



FAIRHAVEN TOWN CLERK
RCUD 2026 AUG 20 PM4:13

Economic Development Committee

Town Hall- 40 Center Street-Fairhaven, MA 02719

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 21, 2026, at 5:30PM

Economic Development Committee Meeting

The Economic Development Committee meeting was held on May 21st with Karyn Ferreira, chairing in place of the absent Cathy Melanson, Chair due to a wake, Mrs. Melanson was the only absentee. The meeting covered administrative updates including quorum and attendance, the approval of April minutes and announcement of the EDC Business After Hours event scheduled for June 4th at 5:30 PM at SOCO, featuring Representative Mark Sylvia. The committee discussed local business updates, noting that Indigo Spa owner Kim Trapper was planning to open in June after tying up final details.

Apartment Development Project Updates

John provided updates on apartment building development projects, reporting success with community input and approval from the select board and building inspector. The team is pursuing a Massachusetts Housing Partnership grant for a feasibility study on a proposed development on the Spring Street lot behind the historic fire station. The project will be unique among similar state programs as it will generate both property taxes and ground lease rent, making it sustaining without using town tax money.

Affordable Housing Development Plans

John explained his approach to affordable housing development, clarifying that it is not rent control but rather a market-indexed rent system targeting 1,400-1,600 monthly rents for 900 square foot two-bedroom apartments. He described plans to issue an RFP to contractors and confirmed that the Fairhaven Housing Authority would handle management of the proposed 60 apartments. The next steps involve securing a grant and conducting a feasibility study, with Rebecca Rowley handling the grant application process.

Fairhaven Economic Development Strategies

The meeting focused on discussing after-hours business events and economic development strategies for Fairhaven. The group reviewed how business outreach is currently conducted through email and social media, with approximately 300 business email addresses maintained by Alyssa Botelho Director of Committee Development. John shared research on successful economic development methods and mentioned a comprehensive retail gap study from 2017-2020 that could be updated and presented to realtors and developers. The group also discussed the need for better coordination between town departments and potential developers, particularly regarding the Euro building and a new development project with 3 storefronts and apartments planned for the former site of Fairhaven's corn guy.

The next meeting schedule is Thursday, June 11, 2026