenges. These waivers allow municipalities to adjust zoning requirements to facilitate the development of housing projects that may not meet standard zoning regulations, particularly in the context of affordable housing.

—Mechanisms for Zoning Waivers
-Zoning waivers can typically enable several approaches to affordable housing:

1. **As-of-Right Development:** Certain developments can proceed without requiring special permits or further review, helping to expedite the housing creation process. This is particularly relevant for projects like building smaller houses on smaller lots.
2. **Flexibility in Dimensional Requirements:** Waivers can permit deviations in lot size, building height, and density requirements, which can help make projects more feasible and economically viable for developers.
3. **Hardship Provisions:** Waivers may be granted when a project demonstrates undue hardship under existing zoning laws, allowing for more creative solutions tailored to community needs.

Recent Developments

Recent regulatory changes by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities include:

- **Year-Round Housing Regulations:** These regulations assist municipalities in providing year-round housing by promoting temporary zoning changes that can lead to permanent solutions, like zoning waivers that support affordable housing initiatives.
- **Housing Preferences:** Some regulations include provisions for housing preferences for essential public employees, indirectly promoting affordable options for those serving the community.

Legislative Context

Several legislative initiatives aim to streamline the zoning process and make it more conducive to affordable housing development. Key themes in recent proposals include:

- Lowering Thresholds for Local Zoning Changes: Making it easier for municipalities to adjust ordinances to encourage the development of affordable housing.
- Encouraging Mixed-Use Developments: Allowing residential units within commercial zones to meet housing demands in urban areas.
- Support for Housing Production Plans: Mandating that municipalities develop plans outlining how they will meet local housing needs can enhance the effectiveness of zoning waivers.

These zoning waivers reflect a broader trend across Massachusetts to create more flexible frameworks for addressing the urgent need for affordable housing, ensuring that developments can respond effectively to unique local challenges.