

**TOWN OF FAIRLEE
PLANNING COMMISSION
Neighborhood Listening Session
MINUTES**

**Wednesday, January 7, 2026, at 6:00 PM
Town of Fairlee Town Hall
Grange Room
75 Town Common Road
Fairlee, VT 05045**

Wednesday, January 7, 2026

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Danen called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

PRESENT

Commission Members: Tim Danen, Chair (Present); Doug Tiftt, Vice Chair, (Present); Lisa Avery (Present); Lynne Fitzhugh (Absent); Susanne Pacilio (Present); Moriah Ludwig (Present online). A quorum was met.

Zoning Administrator: Chris Brimmer (Present)

Minutes Clerk: Joanna Bligh (Present)

Visitors:

In Person:

Peter Berger
Adam Pritchard
Miranda Clemson
Katherine Kasacek

Online:

Moriah Ludwig
Hannah Gelroth
Eric Tyler

NOTES

- Chair Danen introduced Adam Pritchard who was interested in joining the Planning Commission. Pritchard stated that he works at the diner as a line cook, rents an apartment in the Village, and is interested in getting involved in the community.

- Chair Danen stated that the Minutes approval will be moved to the end of the meeting.

NEIGHBORHOOD LISTENING SESSION AND GUIDED CONVERSATION

The Village

Chair Danen introduced Zoning Administrator (ZA) Brimmer to provide some background to today's Listening Session. ZA Brimmer is the Zoning Administrator and Town Planner.

ZA Brimmer stated that the Listening Session will include a series of leading questions for everyone to answer, and if the attendees have questions, they can feel free to ask. ZA Brimmer noted that a Neighborhood Map was used to identify six areas of Fairlee: Lake Morey, Route 5 North, Village area, Terry Hill-Fairview Street area, and Route 244/South Fairlee. One meeting

will also include the business community, Tonight's meeting is the fifth in the series and focuses on the Village neighborhood.

ZA Brimmer noted that at the March meeting, the Commissioners will focus on the business community, which will be the last of the Neighborhood Listening Sessions.

Questions for Neighborhood Residents from the Village

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

What makes you feel connected to Fairlee?

Discussion:

- Kasacek stated that she came from rural Connecticut, lives on Route 5 North, and loves the Upper Valley. The Town of Fairlee is welcoming and offers a lot for a small town – the library, outdoor activities, the skate trail, and hiking.
- Kasacek said that she works in Orford and walks to work.
- Gelroth (online) stated that she lives on Pierson Drive and grew up in Orford. She noted that Fairlee is a dynamic community with the skate trail and the beach.

How well do Town Officials manage the Town and the municipal meetings?

- Pritchard noted that there could be more information out there because there is much he did not know.
- ZA Brimmer suggested a Welcome Packet for new residents, and Clemson stated that Welcome Packets are given out.

What does housing development look like in Fairlee?

- ZA Brimmer stated that multifamily housing is needed, and the two- and three-bedroom property units will hit the target (100 housing units in 10 years), but the Town needs single-family housing to bring back school children.
- Berger stated that further south, the land is encumbered by the Interstate.
- ZA Brimmer noted that the Drive-In north of the Village is a 14-acre property that could support 40 housing units with septic and water.
- ZA Brimmer stated that Fairlee is the only town with the Interstate exits directly entering the downtown.
- ZA Brimmer discussed the AmeriGas property, which he stated that is actively being used as storage with nighttime transfers. However, the property has a 1500-foot blast radius where no houses can be built using federal funds.
- Pacilio stated that the Adam's lot is 4 acres, which is available.
- Tiffit stated that south of the Village, high density housing could be built.
- Berger noted that affordable housing is needed.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

How often do you use the public facilities, such as the library, Town beach, Town Common, the Transfer Station, and the Town forest and trails?

Discussion:

- Pritchard stated that more community services are needed.
- Kasacek noted that there is a need for rural medical services. She goes to Bradford for the primary care and Lebanon for a dentist.
- Kasacek asked if the Commission has communicated with Two River Ottawaquechee Regional Planning Commission (TRORPC), and ZA Brimmer replied that they have prepared maps and help them work through the Act 250 reforms.
- Kasacek discussed the library and noted that they do not have books she reads, so she uses Interlibrary Loan. Kasacek also noted that the space is cramped and needs expansion, more adult programs are needed, and she joined the Friends of the Library.
- Pritchard stated that the concerts are well attended.
- Gelroth noted that her children are young and use the Town Beach and the library. She was shocked at the tiny library.
- Gelroth stated that the Transfer Station has the gate locked, which is too bad. Berger noted that the locked gate is a requirement for the transfer station license.
- Pacilio noted that it needs to be open longer.

COMMUNICATION

How do you get information about Town events?

- Pritchard stated that it is by word of mouth.
- ZA Brimmer mentioned the ListServe, Fairlee Focus, and the newsletter, and Clemson noted that the website has lots of information.
- Kasacek stated that all the communications are easy to navigate.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

What goods and services take residents out of Town?

- ZA Brimmer explained the term *velocity*, which means the number of times \$1, for example, changes hands in Town.
- Pritchard noted that he has been everywhere to eat.
- Kasacek stated that she goes to Wing's weekly, but she prefers better quality of food "The pizza is terrible."
- Kasacek stated that there are no big box stores.
- Gelroth stated that she misses Whippy Dip, and that she shops out of town. Also, there is cheaper gas outside of Fairlee.
- Kasacek stated that she goes to Bradford for groceries.

What good and services do you want in Fairlee that are lacking?

- ZA Brimmer noted that an insurance agent or lawyer would be helpful.
- Kasacek stated that a bike store, retail store, or small engine repair shop.
- Clemson asked about the use of Town-owned public spaces, such as the Town perennial garden. She suggested adding benches or a playground. Clemson noted that the Fairlee

Gardeners originally had 27 members, but no one showed up to help with the transplanting and upkeep.

- Pacilio noted that renters would use garden spaces.
- Berger stated that the stormwater work took 3 years to implement.
- Avery mentioned that at the summer concerts, there are many volunteers and they asked how to get people to step up.
- Tifft noted that the Food Shelf has many volunteers.
- ZA Brimmer stated that the groups need a champion.
- Kasacek noted that sidewalks are not cleaned in the wintertime.
- Pacilio stated that in some towns homeowners clear the sidewalks in front of their houses.
- Berger and Clemson discussed the difficulty of working with Vermont agencies to get infrastructure done.

MATERIAL CONDITIONS

What should the Fairlee streetscape look like?

- ZA Brimmer stated that studies from 2001 looked at underground power lines, stormwater projects, and sidewalks.
- Gelroth expressed the need for public transportation and a walkable community.

In a range of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), how is the Town doing? Are you getting value as a resident of Fairlee?

- Pritchard stated a 3 to 3.5 then changed to 4 because he needed to focus more on the community.
- Kasacek noted that at the Budget Hearing the budget increased by 10%. She stated, “Good job.” She looks at the ListServe every day, and the Town is doing excellent outreach. She is welcoming development to have more taxpayers.
- Gelroth stated that she is eager for the Conservation Commission, and that the Town is doing well.

OPEN DISCUSSION

ZA Brimmer asked for final thoughts from the audience.

- Gelroth stated that a school in the community is essential.
- Kasacek noted that Rivendell being in Vermont is not part of this discussion.
- Tifft asked about the future of Morey School, and Berger replied there is no design as yet, but it will not become housing units.
- ZA Brimmer noted that the Morey School is not conducive to conversion.
- Gelroth stated that her husband stayed home with the children. Only summer daycare was available. Childcare is much needed.
- Kasacek stated that EV charging stations are needed, and Berger replied that Wi-Fi is needed for the charge points.

Housing

- Multifamily housing is needed, and the two- and three-bedroom property units will hit the target (100 housing units in 10 years), but the Town needs single-family housing to bring back school children.
- Further south, the land is encumbered by the Interstate.
- The Drive-In north of the Village is a 14-acre property that could support 40 housing units with septic and water.
- Fairlee is the only town with the Interstate that exits directly entering the downtown.
- AmeriGas property is actively being used as storage with nighttime transfers. and the property has a 1500-foot blast radius where no houses can be built using federal funds.
- The Adam's lot is 4 acres, which is available.
- South of the Village, high density housing could be built.
- Affordable housing is needed.

Public Facilities

- More community services are needed.
- There is a need for rural medical services. Goes to Bradford for the primary care and Lebanon for a dentist.
- The library did not have books she reads, so she uses Interlibrary Loan. The space is cramped and needs expansion, more adult programs are needed.
- Joined the Friends of the Library.
- Concerts are well attended.
- Uses the Town Beach and the library. Shocked at the tiny library.
- The Transfer Station has the gate locked. The locked gate is a requirement for the transfer station license.
- Needs to be open longer.

Economic Development

- *Velocity* means the number of times \$1, for example, changes hands in Town.
- Has been to all restaurants.
- Goes to Wing's weekly, but prefers better quality of food "The pizza is terrible."
- There are no big box stores.
- Misses Whippy Dip and shops out of town.
- There is cheaper gas outside of Fairlee.
- Kasacek stated that she goes to Bradford for groceries.
- An insurance agent or lawyer would be helpful.
- A bike store, retail store, or small engine repair shop.
- Use of Town-owned public spaces, such as the Town perennial garden.
- Renters would use garden spaces.
- Stormwater work took 3 years to implement.
- At the summer concerts, there are many volunteers.
- The Food Shelf has many volunteers.
- The groups need a champion.
- Sidewalks are not cleaned in the wintertime.
- In some towns, homeowners clear the sidewalks in front of their houses.

- Difficulty of working with Vermont agencies to get infrastructure done.

Material Conditions

- Studies from 2001 looked at underground power lines, stormwater projects, and sidewalks.
- Need for public transportation and a walkable community.
- A 3 to 3.5, then changed to 4, because he needed to focus more on the community.
- At the Budget Hearing, the budget increased by 10%. Looks at the ListServe every day, and the Town is doing excellent outreach welcoming development to have more taxpayers.
- Eager for the Conservation Commission, and that the Town is doing well.

Open Discussion

- A school in the community is essential.
- Future of Morey School, and it will not become housing units.
- The Morey School is not conducive to conversion.
- Husband stayed home with the children. Only summer daycare was available. Childcare is much needed.
- EV charging stations are needed, and Wi-Fi is needed for the charge points.